

**RCW 18.71.310 Physician health program—License surcharge—**

**Payment of funds.** (1) The commission shall enter into a contract with the entity to implement a physician health program. The commission may enter into a contract with the entity for up to six years in length. The physician health program may include any or all of the following:

(a) Entering into relationships supportive of the physician health program with professionals who provide either evaluation or treatment services, or both;

(b) Receiving and assessing reports of suspected impairment from any source;

(c) Intervening in cases of verified impairment, or in cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect impairment;

(d) Upon reasonable cause, referring suspected or verified impaired physicians for evaluation or treatment;

(e) Monitoring the treatment and rehabilitation of participants including those ordered by the commission;

(f) Providing monitoring and care management support of program participants;

(g) Performing such other activities as agreed upon by the commission and the entity; and

(h) Providing prevention and education services.

(2) A contract entered into under subsection (1) of this section shall be financed by a surcharge of \$70 per year or equivalent on each license renewal or issuance of a new license to be collected by the department of health from every physician, surgeon, and physician assistant licensed under this chapter in addition to other license fees. These moneys shall be placed in the impaired physician account to be used solely to support the physician health program.

(3) All funds in the impaired physician account shall be paid to the contract entity within sixty days of deposit. [2024 c 15 s 2; 2022 c 43 s 5; 2009 c 98 s 1; 2001 c 109 s 1; 1998 c 132 s 4; 1997 c 79 s 2; 1994 sp.s. c 9 s 330; 1991 c 3 s 169; 1989 c 119 s 2; 1987 c 416 s 2. Formerly RCW 18.72.306.]

**Findings—2024 c 15:** "The legislature finds that for over 30 years the Washington physicians health program has been the approved therapeutic alternative to discipline for Washington physicians, physician assistants, dentists, osteopathic physicians, podiatric physicians, and veterinarians with impairing or potentially impairing health conditions. To best support health care professionals and remain a model physician health program nationally, the license surcharge fees that provide the majority of program funding must be periodically increased to sustain and enhance services for impairing or potentially impairing health conditions and hiring qualified staff to handle the increased caseload complexity. More than ever, the legislature finds it is critical to maintain our current physician workforce and authorizing this fee increase, which is supported and paid for by the health care professionals that the program benefits, will provide the resources necessary for the program to continue essential services to the health care workforce." [2024 c 15 s 1.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—1998 c 132:** See notes following RCW 18.71.0195.

**Effective date—1997 c 79:** See note following RCW 18.71.401.

~~Severability—Headings and captions not law—Effective date—1994~~  
**sp.s. c 9:** See RCW 18.79.900 through 18.79.902.

~~Effective date—1987 c 416:~~ See note following RCW 18.71.300.