WSR 26-19-065
PROPOSED RULES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission)
[Filed September 15, 2026, 8:56 a.m.]

Original Notice.

Preproposal statement of inquiry was filed as WSR 26-09-021.

Title of Rule and Other Identifying Information: Animal euthanasia training program guidelines. The pharmacy quality assurance commission (commission) is proposing amendments to WAC 246-945-503 and creating new WAC 246-945-504 to establish regulatory requirements for animal euthanasia training programs seeking commission approval.

Hearing Location(s): On November 5, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., at Capital Region ESD 113, 6005 Tyee Drive S.W., Tumwater, WA 98512; or virtually at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86309299195, Webinar ID 863 0929 9195; or join via telephone +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma), +1 253 205 0468 US, +1 669 444 9171 US, Webinar ID 863 0929 9195.

Date of Intended Adoption: November 5, 2026.

Submit Written Comments to: Julia Katz-Ukropina, P.O. Box 47850, Olympia, WA 98504-7850, email PharmacyRules@doh.wa.gov, fax 360-236-2260, https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/policyreview, beginning the date and time of the filing, by October 22, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.

Assistance for Persons with Disabilities: Contact Julia Katz-Ukropina, phone 360-236-4946, fax 360-236-2260, TTY 711, email PharmacyRules@doh.wa.gov, by October 8, 2026.

Purpose of the Proposal and Its Anticipated Effects, Including Any Changes in Existing Rules: The commission is proposing amendments to WAC 246-945-503 and creating new WAC 246-945-504 to establish requirements for registered humane societies, animal control agencies, and the department of fish and wildlife (DFW) chemical capture program locations applying for commission approval of animal euthanasia training programs.

The proposed WAC 246-945-504 will replace WAC 246-945-503(4) and a guidance document from October 2020 titled "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies" with enforceable regulations for registered humane societies, animal control agencies, and the DFW chemical capture program location applying for commission approval of animal euthanasia training programs. In contrast to the guidance document, the proposed rule distinguishes the differences between requirements for humane societies and animal control agencies in WAC 246-945-504 (2)(d)(ix) and those for DFW in WAC 246-945-504 (3)(d)(ix) to reflect statutory differences between humane societies and animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations. The inclusion of this nuance aligns the proposed rule more closely with the authorizing statutes. Specifically, under the direction of a licensed veterinarian, humane societies and animal control agencies are approved to use legend drugs and sodium pentobarbital, while DFW is approved to use legend drugs and controlled substances.

The proposed amendments to WAC 246-945-503 add references to new WAC 246-945-504.

Reasons Supporting Proposal: On February 5, 2026, the commission authorized rule making on animal euthanasia training program guidelines to consider replacing the guidance document as a part of a larger project to replace all guidance documents and policy statements with rules, where possible.

The guidance document, "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies" contains additional instructions, some of which are outdated, and does not differentiate statutory differences among applicants. The proposed rule making will address these discrepancies with clear regulations for animal euthanasia training program applicants. Clear regulations for euthanasia training programs is a matter of promoting the welfare of the state through effective communication with the profession and department of health.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 18.64.005, 69.41.080, 69.50.310, and 69.50.320.

Statute Being Implemented: RCW 69.41.080, 69.50.310, and 69.50.320.

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

Agency Comments or Recommendations, if Any, as to Statutory Language, Implementation, Enforcement, and Fiscal Matters: The commission intends to rescind the existing guidance document titled "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies" upon the effective date of the adopted rule.

Name of Proponent: Pharmacy quality assurance commission, governmental.

Name of Agency Personnel Responsible for Drafting and Implementation: Julia Katz-Ukropina, 111 Israel Road S.E., Tumwater, WA 98501, 360-236-4946; Enforcement: Marlee B. O'Neill, 111 Israel Road S.E., Tumwater, WA 98501, 360-236-4946.

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 Julia Katz-Ukropina, P.O. Box 47850, Olympia, WA 98504-7850, phone 360-236-4946, fax 360-236-2260, TTY 711, email PharmacyRules@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 only correct typographical errors, make address or name changes, or clarify language of a rule without changing its effect.

