

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6884

C 20 L 10 E 1
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the practice of counseling.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove and Shin).

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background: In 2008 legislation was enacted which required registered counselors to obtain another health profession credential by July 1, 2010, in order to continue to practice counseling. The new law created several new categories of credentialed counselors. One of the new categories of counselor is the agency affiliated counselor. Agency affiliated counselors are registered health professionals who engage in counseling and are employed by an agency. Agency means an agency or facility operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington. Applicants for registration as an agency-affiliated counselor must provide documentation of their employment with an agency or an offer of employment.

Certain counseling practices are exempt from this counseling credential requirement: other credentialed professions practicing within their scope of practice, attorneys admitted to practice in Washington, counseling employees of federal agencies, trainees or students under supervision, counselors under the auspices of a religious denomination, and peer counselors and those who train them.

It is unclear which one of the counseling categories, created in the law enacted in 2008, employees of the juvenile courts who counsel families and juveniles are required to be credentialed under. However, they are not specifically exempt from the requirements established in 18.19 RCW.

Summary: Juvenile probation officers and juvenile court employees who provide evidence based programs approved by the juvenile rehabilitation administration are defined as agency affiliated counselors. This means they must meet any requirements as set in rules developed by the Department of Health in collaboration with the county that employs them and the juvenile rehabilitation administration of the Department of Social and Health Services.

Votes on Final Passage:

First Special Session

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Senate 40 0
House 82 8

Effective: April 13, 2010