S-4614.1

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6282

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Senate Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Nobles, Conway, Cortes, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Lovick, Orwall, Valdez, and C. Wilson)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/26.

AN ACT Relating to requiring state registered apprenticeships in the building and construction trades to provide behavioral health and wellness training; amending RCW 18.106.070 and 19.28.211; and adding a new section to chapter 49.04 RCW.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 18.106.070 and 2024 c 97 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The department shall issue a certificate of competency to all applicants who have passed the examination and have paid the fee for the certificate. The certificate may include a photograph of the holder. The certificate shall bear the date of issuance, and be renewed every three years, upon application, on or before the birthdate of the holder. The department shall renew a certificate of competency if the applicant: ((~~(a)~~)) (i) Pays the renewal fee assessed by the department; and ((~~(b)~~)) (ii) during the past three years has completed twenty-four hours of continuing education approved by the department with the advice of the advisory board, including four hours related to electrical safety. For holders of the specialty plumber certificate under RCW 18.106.010(14)(c), the continuing education may comprise both electrical and plumbing education with a minimum of twelve of the required twenty-four hours

of continuing education in plumbing. If a person fails to renew the certificate by the renewal date, he or she must pay a doubled fee. If the person does not renew the certificate within ninety days of the renewal date, he or she must retake the examination and pay the examination fee.

The journey level plumber, specialty plumber, and residential service plumber certificates of competency, the medical gas piping installer endorsement, and the temporary permit provided for in this chapter grant the holder the right to engage in the work of plumbing as a journey level plumber, specialty plumber, residential service plumber, or medical gas piping installer, in accordance with their provisions throughout the state and within any of its political subdivisions on any job or any employment without additional proof of competency or any other license or permit or fee to engage in the work. This section does not preclude employees from adhering to a union security clause in any employment where such a requirement exists.

(b) For continuing education hours required under this subsection (1), an applicant may count up to four completed hours in behavioral health and wellness training approved by the department towards the total number of required hours. The training must include at least two hours of instruction and must cover the following topics: Destigmatizing behavioral health and supporting wellness; recognizing signs of distress; suicide prevention; substance use disorder awareness and prevention; and providing peer support and connecting to resources.

(2) A person who is indentured to an apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW for the plumbing construction trade or who is learning the plumbing construction trade may work in the plumbing construction trade if supervised by a certified journey level plumber or a certified specialty plumber in that plumber's specialty. All apprentices and individuals learning the plumbing construction trade shall obtain a plumbing training certificate from the department. The certificate shall authorize the holder to learn the plumbing construction trade while under the direct supervision of a journey level plumber or a specialty plumber working in his or her specialty. The certificate may include a photograph of the holder. The holder of the plumbing training certificate shall renew the certificate annually. At the time of renewal, the holder shall provide the department with an accurate list of the holder's

employers in the plumbing construction industry for the previous year and the number of hours worked for each employer. A fee shall be charged for the issuance or renewal of the certificate. The department shall set the fee by rule. The fee shall cover but not exceed the cost of administering and enforcing the trainee certification and supervision requirements of this chapter.

(3)(a) Trainee supervision shall consist of a trainee under the control of either a journey level plumber, residential service plumber, or an appropriate specialty plumber who has an applicable certificate of competency issued under this chapter. Subject to the ratio of trainees in subsection (4) of this section, either a journey level plumber, residential service plumber, or an appropriate specialty plumber shall be:

(i) On the same jobsite as the trainee for a minimum of seventy-five percent of each working day unless otherwise provided in this chapter; or

(ii) Available via mobile phone or similar device in a manner that allows both audio and visual direction to the trainee from the supervising plumber. Remote trainee supervision using these types of technology is only permitted in cases that meet the following criteria:

(A) The trainee has more than two thousand hours of training;

(B) The supervising plumber is no more than forty miles from the jobsite; and

(C) The scope of work on the trainee's jobsite is residential service plumbing in a residential structure and limited to the scope of the residential service plumber.

(b) An individual who has a current training certificate and who has successfully completed or is currently enrolled in an approved apprenticeship program or in a technical school program in the plumbing construction trade in a school approved by the workforce training and education coordinating board, may work without direct on-site supervision during the last six months of meeting the practical experience requirements of this chapter.

(4)(a) Until December 31, 2028, the ratio of trainees to certified journey level, residential service, or specialty plumbers working on a jobsite must be:

(i) Not more than three trainees, each working on a separate residential structure jobsite performing residential service plumbing

only in a like-in-kind manner for every certified specialty plumber or journey level plumber working as a specialty plumber;

(ii) Not more than one trainee working on any one jobsite for every certified journey level plumber working as a journey level plumber;

(iii) Not more than one trainee working on any one jobsite for every certified residential service plumber; and

(iv) Not more than three trainees working on a residential construction jobsite performing plumbing installation for every certified specialty plumber or journey level plumber working as a specialty plumber.

