

(Effective September 1, 2025)

WAC 246-366A-170 Variances. (1) School officials:

(a) May request a variance from requirements in these rules from the local health officer if they wish to use an alternative to meet the intent of these rules.

(i) The request for a variance must be in writing and describe:

(A) The specific requirement the variance is requested to replace;

(B) The alternative proposed to meet the specific requirement; and

(C) How the proposed alternative will provide at least a comparable level of protection as that provided by the specific requirement.

(ii) The request for a variance must include information as needed to support and clarify the request, such as material descriptions and specifications, engineering reports, photos, drawings, or sketches.

(b) May implement a variance only after obtaining approval from the local health officer.

(2) The local health officer shall:

(a) Initially review documents submitted with the request for a variance and inform school officials if additional information is required.

(b) Compare the health and safety aspects of the specific requirement being addressed and the variance proposal to determine if the proposal provides at least a comparable level of protection as that provided by the specific requirement.

(c) Provide written approval or denial of a request for a variance within sixty days of receiving a complete written request, unless school officials and the local health officer agree to a different timeline.

(d) Submit an annual written report to the department regarding all variance requests. The report must be submitted by March 1st of each year, beginning the third year after the effective date of this section, and cover the calendar period January through December of the previous year.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050. WSR 10-01-174, 10-12-018, 11-10-080, 13-09-040, 15-09-070, 17-14-055, 19-14-107, 21-14-056, 22-14-021, 23-16-005, and 24-14-089, § 246-366A-170, filed 12/22/09, 5/21/10, 5/3/11, 4/11/13, 4/15/15, 6/28/17, 7/2/19, 7/1/21, 6/24/22, 7/19/23, and 6/28/24, effective 9/1/25.]