WSR 26-19-063
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission)
[Filed September 15, 2026, 8:42 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Pharmacy assistant registration; the pharmacy quality assurance commission (commission) is considering amending WAC 246-945-200 to add a requirement for competency in relevant procedures for preventing transmission of blood-borne pathogens and infectious diseases for pharmacy assistant applicants under the age of 18.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.64.005 and 18.64A.030.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: In the 2025 legislative session, HB 1722 (chapter 98, Laws of 2025) was passed, which added a new section to chapter 49.12 RCW that required the department of labor and industries (L&I) to "not prohibit a minor from participating in an occupation based on the risk of exposure to bodily fluids or transmission of infectious agents if the minor has a valid professional license or certification issued by the department of health under Title 18 RCW and said license or certification requires competency in relevant procedures for preventing transmission of bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases." The passing of this law prompted L&I to undergo rule making to align with the requirements and create WAC 296-125-131 Prohibited and hazardous employment—All minors.

The commission authorized rule making at the February 5, 2026, business meeting to consider amending WAC 246-945-200 Pharmacy assistants, to align with the L&I rule making and require that pharmacy assistants under the age of 18 complete training for preventing transmission of bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases. The rule making will also define what the commission will accept as a bona fide pharmacy assistant career training or vocational education program for applicants under the age of 18 who are seeking pharmacy assistant registrations.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: The commission is coordinating with L&I to regulate pharmacy assistant registration.

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 Haleigh Mauldin, P.O. Box 47850, Olympia, WA 98504-7850, phone 360-236-4946, fax 360-236-2260, TTY 711, email PharmacyRules@doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in the drafting of the proposed rules. The commission will conduct a series of rules workshops. Rule-making notices will be delivered via email list. To receive notices, go to https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOH/subscriber/new. After signing in, click open the box labeled "Health Systems Quality Assurance." Next, click open the box labeled "Health Professions" and then click again on "Pharmacy Commission Newsletter." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions or facilities listed to receive information related to that specific topic.

September 15, 2026
Ann Wolken, PharmD, RPh, Chair