Explanation of exemptions: The proposed amendments to WAC 246-945-503 clarify the current rule language and add a reference to the proposed new section of rule. Portions of the proposed new WAC 246-945-504 Humane societies, animal control agencies, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs—Euthanasia training programs, streamlines and clarifies the requirements from the guidance document titled "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies."

Scope of exemption for rule proposal:

Is partially exempt:

Explanation of partial exemptions: See above for exemption.

The proposed rule does not impose more-than-minor costs on businesses. Following is a summary of the agency's analysis showing how costs were calculated. The costs of the proposed rule of $0 are less than the minor cost threshold of $6,265.81 for veterinary service establishments.

The commission assumes that all current registered locations are using commission-approved programs. The commission assumes that there are no new costs imposed by adopting into rule the existing guidelines because no new or additional requirements are added beyond those existent in the current guidance document.

SECTION 1: **A brief description of the proposed rule, including the current situation/rule, followed by the history of the issue and why the proposed rule is needed. A description of the probable compliance requirements and the kinds of professional services that a small business is likely to need in order to comply with the proposed rule:** The commission is proposing amendments to WAC 246-945-503 and creating new WAC 246-945-504 to establish regulatory requirements for commission approval of animal euthanasia training programs operated by registered humane societies, animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations.

Humane societies, animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations are currently authorized to euthanize animals under WAC 246-945-500 through 246-945-151 and RCW 69.41.080, 69.50.310, and 69.50.320. The statutory authority for euthanasia is slightly different for humane societies and animal control agencies than it is for DFW chemical capture program locations.

Humane societies and animal control agencies are authorized by RCW 69.41.080 to administer approved legend drugs for the sole purpose of sedating animals prior to euthanasia and by RCW 69.50.310 to administer one controlled substance, sodium pentobarbital, for the sole purpose of euthanizing injured, sick, homeless, or unwanted domestic pets and animals. Approved legend drugs for sedation prior to euthanasia that humane societies and animal control agencies may administer are listed in WAC 246-945-505.

The DFW chemical capture program locations are authorized by RCW 69.41.080 and 69.50.320 to administer approved legend drugs and approved controlled substances for use in chemical capture programs. Approved legend drugs and approved controlled substances, including sodium pentobarbital, that the DFW chemical capture location may administer, are listed in WAC 246-945-507.

WAC 246-945-503 requires personnel to complete a commission-approved animal euthanasia training program at a registered location to become authorized to administer approved legend drugs and approved controlled substances. The rule also requires registered locations to obtain commission approval for animal euthanasia training programs, or training that is substantially equivalent. Registered locations are not required to have an animal euthanasia training program, but if they do, they are required to be approved by the commission prior to the initiation of the training program. A guidance document from October 2020 titled "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies" provides guidance to registered locations on the process to apply for commission approval of animal euthanasia training programs, if they desire. The guidance document also lists guidelines for these training programs that are not covered in WAC 246-945-503, such as didactic and practical training topics, training manuals, and record retention specifications. However, the guidance document is not enforceable, lacks the statutory authority differences between registered locations, and includes requirements, such as the use of a training manual, that are outdated.

Proposed WAC 246-945-504 will replace WAC 246-945-503(4) and the guidance document with enforceable regulations for registered humane societies, animal control agencies, and the DFW chemical capture pro-

gram locations applying for commission approval of animal euthanasia training programs.

The proposed amendments to WAC 246-945-503 add references to new WAC 246-945-504.

Proposed WAC 246-945-504 establishes what is currently in the guidance document into rule. In contrast to the guidance document, the proposed rule requires humane societies, animal control agencies, and the DFW chemical capture program locations to seek commission approval of euthanasia training programs that reflect their regulatory authorizations prior to initiating the training program.

