
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5118

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Valdez, Orwall, Nobles, Saldaña, and Stanford)

READ FIRST TIME 02/18/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to updating the requirements for the clinical
2 experience license for international medical graduates; and amending
3 RCW 18.71.095.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.71.095 and 2023 c 14 s 1 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The commission may, without examination, issue a limited license
8 to persons who possess the qualifications set forth herein:

9 (1) The commission may, upon the written request of the secretary
10 of the department of social and health services, the secretary of
11 children, youth, and families, or the secretary of corrections, issue
12 a limited license to practice medicine in this state to persons who
13 have been accepted for employment by the department of social and
14 health services, the department of children, youth, and families, or
15 the department of corrections as physicians; who are licensed to
16 practice medicine in another state of the United States or in the
17 country of Canada or any province or territory thereof; and who meet
18 all of the qualifications for licensure set forth in RCW 18.71.050.

19 Such license shall permit the holder thereof to practice medicine
20 only in connection with patients, residents, or inmates of the state
21 institutions under the control and supervision of the secretary of

1 the department of social and health services, the department of
2 children, youth, and families, or the department of corrections.

3 (2) The commission may issue a limited license to practice
4 medicine in this state to persons who have been accepted for
5 employment by a county or city health department as physicians; who
6 are licensed to practice medicine in another state of the United
7 States or in the country of Canada or any province or territory
8 thereof; and who meet all of the qualifications for licensure set
9 forth in RCW 18.71.050.

10 Such license shall permit the holder thereof to practice medicine
11 only in connection with his or her duties in employment with the city
12 or county health department.

13 (3) Upon receipt of a completed application showing that the
14 applicant meets all of the requirements for licensure set forth in
15 RCW 18.71.050 except for completion of two years of postgraduate
16 medical training, and that the applicant has been appointed as a
17 resident physician in a program of postgraduate clinical training in
18 this state approved by the commission, the commission may issue a
19 limited license to a resident physician. Such license shall permit
20 the resident physician to practice medicine only in connection with
21 his or her duties as a resident physician and shall not authorize the
22 physician to engage in any other form of practice. Each resident
23 physician shall practice medicine only under the supervision and
24 control of a physician licensed in this state, but such supervision
25 and control shall not be construed to necessarily require the
26 personal presence of the supervising physician at the place where
27 services are rendered.

28 (4) (a) Upon nomination by the dean of an accredited school of
29 medicine in the state of Washington or the chief executive officer of
30 a hospital or other appropriate health care facility licensed in the
31 state of Washington, the commission may issue a limited license to a
32 physician applicant invited to serve as a teaching-research member of
33 the institution's instructional staff if the sponsoring institution
34 and the applicant give evidence that he or she has graduated from a
35 recognized medical school and has been licensed or otherwise
36 privileged to practice medicine at his or her location of origin.
37 Such license shall permit the recipient to practice medicine only
38 within the confines of the instructional program specified in the
39 application and shall terminate whenever the holder ceases to be
40 involved in that program, or at the end of one year, whichever is

1 earlier. Upon request of the applicant and the institutional
2 authority, the license may be renewed. The holder of a teaching
3 research license under this subsection (4)(a) is eligible for full
4 licensure if the following conditions are met:

5 (i) If the applicant has not graduated from a school of medicine
6 located in any state, territory, or possession of the United States,
7 the District of Columbia, or the Dominion of Canada, the applicant
8 must satisfactorily pass the certification process by the educational
9 commission for foreign medical graduates;

10 (ii) The applicant has successfully completed the exam
11 requirements set forth by the commission by rule;

12 (iii) The applicant has the ability to read, write, speak,
13 understand, and be understood in the English language at a level
14 acceptable for performing competent medical care in all practice
15 settings;

16 (iv) The applicant has continuously held a position of associate
17 professor or higher at an accredited Washington state medical school
18 for no less than three years; and

19 (v) The applicant has had no disciplinary action taken in the
20 previous five years.

21 (b) Upon nomination by the dean of an accredited school of
22 medicine in the state of Washington or the chief executive officer of
23 any hospital or appropriate health care facility licensed in the
24 state of Washington, the commission may issue a limited license to an
25 applicant selected by the sponsoring institution to be enrolled in
26 one of its designated departmental or divisional fellowship programs
27 provided that the applicant shall have graduated from a recognized
28 medical school and has been granted a license or other appropriate
29 certificate to practice medicine in the location of the applicant's
30 origin. Such license shall permit the holder only to practice
31 medicine within the confines of the fellowship program to which he or
32 she has been appointed and, upon the request of the applicant and the
33 sponsoring institution, the license may be renewed by the commission.

