

WSR 23-12-002
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Board of Massage)
[Filed May 24, 2023, 1:32 p.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: WAC 246-830-430 Education and training; the board of massage (board), in coordination with the department of health (department), is considering amendments to the education and training rule to include parameters on online and virtual education and adding health equity awareness training to initial licensure requirements for new massage licensees.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.108.025 and 18.108.085.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: To address the difficulties related to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic that impacted massage therapy schools. In March 2020, the board allowed all massage programs to continue to operate their board-approved program in a distance learning format upon approval by, and in accordance with, the workforce training and education coordinating board's requirements. Hybrid massage programs continue to operate, but no rules exist to guide a school on what topics or how many hours may be in a virtual/online/remote format versus what must be in person.

In 2021, the legislature passed ESSB 5229 concerning health equity continuing education for health care professionals, codified as RCW 43.70.613, which directs the rule-making authority for each health profession licensed under Title 18 RCW subject to continuing education to adopt rules requiring a licensee to complete health equity continuing education training at least once every four years. The board is addressing this in a current rules project initiated under a notice filed as WSR 23-01-132. In addition to requiring health equity courses for continuing education, the board would also like to consider adding health equity awareness to initial education and training requirements for licensure.

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 Megan Maxey, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4945, fax 360-236-2901, TTY 711, email megan.maxey@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov/massage, massage.therapy@doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in the drafting of the proposed rules. Rules workshops will be conducted with interested parties and subject matter experts. Existing GovDelivery lists and other known contact information will be used to inform interested parties of opportunities to provide input on proposed rule language. To find out more information about our rule making, visit www.doh.wa.gov. To subscribe to GovDelivery, please visit www.doh.wa.gov and select the "Subscribe" button at the bottom of the page. After signing in, please click open the box labeled "Health Systems Quality Assurance." Next, click open the box labeled "Health Professions" and then click on "Board of Massage." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions listed to receive information related to that specific profession.

May 24, 2023
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