

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

HOUSE BILL 2309

Chapter 38, Laws of 2026

69th Legislature
2026 Regular Session

STATE EMPLOYMENT—POSTGRADUATE DEGREES

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 11, 2026

Passed by the House January 29, 2026
Yeas 97 Nays 0

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of
Representatives**

Passed by the Senate March 4, 2026
Yeas 48 Nays 0

DENNY HECK

President of the Senate

Approved March 14, 2026 11:06 AM

BOB FERGUSON

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **HOUSE BILL 2309** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

Chief Clerk

FILED

March 16, 2026

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

HOUSE BILL 2309

Passed Legislature - 2026 Regular Session

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Leavitt, Rude, Reed, Zahn, Kloba, Doglio, Ormsby,
and Jacobsen; by request of Office of Financial Management

Prefiled 01/07/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee
on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing barriers to state employment by
2 eliminating postgraduate degree requirements that are unnecessary;
3 and reenacting and amending RCW 41.06.157.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 41.06.157 and 2024 c 330 s 11 and 2024 c 70 s 2 are
6 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

7 (1) To promote the most effective use of the state's workforce
8 and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of
9 services to the citizens of the state, the director shall adopt and
10 maintain a comprehensive classification plan for all positions in the
11 classified service. The classification plan must:

12 (a) Be simple and streamlined;

13 (b) Support state agencies in responding to changing
14 technologies, economic and social conditions, and the needs of its
15 citizens;

16 (c) Value workplace diversity;

17 (d) Facilitate the reorganization and decentralization of
18 governmental services;

19 (e) Enhance mobility and career advancement opportunities;

20 (f) Consider rates in other public employment and private
21 employment in the state;

1 (g) Not require a two-year (~~or~~), four-year, or postgraduate
2 college degree as the only way to demonstrate qualifications for the
3 role unless that degree is required by law for an employee to perform
4 the essential functions of a classification; and

5 (h) Recognize that persons legally authorized to work in the
6 United States under federal law, including deferred action for
7 childhood arrivals recipients, are eligible for employment unless
8 prohibited by other state or federal law.

9 (2) An appointing authority and an employee organization
10 representing classified employees of the appointing authority for
11 collective bargaining purposes may jointly request the director of
12 financial management to initiate a classification study.

13 (3) For institutions of higher education and related boards, the
14 director may adopt special salary ranges to be competitive with
15 positions of a similar nature in the state or the locality in which
16 the institution of higher education or related board is located.

17 (4) The director may undertake salary surveys of positions in
18 other public and private employment to establish market rates. Any
19 salary survey information collected from private employers which
20 identifies a specific employer with salary rates which the employer
21 pays to its employees shall not be subject to public disclosure under
22 chapter 42.56 RCW.

Passed by the House January 29, 2026.
Passed by the Senate March 4, 2026.
Approved by the Governor March 14, 2026.
Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 16, 2026.

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