
SENATE BILL 5054

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators O'Ban, Brown, Conway, Wilson, L., Zeiger, Short, Van De Wege, and Wagoner

Prefiled 12/24/18. Read first time 01/14/19. Referred to Committee on Health & Long Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing the behavioral health workforce by
2 establishing a reciprocity program to increase the portability of
3 behavioral health licenses and certifications; adding a new section
4 to chapter 43.70 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 18.225 RCW; and
5 providing an expiration date.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1)(a) The department shall establish a reciprocity program for
10 applicants for licensure or certification as a chemical dependency
11 professional, mental health counselor, social worker, or marriage and
12 family therapist in Washington state.

13 (b) This reciprocity program must apply to individuals who:

14 (i) Hold or have held within the past twelve months a license or
15 certification in good standing from another state or territory of the
16 United States which has an equivalent or greater scope of practice
17 than a corresponding Washington state license or certification
18 specified in (a) of this subsection; and

19 (ii) Have no disciplinary record or disqualifying criminal
20 history.

1 (2) The department shall issue a probationary license or
2 certification to an applicant who meets the requirements of
3 subsection (1) of this section. The department must determine what
4 deficiencies, if any, exist between the training and education
5 requirements of the foreign license or certification and, after
6 consideration of the experience and capabilities of the applicant,
7 determine whether it is appropriate to require the applicant to
8 undergo additional training or education to maintain the probationary
9 license or certification and within a reasonable time period
10 transition to full licensure or certification. The department may
11 place a reasonable time limit on a probationary license or
12 certification and may, if appropriate, require the applicant to pass
13 a jurisprudential exam.

14 (3) The department must maintain and publish a list of foreign
15 licenses or certifications that the department has determined to have
16 an equivalent or greater scope of practice and equivalent or greater
17 training and education requirements than the corresponding Washington
18 state license or certification specified in subsection (1)(a) of this
19 section.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 18.225
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) The department must explore options for adoption of an
23 interstate compact or compacts supporting license portability for
24 professionals licensed under this chapter and report recommendations
25 to the governor and legislature by November 1, 2020.

26 (2) This section expires June 30, 2022.

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