

**WAC 246-329-025 Exemptions, alternative methods, and interpretations.** The purpose of this section is to provide birth centers a mechanism to request an interpretation, exemption, or approval to use an alternative method. This chapter is not intended to prevent use of any systems, materials, alternate design, or methods of construction as alternatives to those prescribed by these rules.

(1) A birth center requesting exemption from this chapter must submit a written request to the department asking for an exemption. The request must specify the section or sections, explain the reason for the exemption and, when appropriate, include supporting documentation.

(2) A birth center requesting approval for use of alternative materials, design, and methods must submit a written request to the department asking for approval to use an alternative. The request must explain the reason(s) for the use of an alternative and must be supported by technical documentation.

(3) The department may:

(a) Exempt a birth center from complying with portions of this chapter when:

(i) The exemption is not contrary to the intent of chapter 18.46 RCW and the requirements of these rules.

(ii) After review and consideration, the department determines the exemption will not:

(A) Negate the purpose and intent of these rules;

(B) Place the safety or health of the patients in the birth center in jeopardy;

(C) Lessen any fire and life safety or infection control provision of other codes or regulations; and

(D) Affect any structural integrity of the building;

(b) Approve the use of alternative materials, designs, and methods when:

(i) The birth center complies with subsection (2) of this section; and

(ii) After review and consideration, such alternative:

(A) Meets the intent and purpose of these rules; and

(B) Is at least equivalent to the methods prescribed in these rules.

(4) A birth center requesting an interpretation of rule contained in this chapter must submit a written request to the department. The request must specify the section or sections for which an interpretation is needed and details of the circumstances to which the rule is being applied. The birth center must provide any other information the department deems necessary.

(5) The department will, in response to a written request, send a written interpretation of a rule or regulation within thirty calendar days after the department has received complete information relevant to the requested interpretation.

(6) The department and birth center will keep a copy of each exemption or alternative granted or interpretation issued under this section on file and available at all times.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.46 RCW and RCW 43.70.040. WSR 07-07-075, § 246-329-025, filed 3/16/07, effective 4/16/07.]