

WSR 26-05-023
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[Filed February 10, 2026, 8:16 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Administration of anesthetic agents for dental procedures by a dental therapist. The department of health (department) is considering establishing a new section in chapter 246-819 WAC to implement general requirements for dental therapists to administer sedation. The department may consider amendments to other relevant licensure requirement rule sections in chapter 246-819 WAC.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.265.800 and 43.70.280.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: Chapter 18.265 RCW establishes the new profession of dental therapy and authorizes the department to adopt rules in order to implement this statute. Dental therapists are mid-level providers who work in collaboration with a licensed dentist. The rules for licensed dentists who administer anesthetic agents are found in chapter 246-817 WAC. While developing the dental therapy rules, it was communicated by an interested party that a similar section on administering anesthetic agents would need to be added to the dental therapy rules to keep the requirements consistent with the dental anesthetic rule. It was agreed that this rule making would begin after chapter 246-819 WAC was officially adopted, which occurred on October 31, 2025.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: The department will work with the Washington state health care authority (HCA) to ensure rule making does not conflict with current HCA billing requirements. The department will coordinate rule making with impacted agencies, interested parties, and partners when appropriate.

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 Kitty Einert, Program Manager, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4843, TTY 711, email kitty.einert@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in the drafting of the proposed rules. The department will be conducting rules workshops with interested parties and subject matter experts. The department will use existing GovDelivery lists and other known contact information to inform interested parties of opportunities to provide input on proposed rule language. To find out more information about our rule making, visit doh.wa.gov. To subscribe to GovDelivery, please visit doh.wa.gov and select the button titled "Sign up for Updates From DOH" at the bottom of the page. After signing in, select "Health Systems Quality Assurance," "Health Professions," "Dental List," "Dental Therapist," and "Dental Hygiene Examining Committee." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions listed to receive information related to that specific profession.

February 9, 2026
Kristin Peterson, JD
Chief of Policy
for Dennis E. Worsham
Secretary of Health