

RCW 43.43.842 Vulnerable adults—Additional licensing requirements for agencies, facilities, and individuals providing services.

(1)(a) The secretary of social and health services and the secretary of health shall adopt additional requirements for the licensure or relicensure of agencies, facilities, and licensed individuals who provide care and treatment to vulnerable adults, including nursing pools registered under chapter 18.52C RCW. These additional requirements shall ensure that any person associated with a licensed agency or facility having unsupervised access with a vulnerable adult shall not be the respondent in an active vulnerable adult protection order under chapter 7.105 RCW, nor have been: (i) Convicted of a crime against children or other persons as defined in RCW 43.43.830, except as provided in this section; (ii) convicted of crimes relating to financial exploitation as defined in RCW 43.43.830, except as provided in this section; or (iii) found in any disciplinary board final decision to have abused a vulnerable adult as defined in RCW 43.43.830.

(b) A person associated with a licensed agency or facility who has unsupervised access with a vulnerable adult shall make the disclosures specified in RCW 43.43.834(2). The person shall make the disclosures in writing, sign, and swear to the contents under penalty of perjury. The person shall, in the disclosures, specify all crimes against children or other persons, all crimes relating to financial exploitation, and all crimes relating to drugs as defined in RCW 43.43.830, committed by the person.

(2) The rules adopted under this section shall permit the licensee to consider the criminal history of an applicant for employment in a licensed facility when the applicant has one or more convictions for a past offense and:

(a) The offense was simple assault, assault in the fourth degree, or the same offense as it may be renamed, and three or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment;

(b) The offense was prostitution, or the same offense as it may be renamed, and three or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment;

(c) The offense was theft in the third degree, or the same offense as it may be renamed, and three or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment;

(d) The offense was theft in the second degree, or the same offense as it may be renamed, and five or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment;

(e) The offense was forgery, or the same offense as it may be renamed, and five or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment;

(f) The department of social and health services reviewed the employee's otherwise disqualifying criminal history through the department of social and health services' background assessment review team process conducted in 2002, and determined that such employee could remain in a position covered by this section; or

(g) The otherwise disqualifying conviction or disposition has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, or other equivalent procedure.

The offenses set forth in (a) through (g) of this subsection do not automatically disqualify an applicant from employment by a licensee. Nothing in this section may be construed to require the employment of any person against a licensee's judgment.

(3) The rules adopted pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may not allow a licensee to automatically deny an applicant with a conviction for an offense set forth in subsection (2) of this section for a position as a substance use disorder professional or substance use disorder professional trainee certified under chapter 18.205 RCW, as an agency affiliated counselor credentialed under chapter 18.19 RCW practicing as a peer counselor in an agency or facility, or as a peer specialist or peer specialist trainee certified under chapter 18.420 RCW, if:

(a) At least one year has passed between the applicant's most recent conviction for an offense set forth in subsection (2) of this section and the date of application for employment;

(b) The offense was committed as a result of the applicant's substance use or untreated mental health symptoms; and

(c) The applicant is at least one year in recovery from a substance use disorder, whether through abstinence or stability on medication-assisted therapy, or in recovery from a mental health disorder.

(4) In consultation with law enforcement personnel, the secretary of social and health services and the secretary of health shall investigate, or cause to be investigated, the conviction record and the protection proceeding record information under this chapter of the staff of each agency or facility under their respective jurisdictions seeking licensure or relicensure. An individual responding to a criminal background inquiry request from his or her employer or potential employer shall disclose the information about his or her criminal history under penalty of perjury. The secretaries shall use the information solely for the purpose of determining eligibility for licensure or relicensure. Criminal justice agencies shall provide the secretaries such information as they may have and that the secretaries may require for such purpose. [2025 c 58 s 3009. Prior: 2023 c 469 s 20; 2023 c 425 s 23; 2021 c 215 s 150; prior: 2019 c 446 s 44; 2019 c 444 s 22; 2014 c 88 s 1; 2007 c 387 s 4; 1998 c 10 s 4; 1997 c 392 s 518; 1992 c 104 s 1; 1989 c 334 s 11.]

Explanatory note—2025 c 58: See note following RCW 1.16.050.

Effective date—2023 c 425 ss 1-7, 13-20, and 22-26: See note following RCW 18.83.170.

Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215: See note following RCW 7.105.900.

Short title—Findings—Construction—Conflict with federal requirements—Part headings and captions not law—1997 c 392: See notes following RCW 74.39A.009.