

**RCW 43.216.090 Early achievers program—Mental health**

**consultants.** (1) The department shall administer or contract for infant and early childhood mental health consultation services to child care providers and early learning providers participating in the early achievers program.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2021, the department of children, youth, and families must have or contract for one infant and early childhood mental health consultation coordinator and must enter into a contractual agreement with an organization providing coaching services to early achievers program participants to hire at least 12 qualified infant and early childhood mental health consultants. The department shall determine, in collaboration with the statewide child care resource and referral network, where the additional consultants should be sited based on factors such as the total provider numbers overlaid with indicators of highest need. The infant and early childhood mental health consultants must support early achievers program coaches and child care providers by providing resources, information, and guidance regarding challenging behavior and expulsions and may travel to assist providers in serving families and children with severe behavioral needs.

(3) The department shall provide, or contract with an entity to provide, reflective supervision and professional development for infant and early childhood mental health consultants to meet national competency standards.

(4) As capacity allows, the department may provide access to infant and early childhood mental health consultation services to caregivers and licensed or certified, military, and tribal early learning providers, license-exempt family, friend, and neighbor care providers, and families with children expelled or at risk of expulsion from child care. [2021 c 199 s 309; 2019 c 360 s 7.]

**Effective date—2021 c 199 ss 201, 202, 301, 309, and 504:** See note following RCW 43.216.802.

**Short title—Findings—Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 199:** See notes following RCW 43.216.770.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 360:** See note following RCW 74.09.4951.