

WSR 26-01-020
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Board of Nursing)
[Filed December 5, 2025, 7:52 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Nursing education programs. The Washington state board of nursing (board) is considering amendments to WAC 246-840-500 through 246-840-571 to clarify nursing education program requirements; significantly reduce the administrative burden on nursing programs while maintaining efficiency and adherence to minimum educational standards set by the board; remove barriers related to clinical placements and clinical faculty oversight; evaluate the minimum requirements for simulation education; and simplify processes for program expansion and the implementation of innovative delivery methods. The board also plans to address changes regarding nursing education programs resulting from legislation enacted during the 2026 legislative session.

This rule making is phase 3 of the board's review of chapter 246-840 WAC, conducted in accordance with the board's five-year formal rule review process under RCW 43.70.041. Phase 1 addresses licensing and continuing competency requirements for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses. Phase 2's focus is on rules for advanced practice and pain management, including the advanced registered nurse practitioner licensure rules. Phase 3, as noted above, concentrates on nursing education program standards. Phase 4 will cover practice standards and delegation guidelines. The overall goal of this review is to clarify and update outdated language, rewrite and reformat existing rules to reflect current best practices, and restructure sections as necessary.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.79.010 and 18.79.110.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: Regular review and revision of the nursing education rules are essential to ensure that regulatory standards keep pace with the evolving needs of the health care system, advances in education delivery, and workforce demands. Over time, existing rules can become outdated, overly complex, or burdensome, creating unnecessary administrative challenges for nursing programs and limiting flexibility in how education is delivered. Updating these regulations helps promote clarity, consistency, and efficiency, while maintaining high standards for nursing education and public safety. Through collaborative rule making, this effort engages interested parties to support innovation in teaching methods, streamline program oversight, and remove barriers that hinder clinical training opportunities, ultimately strengthening the preparation of future nurses.

RCW 43.70.041 requires a formal review process of existing rules every five years to simplify, improve, and streamline rules pertaining to health professions. As part of this review process, the board is considering amendments to nursing education program rules.

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 Jessilyn Dagum, P.O. Box 47864, Olympia, WA 98504-7864, phone 360-236-3538, fax 360-536-4738, TTY 711, email WABONRules@doh.wa.gov, website www.nursing.wa.gov.

Additional comments: The board will notify interested parties of rule making by posting information on the department of health website, the board website, and by use of GovDelivery. Interested parties may sign up to receive board rule-making notices at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOH/subscriber/new>. The board will hold virtual meetings at varying times to encourage participation.

December 5, 2025
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Board of Nursing