34 All persons licensed under this section shall be subject to the
35 jurisdiction of the commission to the same extent as other members of
36 the medical profession, in accordance with this chapter and chapter
37 18.130 RCW.

38 Persons applying for licensure and renewing licenses pursuant to
39 this section shall comply with administrative procedures,
40 administrative requirements, and fees determined as provided in RCW

1 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. Any person who obtains a limited license
2 pursuant to this section may apply for licensure under this chapter,
3 but shall submit a new application form and comply with all other
4 licensing requirements of this chapter.

5 ~~(5) ((The commission may issue a time-limited clinical experience
6 license to an applicant who does not qualify for licensure under RCW
7 18.71.050 or chapter 18.71B RCW and who meets the requirements
8 established by the commission in rule for the purpose of gaining
9 clinical experience at an approved facility or program.~~

10 ~~(6))~~ (a) Upon nomination by the chief medical officer of any
11 hospital, appropriate medical practice or physician employment group
12 located in the state of Washington, the department of social and
13 health services, the department of children, youth, and families, the
14 department of corrections, or a county or city health department, the
15 commission may issue a limited license to an international medical
16 graduate for the purpose of gaining clinical experience if the
17 applicant:

18 (i) ~~((Has been a Washington state resident for at least one year;~~
19 ~~(ii))~~ Provides proof the applicant is certified by the
20 educational commission for foreign medical graduates;

21 ~~((iii))~~ (ii) Has passed ~~((all))~~ steps one and two of the United
22 States medical licensing examination; and

23 ~~((iv))~~ (iii) Submits to the commission background check process
24 required of applicants generally.

25 (b) The commission at its sole discretion may elect to waive
26 requirements in statute and rule when considering internationally
27 trained applicants experiencing hardship in providing required
28 documents for license applications. The commission may also require
29 alternate demonstrations of competence that may include examinations
30 or specialty assessments, a period of supervised practice, or other
31 tools as appropriate for evaluation of an applicant to the
32 satisfaction of the commission. Hardship scenarios the commission may
33 consider include, but are not limited to, refugee status, persecution
34 in the home country of the applicant due to beliefs, ethnicity, or
35 other demographic considerations. The commission may not consider as
36 a hardship the inability of the applicant to complete the
37 certification and examination processes administered by the
38 educational commission on foreign medical graduates or the failure of
39 required examinations.

40 (c) A license holder under this subsection may only practice:

1 (i) Under the supervision and control of a physician who is
2 licensed in this state under this chapter or chapter 18.57 RCW and is
3 of the same or substantially similar clinical specialty; and

4 (ii) Within the nominating facility or organization.

5 ~~((e))~~ (d) A license holder must file with the commission a
6 practice agreement between the license holder and the supervising
7 physician who is of the same or substantially similar clinical
8 specialty prior to beginning practice under this license.

9 ~~((d))~~ (e) A supervising physician may supervise no more than
10 ~~((two))~~ four license holders under this subsection unless the
11 commission grants a request to increase this limit.

12 ~~((e))~~ (f) A limited license issued under this subsection is
13 valid for two years and may be renewed ~~((once))~~ three times by the
14 commission upon application for renewal by the nominating entity for
15 a total of eight years. Prior to the third renewal, the applicant
16 must attest to the commission that they applied to one or more
17 residency programs.

18 ~~((f))~~ (g) The scope of practice of an individual licensed and
19 practicing under authority of this license shall be defined in the
20 practice agreement between the supervising physician and the
21 licensee. For purposes of medical practice, employment role
22 definition, malpractice coverage, credentialing, and insurance
23 billing for plans described in, but not limited to, Title 48 RCW, the
24 licensee shall be considered a full scope physician, unless
25 disciplinary action limits the scope of the license held by the
26 licensee or the supervising physician.

27 (h) All persons licensed under this subsection are subject to the
28 jurisdiction of the commission to the same extent as other members of
29 the medical profession, in accordance with this chapter and chapter
30 18.130 RCW.

31 ~~((g))~~ (i) Persons applying for licensure and renewing licenses
32 under this subsection shall comply with administrative procedures,
33 administrative requirements, and fees determined as provided in RCW
34 43.70.250 and 43.70.280.

35 ~~((h))~~ (j) The supervising physician shall retain professional
36 and personal responsibility for any act which constitutes the
37 practice of medicine as defined in RCW 18.71.011 or the practice of
38 osteopathic medicine and surgery as defined in RCW 18.57.001 when

1 performed by an international medical graduate practicing under their
2 supervision.

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