

## WSR 26-03-002

## PROPOSED RULES

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

(Dental Quality Assurance Commission)

[Filed January 7, 2026, 2:24 p.m.]

Original Notice.

Preproposal statement of inquiry was filed as WSR 24-15-022.

Title of Rule and Other Identifying Information: Dental licensure requirements; the dental quality assurance commission (commission) is proposing amendments to WAC 246-817-135 to remove requirements pertaining to federal or state tax numbers when applying for licensure without an examination. The commission is also proposing amendments to WAC 246-817-160 to explain the educational and training pathways that graduates of nonaccredited schools or programs must complete to obtain comprehensive dental training that meets minimum clinical competency requirements.

Hearing Location(s): On March 6, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., at the Washington State Department of Health, TC2 Room 166, 111 Israel Road S.E., Tumwater, WA 98501-5414; or via Zoom at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_bZ1Vu4\\_hSjedMRtMy3lM5A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bZ1Vu4_hSjedMRtMy3lM5A). Follow the Zoom link to register for the virtual hearing, which will give you instructions to either join the meeting on a device, or to call in to the meeting on the phone. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Date of Intended Adoption: March 6, 2026.

Submit Written Comments to: Debbie Gardner, Program Manager, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, email [dental@doh.wa.gov](mailto:dental@doh.wa.gov), <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/policyreview>, beginning the date and time of this filing, by February 24, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.

Assistance for Persons with Disabilities: Contact Debbie Gardner, program manager, phone 360-236-4893, TTY 711, email [dental@doh.wa.gov](mailto:dental@doh.wa.gov), by February 24, 2026.

Purpose of the Proposal and Its Anticipated Effects, Including Any Changes in Existing Rules: The commission is proposing amendments to WAC 246-817-135 to revise requirements related to federal or state tax numbers and WAC 246-817-160 to better explain the educational and training pathways that graduates of nonaccredited schools must complete to obtain comprehensive dental training that meets minimum clinical competency requirements.

To protect an applicant's privacy and security, the commission is proposing amending WAC 246-817-135 to remove the requirement of providing federal and state tax numbers from applications for licensure without an examination, as it is not necessary data to protect public health when meeting licensing requirements.

The commission has been receiving an increased number of applicants who have received training from nonaccredited schools or programs. Due to the varying degree of education and training from nonaccredited dental schools and programs, the commission is proposing amendments to WAC 246-817-160 to explain the educational and training pathways graduates of nonaccredited schools must complete to pursue licensure in Washington state.

Clinical education and training requirements were last reviewed by the commission in 2016. Providing clear standards will ensure that minimum clinical competency requirements are met and that graduates of nonaccredited schools obtain similar levels of comprehensive education

and training as dentists who graduate from Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) accredited schools.

The commission is proposing the following amendments to explain the pathways graduates of nonaccredited schools must complete to pursue licensure in Washington state:

- Successful completion of at least two years of predoctoral dental education obtained at a CODA-accredited dental school; or
- Successful completion of at least one additional CODA-accredited postdoctoral academic year of education in a general practice residency or advanced education in general dentistry residency.

Reasons Supporting Proposal: Rule making is necessary to remove barriers for dentists applying for licensure without examination and to provide clear educational and training pathways for graduates of nonaccredited schools. The proposed rule amendments meet the intent of the underlying statutes of establishing, monitoring, and enforcing qualifications for licensure and consistent standards of practice as part of the commission's purpose. Providing clear standards for dental licensure ensures appropriate comprehensive dental training to meet minimum competency requirements and best practices for patient safety.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 18.32.0365.

Statute Being Implemented: RCW 18.32.002, 18.32.0365, 18.32.040, 18.32.215, and 18.32.222.

Rule is not necessitated by federal law, federal or state court decision.

Name of Proponent: Dental quality assurance commission, governmental.

Name of Agency Personnel Responsible for Drafting, Implementation, and Enforcement: Debbie Gardner, 111 Israel Road S.E., Tumwater, WA 98501, 360-236-4893.

A school district fiscal impact statement is not required under RCW 28A.305.135.

A cost-benefit analysis is required under RCW 34.05.328. A preliminary cost-benefit analysis may be obtained by contacting Debbie Gardner, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4893, TTY 711, email dental@doh.wa.gov.

This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt from requirements of the Regulatory Fairness Act because the proposal:

Is exempt under RCW 19.85.025(3) as the rules adopt, amend, or repeal a procedure, practice, or requirement relating to agency hearings; or a filing or related process requirement for applying to an agency for a license or permit.

Is exempt under RCW 19.85.025(4).

Explanation of exemptions: The entire proposed rule is exempt under RCW 19.85.025(4) as it only affects the dental professional's license which does not meet the definition of "small business" in RCW 19.85.020. A portion of the rule, WAC 246-817-135, is exempt under RCW 34.05.310 (4)(g)(ii) because it repeals a requirement to submit proof of federal or state tax numbers for a dental licensure without examination.

