

**RCW 71.24.037 Licensed or certified behavioral health agencies—  
Minimum standards—Investigations and enforcement actions—Inspections.**

(1) The secretary shall license or certify any agency or facility that: (a) Submits payment of the fee established under RCW 43.70.110 and 43.70.250; (b) submits a complete application that demonstrates the ability to comply with requirements for operating and maintaining an agency or facility in statute or rule; and (c) successfully completes the prelicensure inspection requirement.

(2) The secretary shall establish by rule minimum standards for licensed or certified behavioral health agencies that must, at a minimum, establish: (a) Qualifications for staff providing services directly to persons with mental disorders, substance use disorders, or both; (b) the intended result of each service; and (c) the rights and responsibilities of persons receiving behavioral health services pursuant to this chapter and chapter 71.05 RCW. The secretary shall provide for deeming of licensed or certified behavioral health agencies as meeting state minimum standards as a result of accreditation by a recognized behavioral health accrediting body recognized and having a current agreement with the department.

(3) The department shall review reports or other information alleging a failure to comply with this chapter or the standards and rules adopted under this chapter and may initiate investigations and enforcement actions based on those reports.

(4) The department shall conduct inspections of agencies and facilities, including reviews of records and documents required to be maintained under this chapter or rules adopted under this chapter.

(5) The department may suspend, revoke, limit, restrict, or modify an approval, or refuse to grant approval, for failure to meet the provisions of this chapter, or the standards adopted under this chapter. RCW 43.70.115 governs notice of a license or certification denial, revocation, suspension, or modification and provides the right to an adjudicative proceeding.

(6) No licensed or certified behavioral health agency may advertise or represent itself as a licensed or certified behavioral health agency if approval has not been granted or has been denied, suspended, revoked, or canceled.

(7) Licensure or certification as a behavioral health agency is effective for one calendar year from the date of issuance of the license or certification. The license or certification must specify the types of services provided by the behavioral health agency that meet the standards adopted under this chapter. Renewal of a license or certification must be made in accordance with this section for initial approval and in accordance with the standards set forth in rules adopted by the secretary.

(8) Licensure or certification as a licensed or certified behavioral health agency must specify the types of services provided that meet the standards adopted under this chapter. Renewal of a license or certification must be made in accordance with this section for initial approval and in accordance with the standards set forth in rules adopted by the secretary.

(9) The department shall develop a process by which a provider may obtain dual licensure as an evaluation and treatment facility and secure withdrawal management and stabilization facility.

(10) Licensed or certified behavioral health agencies may not provide types of services for which the licensed or certified behavioral health agency has not been certified. Licensed or certified

behavioral health agencies may provide services for which approval has been sought and is pending, if approval for the services has not been previously revoked or denied.

(11) The department periodically shall inspect licensed or certified behavioral health agencies at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner.

(12) Upon petition of the department and after a hearing held upon reasonable notice to the facility, the superior court may issue a warrant to an officer or employee of the department authorizing him or her to enter and inspect at reasonable times, and examine the books and accounts of, any licensed or certified behavioral health agency refusing to consent to inspection or examination by the department or which the department has reasonable cause to believe is operating in violation of this chapter.

(13) The department shall maintain and periodically publish a current list of licensed or certified behavioral health agencies.

(14) Each licensed or certified behavioral health agency shall file with the department or the authority upon request, data, statistics, schedules, and information the department or the authority reasonably requires. A licensed or certified behavioral health agency that without good cause fails to furnish any data, statistics, schedules, or information as requested, or files fraudulent returns thereof, may have its license or certification revoked or suspended.

(15) The authority shall use the data provided in subsection (14) of this section to evaluate each program that admits children to inpatient substance use disorder treatment upon application of their parents. The evaluation must be done at least once every twelve months. In addition, the authority shall randomly select and review the information on individual children who are admitted on application of the child's parent for the purpose of determining whether the child was appropriately placed into substance use disorder treatment based on an objective evaluation of the child's condition and the outcome of the child's treatment.

(16) Any settlement agreement entered into between the department and licensed or certified behavioral health agencies to resolve administrative complaints, license or certification violations, license or certification suspensions, or license or certification revocations may not reduce the number of violations reported by the department unless the department concludes, based on evidence gathered by inspectors, that the licensed or certified behavioral health agency did not commit one or more of the violations.

(17) In cases in which a behavioral health agency that is in violation of licensing or certification standards attempts to transfer or sell the behavioral health agency to a family member, the transfer or sale may only be made for the purpose of remedying license or certification violations and achieving full compliance with the terms of the license or certification. Transfers or sales to family members are prohibited in cases in which the purpose of the transfer or sale is to avoid liability or reset the number of license or certification violations found before the transfer or sale. If the department finds that the owner intends to transfer or sell, or has completed the transfer or sale of, ownership of the behavioral health agency to a family member solely for the purpose of resetting the number of violations found before the transfer or sale, the department may not renew the behavioral health agency's license or certification or issue a new license or certification to the behavioral health service provider.

(18) Every licensed or certified outpatient behavioral health agency shall display the 988 crisis hotline number in common areas of the premises and include the number as a calling option on any phone message for persons calling the agency after business hours.

(19) Every licensed or certified inpatient or residential behavioral health agency must include the 988 crisis hotline number in the discharge summary provided to individuals being discharged from inpatient or residential services. [2023 c 454 § 2. Prior: 2019 c 446 § 23; 2019 c 325 § 1007; 2018 c 201 § 4005; 2017 c 330 § 2; 2016 sp.s. c 29 § 505; 2001 c 323 § 11; 1999 c 10 § 5.]

**Effective date—2019 c 325:** See note following RCW 71.24.011.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2018 c 201:** See notes following RCW 41.05.018.

**Finding—2017 c 330:** "The state finds that the department should not reduce the number of license violations found by field inspectors for the purpose of allowing licensed behavioral health service providers to avoid liability in a manner that permits the violating service provider to continue to provide care at the risk of public safety. The state also recognizes the need to prohibit fraudulent transfers of licenses between licensed behavioral health service providers found in violation of the terms of their license agreement and their family members." [2017 c 330 § 1.]

**Effective dates—2016 sp.s. c 29:** See note following RCW 71.05.760.

**Short title—Right of action—2016 sp.s. c 29:** See notes following RCW 71.05.010.

**Purpose—Intent—1999 c 10:** See note following RCW 71.24.025.