

WSR 24-11-005
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Examining Board of Psychology)
[Filed May 2, 2024, 12:20 p.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Psychologist licensure requirements; implementation of legislation, lowering barriers to licensure, streamline credentialing, and other updates.

Amending chapter 246-924 WAC, Psychologists, and possibly repealing or creating new sections. The examining board of psychology (board) is considering rule amendments to implement recent legislation, including 2SHB 1724 (chapter 425, Laws of 2023) and E2SHB 2247 (chapter 371, Laws of 2024). To implement this legislation, the board will consider (1) lowering or removing barriers to entering and remaining in the behavioral health care workforce, (2) measures to streamline and shorten the credentialing process, (3) establishing a psychological associate license, (4) amending the licensure process for experienced psychologists licensed outside of Washington, and (5) other amendments to the chapter as appropriate. This may include streamlining the licensure process for graduates of non-American Psychological Associate (APA) programs and addressing other issues raised by the board, partners, or interested parties.

Additionally, this rule-making project will continue work started under WSR 23-06-041, under which the board began considering amendments related to licensure requirements, changes to the national examination, supervision requirements, the role of technology and telepsychology in the profession, additional options for sanctions, and other topics. These rule projects are being combined for efficiency, because both involve many of the same rule sections.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.83.050, 18.130.800; 2SHB 1724 (chapter 425, Laws of 2023), and E2SHB 2247 (chapter 371, Laws of 2024).

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: Rule making is necessary to implement recent legislation. During the 2023 legislative session, 2SHB 1724 specifically directed the board to complete rule making to remove barriers to entering and remaining in the health care workforce and to streamline and shorten the credentialing process. Later, during the 2024 legislative session, E2SHB 2247 created the new psychological associate license and granted the board rule-making authority to waive licensure requirements for experienced psychologists licensed in a different jurisdiction. Rule making is necessary to amend existing licensure requirements and comply with new legislation.

Additionally, rule making may be necessary to align current rules with new developments within the profession, such as current APA accreditation standards, changes to the national examination, the increasing use of remote technologies to provide education and supervision, telepsychology treatment, professional association requests for expanded sanction options, and other issues raised by the board and the public. The board may also consider making housekeeping changes to clarify and streamline the rules as appropriate.

Incorporating changes into rule will provide clarity for licensees and allow the board to consistently uphold standards that protect public safety.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: None.

Process for Developing New Rule: Collaborative rule making.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Nancy Delgado, P.O. Box 47850 Olympia, WA 98504-7850, phone 360-236-4951, TTY 711, email psychology@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in drafting the proposed rules. The board will be conducting rules workshops with interested parties and subject matter experts. The board will use the GovDelivery examining board of psychology list to inform interested parties of opportunities to provide input on proposed rule language.

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May 2, 2024
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Examining Board of Psychology