

RCW 18.130.180 Unprofessional conduct. Except as provided in RCW 18.130.450, the following conduct, acts, or conditions constitute unprofessional conduct for any license holder under the jurisdiction of this chapter:

(1) The commission of any act involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, or corruption relating to the practice of the person's profession, whether the act constitutes a crime or not. If the act constitutes a crime, conviction in a criminal proceeding is not a condition precedent to disciplinary action. Upon such a conviction, however, the judgment and sentence is conclusive evidence at the ensuing disciplinary hearing of the guilt of the license holder of the crime described in the indictment or information, and of the person's violation of the statute on which it is based. For the purposes of this section, conviction includes all instances in which a plea of guilty or nolo contendere is the basis for the conviction and all proceedings in which the sentence has been deferred or suspended. Nothing in this section abrogates rights guaranteed under chapter 9.96A RCW;

(2) Misrepresentation or concealment of a material fact in obtaining a license or in reinstatement thereof;

(3) All advertising which is false, fraudulent, or misleading;

(4) Incompetence, negligence, or malpractice which results in injury to a patient or which creates an unreasonable risk that a patient may be harmed. The use of a nontraditional treatment by itself shall not constitute unprofessional conduct, provided that it does not result in injury to a patient or create an unreasonable risk that a patient may be harmed;

(5) Suspension, revocation, or restriction of the individual's license to practice any health care profession by competent authority in any state, federal, or foreign jurisdiction, a certified copy of the order, stipulation, or agreement being conclusive evidence of the revocation, suspension, or restriction;

(6) The possession, use, prescription for use, or distribution of controlled substances or legend drugs in any way other than for legitimate or therapeutic purposes, diversion of controlled substances or legend drugs, the violation of any drug law, or prescribing controlled substances for oneself;

(7) Violation of any state or federal statute or administrative rule regulating the profession in question, including any statute or rule defining or establishing standards of patient care or professional conduct or practice;

(8) Failure to cooperate with the disciplining authority by:

(a) Not furnishing any papers, documents, records, or other items;

(b) Not furnishing in writing a full and complete explanation covering the matter contained in the complaint filed with the disciplining authority;

(c) Not responding to subpoenas issued by the disciplining authority, whether or not the recipient of the subpoena is the accused in the proceeding; or

(d) Not providing reasonable and timely access for authorized representatives of the disciplining authority seeking to perform practice reviews at facilities utilized by the license holder;

(9) Failure to comply with an order issued by the disciplining authority or a stipulation for informal disposition entered into with the disciplining authority;

- (10) Aiding or abetting an unlicensed person to practice when a license is required;
- (11) Violations of rules established by any health agency;
- (12) Practice beyond the scope of practice as defined by law or rule;
- (13) Misrepresentation or fraud in any aspect of the conduct of the business or profession;
- (14) Failure to adequately supervise auxiliary staff to the extent that the consumer's health or safety is at risk;
- (15) Engaging in a profession involving contact with the public while suffering from a contagious or infectious disease involving serious risk to public health;
- (16) Promotion for personal gain of any unnecessary or inefficacious drug, device, treatment, procedure, or service;
- (17) Conviction of any gross misdemeanor or felony relating to the practice of the person's profession. For the purposes of this subsection, conviction includes all instances in which a plea of guilty or nolo contendere is the basis for conviction and all proceedings in which the sentence has been deferred or suspended. Nothing in this section abrogates rights guaranteed under chapter 9.96A RCW;
- (18) The offering, undertaking, or agreeing to cure or treat disease by a secret method, procedure, treatment, or medicine, or the treating, operating, or prescribing for any health condition by a method, means, or procedure which the licensee refuses to divulge upon demand of the disciplining authority;
- (19) The willful betrayal of a practitioner-patient privilege as recognized by law;
- (20) Violation of chapter 19.68 RCW or a pattern of violations of RCW 41.05.700(8), 48.43.735(8), 48.49.020, 48.49.030, 71.24.335(8), or 74.09.325(8);
- (21) Interference with an investigation or disciplinary proceeding by willful misrepresentation of facts before the disciplining authority or its authorized representative, or by the use of threats or harassment against any patient or witness to prevent them from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding or any other legal action, or by the use of financial inducements to any patient or witness to prevent or attempt to prevent him or her from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding;
- (22) Current misuse of:
 - (a) Alcohol;
 - (b) Controlled substances; or
 - (c) Legend drugs;
- (23) Abuse of a client or patient or sexual contact with a client or patient;
- (24) Acceptance of more than a nominal gratuity, hospitality, or subsidy offered by a representative or vendor of medical or health-related products or services intended for patients, in contemplation of a sale or for use in research publishable in professional journals, where a conflict of interest is presented, as defined by rules of the disciplining authority, in consultation with the department, based on recognized professional ethical standards;
- (25) Violation of RCW 18.130.420;
- (26) Performing conversion therapy on a patient under age eighteen;
- (27) Violation of RCW 18.130.430;

(28) Violation of RCW 18.130.460. [2023 c 192 § 2; 2023 c 122 § 4; 2021 c 157 § 7; 2020 c 187 § 2; 2019 c 427 § 17. Prior: 2018 c 300 § 4; 2018 c 216 § 2; 2010 c 9 § 5; 2008 c 134 § 25; 1995 c 336 § 9; 1993 c 367 § 22; prior: 1991 c 332 § 34; 1991 c 215 § 3; 1989 c 270 § 33; 1986 c 259 § 10; 1984 c 279 § 18.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2023 c 122 § 4 and by 2023 c 192 § 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Effective date—2023 c 192: See note following RCW 18.130.450.

Finding—Intent—Effective date—2023 c 122: See notes following RCW 9A.36.170.

Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 157: See note following RCW 74.09.327.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 427: See RCW 48.49.003 and 48.49.900.

Intent—Finding—2018 c 300: "(1) The legislature intends to regulate the professional conduct of licensed health care providers with respect to performing conversion therapy on patients under age eighteen.

(2) The legislature finds and declares that Washington has a compelling interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, and in protecting its minors against exposure to serious harms caused by conversion therapy." [2018 c 300 § 1.]

Construction—2018 c 300: "This act may not be construed to apply to:

(1) Speech that does not constitute performing conversion therapy by licensed health care providers on patients under age eighteen;

(2) Religious practices or counseling under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or organization that do not constitute performing conversion therapy by licensed health care providers on patients under age eighteen; and

(3) Nonlicensed counselors acting under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or organization." [2018 c 300 § 2.]

Intent—2010 c 9: See note following RCW 69.50.315.

Finding—Intent—Severability—2008 c 134: See notes following RCW 18.130.020.

Application to scope of practice—Captions not law—1991 c 332: See notes following RCW 18.130.010.

Severability—1986 c 259: See note following RCW 18.130.010.