
SENATE BILL 5185

State of Washington

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By Senators Saldaña, Cortes, Cleveland, Wellman, Stanford, Nguyen, Chapman, Orwall, Dhingra, Valdez, and Riccelli

Prefiled 01/08/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing preceptorship and hardship
2 pathways to medical practice for international medical graduates;
3 amending RCW 18.71.051; and adding a new section to chapter 18.71
4 RCW.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.71.051 and 2020 c 325 s 4 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) Applicants for licensure to practice medicine who have
9 graduated from a school of medicine located outside of the states,
10 territories, and possessions of the United States, the District of
11 Columbia, or the Dominion of Canada, shall file an application for
12 licensure with the commission on a form prepared by the secretary
13 with the approval of the commission. (~~Each applicant~~) The
14 commission recognizes as equivalent to the United States medical
15 school accreditation and national medical licensure examination
16 standards the Canadian medical school accreditation and Canadian
17 national medical licensure exam.

18 (2) Applicants shall furnish proof satisfactory to the commission
19 of the following:

1 (a) That (~~he or she has~~) they have completed in a school of
2 medicine a resident course of professional instruction equivalent to
3 that required in this chapter for applicants generally;

4 (~~(i) Except as provided in (b) (ii) of this subsection, that~~
5 ~~he or she meets~~) That they meet all the requirements which must be
6 met by graduates of the United States and Canadian schools of
7 medicine except that (~~he or she~~) they need not have graduated from
8 a school of medicine approved by the commission;

9 (~~(ii) An applicant for licensure under this section is not~~
10 ~~required to meet the requirements of RCW 18.71.050(1) (b) if he or she~~
11 ~~furnishes proof satisfactory to the commission that he or she has:~~

12 ~~(A) (I) Been admitted as a permanent immigrant to the United~~
13 ~~States as a person of exceptional ability in sciences pursuant to the~~
14 ~~rules of the United States department of labor; or~~

15 ~~(II) Been issued a permanent immigration visa; and~~

16 ~~(B) Received multiple sclerosis certified specialist status from~~
17 ~~the consortium of multiple sclerosis centers; and~~

18 ~~(C) Successfully completed at least twenty-four months of~~
19 ~~training in multiple sclerosis at an educational institution in the~~
20 ~~United States with an accredited residency program in neurology or~~
21 ~~rehabilitation;))~~

22 (c) That (~~he or she has~~) they have satisfactorily passed the
23 examination given by the educational council for foreign medical
24 graduates or (~~has~~) have met the requirements in lieu thereof as set
25 forth in rules adopted by the commission;

26 (d) That (~~he or she has~~) they have the ability to read, write,
27 speak, understand, and be understood in the English language.

28 (~~(2)~~) (3) An applicant may obtain an exceptional qualification
29 waiver, waiving requirements determined by the commission in rule or
30 statute, if they possess an acceptable body of work related to
31 research, medical excellence, or employment, and have the
32 recommendation of other national or international experts in the same
33 specialty or field.

34 (4) The commission, at its sole discretion, may elect to waive
35 requirements in statute and rule when considering internationally
36 trained applicants experiencing hardship in providing required
37 documents for license applications. The commission may also require
38 alternate demonstrations of competence that may include examinations
39 or specialty assessments, a period of supervised practice, or other
40 tools as appropriate for evaluation of an applicant to the

1 satisfaction of the commission. Hardship scenarios the commission may
2 consider include, but may not be limited to, refugee status,
3 persecution in the home country of the applicant due to beliefs,
4 ethnicity, or other demographic considerations. The commission may
5 not consider as a hardship the inability of the applicant to complete
6 the certification and examination processes administered by the
7 educational commission on foreign medical graduates or the failure of
8 required examinations.

9 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 18.71
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 (1) The commission may create or approve a preceptorship pathway
12 for international medical graduates to qualify for full and
13 unrestricted physician and surgeon licensure under this chapter.
14 Licensure under this pathway does not require completion of the
15 postgraduate training requirement specified in RCW 18.71.050(1)(b).
16 An individual licensed and practicing under authority of this pathway
17 is a full scope licensed physician for all purposes including medical
18 practice, employment role definition, malpractice coverage,
19 credentialing, and insurance billing for plans described in, but not
20 limited to, Title 48 RCW, unless disciplinary action limits the scope
21 of a particular license. Any scope limitations may also be imposed at
22 the practice level consistent with standard credentialing processes
23 and practice agreements between the licensee and the supervising
24 physician.

25 (2) An internationally trained medical graduate not currently
26 licensed by the commission may demonstrate competence to the
27 commission for eventual independent practice and licensure through a
28 required period of supervised practice, supervisor assessments, and
29 attestation of the supervisor submitted to the commission.

30 (a) The pathway consists of the following elements:

31 (i) Licensure under RCW 18.71.095(6) or be granted a hardship
32 waiver under RCW 18.71.051(3) for licensure under RCW 18.71.095(6);

33 (ii) Full-time practice as a physician in a clinical location or
34 locations acceptable to the commission for not less than four years
35 or 48 months; and

36 (iii) A satisfactory rating in all categories by the supervising
37 physician with a commission approved clinical assessment evaluation.

38 (b) Upon satisfaction of (a) of this subsection, the licensee may
39 apply for a license issued under this chapter by providing the

1 required documentation of a minimum of 48 months of supervised full-
2 time clinical practice at the level of a physician, satisfactory
3 clinical assessment evaluations for the period of supervised practice
4 required in (a)(ii) of this subsection, an attestation from the
5 supervising physician, a written endorsement from the medical
6 director of the practice site if different than the supervising
7 physician, proof of board certification, and supplying any further
8 information required by the commission. The commission accepts only
9 ABMS and AAGP board certifications.

10 (3) For exceptionally qualified international medical graduates,
11 the commission may establish an abbreviated assessment program to
12 determine competence and skill level for the purposes of issuing a
13 full and unrestricted license.

14 (4) The commission may conduct rule making to implement the
15 requirements of this section.

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