WSR 26-17-032
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Dental Quality Assurance Commission)
[Filed August 11, 2026, 8:46 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Dental assistant registration. The dental quality assurance commission (commission) is considering amending WAC 246-817-190 to align with the department of labor and industries (L&I) new WAC section number change and to define what the commission will accept as a bona fide dental assistant career training or vocational education program for minors (16- and 17-year-olds) who are seeking dental assistant registration.

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

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: Effective January 16, 2026, the commission adopted rule amendments to WAC 246-817-190 to align with the rule language in the L&I WAC 296-125-030 Prohibited and hazardous employment—All minors. Since then, L&I recently completed rule making to implement legislative bills related to youth employment, including HB 1722, (chapter 98, Laws of 2025), effective July 1, 2026. L&I's WAC 296-125-030 is newly numbered WAC 296-125-131 in the L&I rule project, and students who are minors and have successfully completed a bona fide health care career training or vocational education program are now listed in WAC 296-125-131(24).

On June 12, 2026, during a business meeting, the commission authorized rule making to amend WAC 246-817-190 to align with the L&I rule number change and to define what the commission will accept as a bona fide dental assistant career training or vocational education program for minors (16- and 17-year-olds) who are seeking dental assistant registration. Establishing clear registration requirements for minors in rule will allow the commission to enforce registration requirements and will align with L&I's employment rules for minors.

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 Debbie Gardner, Program Manager, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4893, TTY 711, email dental@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in the drafting of the proposed rules. The commission will be conducting rules workshops with interested parties and subject matter experts. The commission will use existing email 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 email lists, 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," and "Dental List." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions listed to receive information related to that specific profession.

August 11, 2026
Bryan Swanson, DDS, Chair
Dental Quality Assurance Commission