

**RCW 48.21.160 Chemical dependency benefits—Legislative**

**declaration.** The legislature recognizes that chemical dependency is a disease and, as such, warrants the same attention from the health care industry as other similarly serious diseases warrant; the legislature further recognizes that health insurance contracts and contracts for health care services include inconsistent provisions providing benefits for the treatment of chemical dependency. In order to assist the many citizens of this state who suffer from the disease of chemical dependency, and who are presently effectively precluded from obtaining adequate coverage for medical assistance under the terms of their health insurance contract or health care service contract, the legislature hereby declares that provisions providing benefits for the treatment of chemical dependency shall be included in new contracts and that this section, RCW 48.21.180, 48.21.190, 48.44.240, 48.46.350, and RCW 48.21.195, 48.44.245, and 48.46.355 are necessary for the protection of the public health and safety. Nothing in this section, RCW 48.21.180, 48.21.190, 48.44.240, 48.46.350, and RCW 48.21.195, 48.44.245, and 48.46.355 shall be construed to relieve any person of any civil or criminal liability for any act or omission that is the result of a chemical dependency or to grant any person with a chemical dependency any special right, privilege, or status under the law against discrimination, chapter 49.60 RCW. [1987 c 458 § 13; 1974 ex.s. c 119 § 1.]

**Effective date—1987 c 458 §§ 13-20:** "Sections 13 through 20 of this act shall take effect on January 1, 1988." [1987 c 458 § 24.]

**Severability—1987 c 458:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1987 c 458 § 25.]