(b) After December 31, 2028, not more than two trainees may work on any residential structure jobsite for every certified specialty plumber or journey level plumber working as a specialty plumber.

(5) An individual who has a current training certificate and who has successfully completed or is currently enrolled in a medical gas piping installer training course approved by the department may work on medical gas piping systems if the individual is under the direct supervision of a certified medical gas piping installer who holds a medical gas piping installer endorsement one hundred percent of a working day on a one-to-one ratio.

(6) The training to become a certified plumber must include not less than sixteen hours of classroom training established by the director with the advice of the advisory board. The classroom training must include, but not be limited to, electrical wiring safety, grounding, bonding, and other related items plumbers need to know to work under this chapter.

(7) All persons who are certified plumbers before January 1, 2003, are deemed to have received the classroom training required in subsection (6) of this section.

(8)(a) The department shall instruct the advisory board of plumbers to convene a subgroup that includes the statewide association representing plumbing, heating, and cooling contractors; the union representing plumbers and pipefitters; the association representing plumbing contractors who employ union plumbers and pipefitters; and other directly affected stakeholders after the completion of the 2023 legislative session, the 2027 legislative session, and every three years thereafter.

(b) The work group shall evaluate the effects that the trainee ratio changes have had on the industry, including public safety and

industry response to public demand for plumbing services. The work group shall determine a sustainable plan for maintaining sufficient numbers of plumbers and trainees within the plumbing workforce to safely meet the needs of the public. The report is due to the standing labor committees of the legislature before December 1st of each year that the work group convenes. The work group shall conclude on receipt of the report by the legislature. Within current funding appropriated to the department, the department must reimburse each member of the work group in accordance with the provisions of RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 for each day in which the member is actually engaged in attendance of meetings of the advisory board.

Sec. 2. RCW 19.28.211 and 2025 c 233 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall issue a certificate of competency to all applicants who have passed the examination provided in RCW 19.28.201, met the in-class education requirements of RCW 19.28.205 if applicable, and who have complied with RCW 19.28.161 through 19.28.271 and the rules adopted under this chapter. The certificate may include a photograph of the holder. The certificate shall bear the date of issuance, and shall expire on the holder's birthday. The certificate shall be renewed every three years, upon application, on or before the holder's birthdate. A fee shall be assessed for each certificate and for each annual renewal.

(2) If the certificate holder demonstrates to the department that he or she has satisfactorily completed an annual eight-hour continuing education course, the certificate may be renewed without examination by appropriate application unless the certificate has been revoked, suspended, or not renewed within ninety days after the expiration date. For pump and irrigation or domestic pump specialty electricians, the continuing education course may combine both electrical and plumbing education provided that there is a minimum of four hours of electrical training in the course.

(a) The contents and requirements for satisfactory completion of the continuing education course shall be determined by the director and approved by the board.

(b) For continuing education requirements, an applicant may count up to four completed hours in behavioral health and wellness training approved by the department towards the total number of required hours. The training must include at least two hours of instruction

and must cover the following topics: Destigmatizing behavioral health and supporting wellness; recognizing signs of distress; suicide prevention; substance use disorder awareness and prevention; and providing peer support and connecting to resources.

(c) The department shall accept proof of a certificate holder's satisfactory completion of a continuing education course offered in another state as meeting the requirements for maintaining a current Washington state certificate of competency if the department is satisfied the course is comparable in nature to that required in Washington state for maintaining a current certificate of competency.

(3) If the certificate is not renewed before the expiration date, the individual shall pay twice the usual fee. The department shall set the fees by rule for issuance and renewal of a certificate of competency. The fees shall cover but not exceed the costs of issuing the certificates and of administering and enforcing the electrician certification requirements of this chapter.

(4)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, the certificates of competency and temporary permits provided for in this chapter grant the holder the right to work in the electrical construction trade as a master electrician, journey level electrician, or specialty electrician in accordance with their provisions throughout the state and within any of its political subdivisions without additional proof of competency or any other license, permit, or fee to engage in such work.

(b) Persons performing installation and maintenance work as provided in RCW 19.28.285 must also meet the certification requirements of RCW 19.28.285.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Beginning July 1, 2027, an apprenticeship program for a building or construction trade occupation approved by the apprenticeship council under this chapter must provide apprentices with behavioral health and wellness training and must require apprentices to successfully complete the training. Any new or updated apprenticeship program standards for a building or construction trade occupation approved by the council under this chapter on or after July 1, 2027, must include the training hours under this section.

(2)(a) The behavioral health and wellness training must include at least two hours of instruction. These hours are in addition to,

and do not supplant, the minimum related or supplemental instruction hours required for the applicable program.

(b) The behavioral health and wellness training must cover the following topics: (i) Destigmatizing behavioral health and supporting wellness; (ii) recognizing signs of distress; (iii) suicide prevention; (iv) substance use disorder awareness and prevention; and (v) providing peer support and connecting to resources.

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