WSR 26-18-073
PERMANENT RULES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[Filed September 1, 2026, 8:21 a.m., effective October 2, 2026]

Effective Date of Rule: Thirty-one days after filing.

Purpose: Acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioners; expanding the acceptance of English proficiency examinations.

The department of health (department), in consultation with the acupuncture and Eastern medicine advisory committee (committee) is adopting amendments to WAC 246-803-130 Applications requirements for applicants from foreign schools, and 246-803-240 Examinations, to allow the acceptance of additional English proficiency examinations as approved by the secretary in accordance with RCW 18.06.090.

Individuals who are seeking an acupuncture and Eastern medicine license in Washington state are required to demonstrate competency in English and skills by meeting examination requirements. Candidates who have not passed the required examinations in English are required to demonstrate sufficient fluency in reading, speaking, and comprehension by successfully passing an English proficiency examination.

The updates to WAC 246-803-130 will expand the acceptance of additional examinations candidates can take to demonstrate proficiency in the English language, increasing access and opportunity. The adopted rule amendments implement the general goals and objectives of RCW 18.06.090, which requires acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioners to demonstrate sufficient English fluency for communicating with other health care providers and patients.

The amendments also update existing language in WAC 246-803-240 to remove outdated reference to the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine. The amendments will ensure rules for applicants for acupuncture and Eastern medicine are accurate and reduce confusion.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 246-803-130 and 246-803-240.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 18.06.080, 18.06.090, and 18.06.160.

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 26-12-013 on May 22, 2026.

A final cost-benefit analysis is available by contacting Adriana Barcena, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4865, fax 360-236-2901, TTY 711, email Adriana.barcena@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 0, Amended 2, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 2, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: September 1, 2026.

Kristin Peterson, JD
Chief of Policy

for Dennis E. Worsham
Secretary of Health

RDS-6692.1

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 21-09-008, filed 4/8/21, effective 5/9/21)

WAC 246-803-130 Application requirements for applicants from foreign schools. (1) An applicant for an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner license who has graduated from a foreign acupuncture or Eastern medicine practitioner program not accredited, or approved by the secretary must:

(a) Have at least a bachelor's or master's degree in Eastern medicine or acupuncture from an institution of higher learning which is approved by the foreign country's ministry of education/health, or other governmental entity;

(b) Have graduated from a program of Eastern medicine or acupuncture education with requirements substantially equal to those required of graduates of secretary-approved programs; and

(c) Demonstrate fluency in reading, speaking, and understanding the English language by taking the examinations required in WAC 246-803-240 (2)(a) through (c) in English or ((~~by passage of the test of English as a foreign language in WAC 246-803-240(3)~~)) successfully pass an English proficiency examination approved by the secretary with an overall passing rate of 74 percent.

(2) An applicant for an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner license must submit to the department:

(a) A completed application.

(b) The application fee required under WAC 246-803-990.

(c) Original copy of school transcripts from the Eastern medicine or acupuncture program showing degree and degree date.

(d) A credentialing evaluation report from the International Consultants of Delaware (ICD).

(e) Verification of clinical training as required in WAC 246-803-230.

(f) Verification of successful completion of the examinations as required in WAC 246-803-240.

(g) Verification of all acupuncturist, acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner or health care licenses held, submitted directly from the licensing agency. The verification shall include the license number, issue date, expiration date and whether the acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner has been the subject of final or pending disciplinary action.

(h) Verification of current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification. The training in CPR shall consist of a minimum of one quarter credit or equivalent. Red Cross certification or documentation of equivalent training may be substituted for the one quarter credit.

(i) Any additional documents requested by the secretary.

(3) The department recognizes the ICD for credential evaluations. The applicant shall request that the ICD send their evaluation directly to the department. To obtain a credentialing evaluation report, the applicant shall submit to the ICD:

(a) Transcripts;
(b) Appropriate fees; and
(c) Other requested documentation.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 22-12-018, filed 5/23/22, effective 7/1/22)

WAC 246-803-240 Examinations. (1) The examinations administered by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) are the official examinations for licensure as an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner.

(2) An applicant for licensure as an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner must pass the following examinations:

(a) Foundations of Oriental medicine examination;
(b) Acupuncture with point location examination;
(c) Biomedicine examination; and
(d) Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and ((~~Oriental~~)) Herbal Medicine (((~~CCAOM~~)) CCAHM) clean needle technique course.

(3) If the applicant takes the examinations listed in subsection (2) of this section in a language other than English, they must also ((~~take and pass the internet-based test of English as a foreign language (ibTOEFL) examination with an overall score of not less than 89. This is done by obtaining scores on the ibTOEFL of at least:~~

~~(a) Twenty-four on the writing section;~~
~~(b) Twenty-six on the speaking section;~~
~~(c) Twenty-one on the reading section; and~~
~~(d) Eighteen on the listening comprehension section~~)) successfully pass an English proficiency examination approved by the secretary with an overall passing rate of 74 percent.