

RCW 18.88B.021 Certification requirements. (1) Beginning January 7, 2012, except as provided in RCW 18.88B.041 and 18.88B.022, any person hired as a long-term care worker must be certified as a home care aide as provided in this chapter within 200 calendar days after the date of hire. A long-term care worker who is not currently certified or eligible to reactivate an expired credential shall receive a new date of hire when beginning work with either a new employer or returning to a former employer after prior employment has ended.

(2) (a) No person may practice or, by use of any title or description, represent himself or herself as a certified home care aide without being certified as provided in this chapter.

(b) This section does not prohibit a person: (i) From practicing a profession for which the person has been issued a license or which is specifically authorized under this state's laws; or (ii) who is exempt from certification under RCW 18.88B.041 from providing services as a long-term care worker.

(c) In consultation with consumer and worker representatives, the department shall, by January 1, 2013, establish by rule a single scope of practice that encompasses both long-term care workers who are certified home care aides and long-term care workers who are exempted from certification under RCW 18.88B.041.

(3) If a pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of emergency impacts the ability of long-term care workers to complete certification as required by this section, the department may adopt rules to allow long-term care workers additional time to become certified.

(a) Rules adopted under this subsection (3) are effective until the termination of the pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of emergency or until the department determines that additional time for long-term care workers to become certified is no longer necessary, whichever is later. Once the department determines a rule adopted under this subsection (3) is no longer necessary, it must repeal the rule under RCW 34.05.353.

(b) Within 12 months of the termination of the pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of emergency, the department shall conduct a review of certification compliance with subsection (1) of this section and rules adopted under this subsection (3) and provide the legislature with a report.

(4) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. [2025 c 341 s 2; 2023 c 424 s 2; 2021 c 203 s 10; 2013 c 259 s 1; 2012 c 164 s 301; 2012 c 1 s 103 (Initiative Measure No. 1163, approved November 8, 2011).]

Effective date—2025 c 341: See note following RCW 18.88B.022.

Effective date—Retroactive application—2021 c 203: See notes following RCW 43.43.832.

Finding—Intent—Rules—Effective date—2012 c 164: See notes following RCW 18.88B.010.

Intent—Findings—Performance audits—Spending limits—Contingent effective dates—Application—Construction—Effective date—Short title—2012 c 1 (Initiative Measure No. 1163): See notes following RCW 74.39A.056.