

**WSR 21-04-050**  
**PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

(Dental Quality Assurance Commission)  
[Filed January 27, 2021, 1:59 p.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: WAC 246-817-580 Novel coronavirus disease 2019 screening, the dental quality assurance commission (commission) is considering permanent rule making to allow dentists to delegate administration of novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) screening tests to registered dental assistants, licensed expanded function dental auxiliaries, and licensed dental hygienists with appropriate supervision and demonstration of competency.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.260.040, 18.260.070, 18.29.050, 18.32.002, and 18.32.0365.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, screening for the disease is essential in dental practice. Dentistry produces large amounts of aerosols and it is important for dentists to appropriately screen patients prior to dental treatment. Delegation of COVID-19 screening test of patients assists dentists by reducing their workload to effectively continue dental care to patients. Knowing whether a patient is positive for COVID-19 will assist dentists in appropriate oral health treatment planning for the patient.

As dental procedures are proceeding during this pandemic, there is an influx of patients needing dental care and a greater need of the dental workforce. Allowing dentists to delegate COVID-19 screening tests with supervision to appropriately credentialed dental staff, will allow dentists to provide safe dental care to more patients.

On October 23, 2020, the commission approved emergency rule making for COVID-19 screening tests. The commission intends for the emergency rule to be in place until the permanent rule is adopted.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: None.

Process for Developing New Rule: Collaborative rule making.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Jennifer Santiago, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504, phone 360-236-4893, fax 360-236-2901, TTY 711, email [jennifer.santiago@doh.wa.gov](mailto:jennifer.santiago@doh.wa.gov), website [www.doh.wa.gov/dental](http://www.doh.wa.gov/dental), [dental@doh.wa.gov](mailto:dental@doh.wa.gov).

Additional comments: Stakeholders may sign up for the program's interested parties list (GovDelivery) at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOH/subscriber/new>. All rule-making notices will be emailed via GovDelivery. Rule development will take place in open public meetings prior to a formal rule proposal and comment period.

January 27, 2021  
Trina Crawford  
Executive Director