

**WAC 182-551-2040 Face-to-face encounter requirements.** (1) The medicaid agency pays for home health services provided under this chapter only when the face-to-face encounter requirements in this section are met.

(2) For initiation of home health services, with the exception of medical equipment under WAC 182-551-2122, the face-to-face encounter must be related to the primary reason the client requires home health services and must occur within ninety days before or within the thirty days after the start of the services.

(3) For the initiation of medical equipment under WAC 182-551-2122, the face-to-face encounter must be related to the primary reason the client requires medical equipment and must occur no later than six months prior to the start of services.

(4) The face-to-face encounter may be conducted by the ordering physician, a nonphysician practitioner as described in WAC 182-500-0075, or the attending acute, or post-acute physician, for beneficiaries admitted to home health immediately after an acute or post-acute stay.

(5) If a nonphysician practitioner as described in WAC 182-500-0075 (or the attending physician when a client is discharged from an acute hospital stay) performs the face-to-face encounter, the nonphysician practitioner (or attending physician) must communicate the clinical findings of that face-to-face encounter to the ordering physician. Those clinical findings must be incorporated into a written or electronic document included in the client's medical record.

(6) For all home health services except medical equipment under WAC 182-551-2122, the physician responsible for ordering the services must:

(a) Document that the face-to-face encounter, which is related to the primary reason the client requires home health services, occurred within the required time frames described in subsection (2) of this section prior to the start of home health services; and

(b) Indicate the practitioner who conducted the encounter, and the date of the encounter.

(7) For medical equipment under WAC 182-551-2122, except as provided in (b) of this subsection, an ordering physician, a nonphysician practitioner as described in WAC 182-500-0075, except for certified nurse midwives, or the attending physician when a client is discharged from an acute hospital stay, must:

(a) Document that the face-to-face encounter, which is related to the primary reason the client requires home health services, occurred within the required time frames described in subsection (3) of this section prior to the start of home health services; and

(b) Indicate the practitioner who conducted the encounter, and the date of the encounter.

(8) The face-to-face encounter may occur through telemedicine. See WAC 182-551-2125.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021, 41.05.160 and 42 C.F.R. Section 440.70. WSR 18-24-023, § 182-551-2040, filed 11/27/18, effective 1/1/19.]