

RCW 18.225.145 Associate licensing—Requirements. (1) The secretary shall issue an associate license to any applicant who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the secretary that the applicant meets the following requirements for the applicant's practice area and submits a declaration that the applicant is working toward full licensure in that category:

(a) Licensed social worker associate—advanced or licensed social worker associate—~~independent clinical~~: Graduation from a master's degree or doctoral degree educational program in social work accredited by the council on social work education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

(b) Licensed mental health counselor associate: Graduation from a master's degree or doctoral degree educational program in mental health counseling or a related discipline from a college or university approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

(c) Licensed marriage and family therapist associate: Graduation from a master's degree or doctoral degree educational program in marriage and family therapy or graduation from an educational program in an allied field equivalent to a master's degree or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

(2) Associates may not provide independent social work, mental health counseling, or marriage and family therapy for a fee, monetary or otherwise. Associates must work under the supervision of an approved supervisor. Beginning October 1, 2025, an applicant for an associate license under this section may practice without a license under the direct supervision of an approved supervisor for 120 days after the department receives the applicant's completed application or the applicant's license is issued or denied, whichever is sooner.

(3) Associates shall provide each client or patient, during the first professional contact, with a disclosure form according to RCW 18.225.100, disclosing that he or she is an associate under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

(4) The department shall adopt by rule what constitutes adequate proof of compliance with the requirements of this section.

(5) Applicants are subject to the denial of a license or issuance of a conditional license for the reasons set forth in chapter 18.130 RCW.

(6) (a) An associate license may be renewed. Until October 1, 2025, the applicant for renewal must have successfully completed eighteen hours of continuing education in the preceding year. After October 1, 2025, the applicant for renewal must have successfully completed, in the preceding year, continuing education requirements established in rule by the secretary in consultation with the committee. Beginning with the second renewal, the continuing education requirements established in rule by the secretary in consultation with the committee must require the applicant to complete a minimum number of continuing education hours in the preceding two years in professional ethics.

(b) A person whose associate license was not renewed due to the person exceeding the six-renewal limit in place prior to June 6, 2024, shall be treated as if the person's license expired. The secretary shall allow such a person to return the person's associate license to active status pursuant to standard rules and procedures in place for returning an expired credential to active status. [2024 c 371 s 15; 2021 c 57 s 2; 2013 c 73 s 4; 2008 c 135 s 13.]

Rule making—2024 c 371 ss 1-16: See note following RCW 18.83.020.

Effective date—2021 c 57: See note following RCW 18.205.095.

Effective date—2008 c 135 ss 1, 2, 7-9, and 11-19: See note following RCW 18.19.020.