Scope of exemption for rule proposal:

Is fully exempt.

January 7, 2026  
Bryan Swanson, DDS, Chair  
Dental Quality Assurance Commission

RDS-6362.6

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 21-01-215, filed 12/23/20, effective 1/23/21)

**WAC 246-817-135 Dental licensure without examination—Eligibility and application requirements.** For individuals holding a dentist credential in another U.S. state or territory, to be eligible for Washington state dental license without examination, the applicant must provide:

- (1) A completed application on forms provided by the secretary;
- (2) Applicable fees under WAC 246-817-990;
- (3) A verification by a U.S. state or territory board of dentistry (or equivalent authority) of an active credential to practice dentistry, without restrictions, and whether the applicant has been the subject of final or pending disciplinary action;
- (4) Proof of graduation from an approved dental school under WAC 246-817-110 (2) (a):
  - (a) The only acceptable proof is an official, posted transcript sent directly from such school;
  - (b) Graduates of nonapproved dental schools must meet the requirements under RCW 18.32.215 (1) (b).
- (5) Proof that the applicant is currently engaged in the practice of dentistry:
  - (a) Dentists serving in the United States federal services as described in RCW 18.32.030(2) must provide documentation from their commanding officer regarding length of service, duties and responsibilities, and any adverse actions or restrictions;
  - (b) Dentists employed by a dental school approved under WAC 246-817-110 (2) (a) must provide documentation from the dean or appropriate administrator of the institution regarding the length and terms of employment, duties and responsibilities, and any adverse actions or restrictions;
  - (c) Dentists in a dental residency program must provide documentation from the director or appropriate administrator of the residency program regarding length of residency, duties and responsibilities, and any adverse actions or restrictions;
  - (d) Dentists practicing dentistry for a minimum of (~~twenty~~) 20 hours per week for the four consecutive years preceding application, in another U.S. state or territory must provide:
    - (i) Address of practice location(s);
    - (ii) Length of time at the location(s);
    - (iii) A letter from all malpractice insurance carrier(s) defining years when insured and any claims history; and
    - (iv) (~~Federal or state tax numbers; and~~ ~~(v)~~) DEA numbers if any.
- (6) Proof of successful completion of a commission approved written jurisprudence examination;
- (7) A recent 2" x 2" photograph, signed, dated, and attached to the application; and
- (8) Authorization for background inquiries to other sources may include, but are not limited to, the national practitioner data bank and drug enforcement agency.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 18-01-106, filed 12/19/17, effective 1/19/18)

**WAC 246-817-160 Graduates of nonaccredited schools.** (1) An applicant for Washington state dental licensure, who is a graduate of a dental school or college not accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation shall provide to the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (commission):

(a) ~~Materials listed in WAC 246-817-110 (1), (3), (5) ((through (8), and (10) through (13))), (6), (7), and (9) through (12);~~

(b) Official school transcript or diploma with dental degree listed transcribed to English if necessary;

(c) ~~((Evidence of successful completion of at least two additional predoctoral or postdoctoral academic years of dental education.~~

~~(i) Additional predoctoral or postdoctoral dental education completed prior to July 1, 2018, must be obtained at a dental school in the United States or Canada, approved, conditionally or provisionally, by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.~~

~~(ii) Additional predoctoral or postdoctoral dental education completed after July 1, 2018, must be obtained in a dental program in the United States or Canada,))~~ Additional predoctoral or postdoctoral academic years of dental education resulting in a certificate attesting to the successful graduation from that program. This can be satisfied by:

(i) Successful completion of at least two years of predoctoral dental education obtained at a dental school, approved, conditionally or provisionally, by the Commission on Dental Accreditation; or

(ii) Successful completion of at least one additional postdoctoral academic year of education in a general practice residency (GPR) or advanced education in general dentistry (AEGD) residency that has been approved, conditionally or provisionally, by the Commission on Dental Accreditation ((and include clinical training)); and

(d) An applicant for Washington state dental licensure must provide proof of successful completion of:

(i) An approved practical/clinical examination under WAC 246-817-120; or

(ii) A qualifying residency program under RCW 18.32.040 (3)(c).

(2) Upon completion of the requirements in subsection (1)(a) through (c) of this section, an applicant may be eligible to take the practical examination as approved in WAC 246-817-120 (2) through (4).

(a) The commission may issue examination approval up to six months before an applicant has completed the ~~((two))~~ additional predoctoral or postdoctoral academic years of dental education.

(b) An applicant must provide a letter from the school where the ~~((two))~~ additional predoctoral or postdoctoral academic years ~~((is))~~ are being obtained indicating expected date of education completion.