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**HOUSE BILL 2015**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Senn, Schmick, Ryu, Reed, Ormsby, Callan, Macri, Doglio, Lekanoff, Reeves, and Tharinger

AN ACT Relating to incentivizing adult family homes to increase bed capacity to seven or eight beds; amending RCW 70.128.066 and 70.128.070; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 70.128.066 and 2020 c 220 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) An applicant requesting to increase bed capacity to seven or eight beds must successfully demonstrate to the department financial solvency and management experience for the home under its ownership and the ability to meet other relevant safety, health, and operating standards pertaining to the operation of an eight bed home, including the ability to meet the needs of all current and prospective residents and ways to mitigate the potential impact of vehicular traffic related to the operation of the home.

(2) The department may only accept and process an application to increase the bed capacity to seven or eight beds when:

(a) A period of no less than twenty-four months has passed since the issuance of the initial adult family home license;

(b) The home has been licensed for six residents for at least twelve months prior to application;

(c) The home has completed two full inspections that have resulted in no enforcement actions. For adult family homes applying to increase bed capacity under this section prior to January 1, 2026, the department may:

(i) Complete the first inspection upon receipt of an application to increase bed capacity if the home has otherwise met the requirements of this section.

(ii) Complete a second inspection upon receipt of an application to increase bed capacity if at least six months have passed since the first inspection;

(d) The home has submitted an attestation that an increase in the number of beds will not adversely affect the health, safety, or quality of life of current residents of the home;

(e) The home has demonstrated to the department the ability to comply with the emergency evacuation standards established by the department in rule;

(f) The home has a residential sprinkler system in place in order to serve residents who require assistance during an evacuation; and

(g) The home has paid any fees associated with licensure or additional inspections.

(3) The department shall accept and process applications under RCW 70.128.060(13) for a seven or eight bed adult family home only if:

(a) The new provider is a provider of a currently licensed adult family home that has been licensed for a period of no less than twenty-four months since the issuance of the initial adult family home license;

(b) The new provider's current adult family home has been licensed for six or more residents for at least twelve months prior to application; and

(c) The adult family home has completed at least two full inspections, and the most recent two full inspections have resulted in no enforcement actions.

(4) Prior to issuing a license to operate a seven or eight bed adult family home, the department shall:

(a) Notify the local jurisdiction in which the home is located, in writing, of the applicant's request to increase bed capacity, and allow the local jurisdiction to provide any recommendations to the department as to whether or not the department should approve the applicant's request to increase its bed capacity to seven or eight beds; and

(b) Conduct an inspection to determine compliance with licensing standards and the ability to meet the needs of eight residents.

(5) In addition to the consideration of other criteria established in this section, the department shall consider comments received from current residents of the adult family home related to the quality of care and quality of life offered by the home, as well as their views regarding the addition of one or two more residents.

(6) Upon application for an initial seven or eight bed adult family home, a home must provide at least sixty days' notice to all residents and the residents' designated representatives that the home has applied for a license to admit up to seven or eight residents before admitting a seventh resident. The notice must be in writing and written in a manner or language that is understood by the residents and the residents' designated representatives.

(7) In the event of serious noncompliance in a seven or eight bed adult family home, in addition to, or in lieu of, the imposition of one or more actions listed in RCW 70.128.160(2), the department may revoke the adult family home's authority to accept more than six residents.

**Sec.**  RCW 70.128.070 and 2021 c 203 s 13 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A license shall remain valid unless voluntarily surrendered, suspended, or revoked in accordance with this chapter.

(2)(a) Homes applying for a license shall be inspected at the time of licensure.

(b)(i) Homes licensed by the department shall be inspected at least every eighteen months, with an annual average of fifteen months. However, an adult family home may be allowed to continue without inspection for two years if the adult family home had no inspection citations for the past three consecutive inspections and has received no written notice of violations resulting from complaint investigations during that same time period.

(ii) For adult family homes applying to increase bed capacity under RCW 70.128.066 prior to January 1, 2026, the department may:

(A) Complete the first inspection upon receipt of an application to increase bed capacity if the home has otherwise met the requirements of this section.

(B) Complete a second inspection upon receipt of an application to increase bed capacity if at least six months have passed since the first inspection.

(c) The department may make an unannounced inspection of a licensed home at any time to assure that the home and provider are in compliance with this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter.

(d) If a pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of emergency prevents the department from completing inspections according to the timeline in this subsection, the department shall adopt rules to reestablish inspection timelines based on the length of time since last inspection, compliance history of each facility, and immediate health or safety concerns.

(i) Rules adopted under this subsection (2)(d) are effective until the termination of the pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of emergency or until the department determines that all facility inspections are occurring according to time frames established in (b) of this subsection, whichever is later. Once the department determines a rule adopted under this subsection (2)(d) is no longer necessary, it must repeal the rule under RCW 34.05.353.

(ii) Within 12 months of the termination of the pandemic, natural disaster, or declared state of emergency, the department shall conduct a review of inspection compliance with (b) of this subsection and provide the legislature with a report.

(3) If the department finds that the home is not in compliance with this chapter, it shall require the home to correct any violations as provided in this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

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