Unlike the guidance document, the proposed rule distinguishes the differences between requirements for humane societies and animal control agencies in WAC 246-945-504 (2)(d)(ix) and those for DFW in WAC 246-945-504 (3)(d)(ix) to reflect statutory differences between humane societies and animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations. The inclusion of this nuance aligns the proposed rule more closely with the authorizing statutes than the guidance document. Specifically, under the direction of a licensed veterinarian, humane societies and animal control agencies are approved to use legend drugs and sodium pentobarbital while DFW is approved to use legend drugs and controlled substances.

On February 5, 2026, the commission authorized rule making on animal euthanasia training program guidelines to consider replacing the guidance document as a part of a larger project to replace all guidance documents and policy statements with rules, where possible.

To comply with the proposed rule, an applicable small business will need to become familiar with the new rule and follow the applicable process when seeking commission approval for a euthanasia training program. The application process is unchanged from the current application process in the guidance document titled "Euthanasia Training Program Guidelines for Animal Control Agencies and Humane Societies." Applicable small businesses are humane societies and animal control agencies with few staff. Professional services likely needed for compliance are communicating with the humane society or animal control agency's employees and the commission.

SECTION 2: **Identification and summary of which businesses are required to comply with the proposed rule using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS):** Small business economic impact statement (SBEIS) Table 1. Summary of Businesses Required to Comply to the Proposed Rule:

NAICS Code (4, 5, or 6 Digit)	NAICS Business Description	Number of Businesses in Washington State	Minor Cost Threshold
541940	Veterinary Services	954	$6,265.81

SECTION 3: **Analysis of probable costs of businesses in the industry to comply to the proposed rule and includes the cost of equipment, supplies, labor, professional services, and administrative costs. The analysis considers if compliance with the proposed rule will cause businesses in the industry to lose sales or revenue:** New WAC 246-945-504 Humane societies, animal control agencies, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs—Euthanasia training programs.

Description: The new proposed rule establishes enforceable standards for registered humane societies, animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations seeking commission approval of an

animal euthanasia training program prior to the initiation of the training program.

Proposed WAC 246-945-504 requires an application be submitted to the commission demonstrating that the training meets the requirements outlined in the rule. The proposed rule establishes most of the requirements from the guidance document into rule.

The proposed rule distinguishes the differences between requirements for humane societies and animal control agencies in WAC 246-945-504 (2)(d)(ix) and those for DFW in WAC 246-945-504 (3)(d)(ix) to reflect statutory differences between humane societies and animal control agencies, and DFW chemical capture program locations. Under the direction of a licensed veterinarian, humane societies and animal control agencies are approved to use legend drugs and sodium pentobarbital while DFW chemical capture program locations are approved to use legend drugs and controlled substances. The inclusion of this nuance aligns the proposed rule more closely with the authorizing statutes than the guidance document.

Unlike the guidance document, the proposed rule does not require the program to:

- Use a manual approved by the commission or approved by a nationally recognized authority on euthanasia;
- Retain a list of individuals that have successfully completed the programs for two years; nor
- Issue a certificate of completion.

The commission believes these requirements are not needed in rule because they are not imperative to the promotion of public health and safety by ensuring authorized personnel have demonstrated adequate knowledge of the potential hazards and proper techniques for administering approved drugs.

Registered locations with approved animal euthanasia training programs will not need to seek reapproval once this rule is in effect because they sufficiently demonstrated compliance with the requirements in the proposed rule, at minimum, when they obtained initial commission approval. Also, registered locations are not required to have an animal euthanasia training program.

Cost(s): The commission assumes that there are no new costs imposed by adopting the proposed rule because no new or additional requirements are added beyond those existent in the current guidance document.

Summary of all cost(s): SBEIS Table 2. Summary of Section 3 Probable Cost(s):

WAC Sections and Title	Probable Cost(s)
WAC 246-945-504 Humane societies, animal control agencies, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs—Euthanasia training programs	$0

SECTION 4: **Analysis on if the proposed rule may impose more-than-minor costs for businesses in the industry. Includes a summary of how the costs were calculated:** No, the costs of the proposed rule of **$0** are less than the minor cost threshold of **$6,265.81** for veterinary service establishments.

Summary of how the costs were calculated: The commission assumes that all current registered locations are using commission-approved programs. The commission assumes that there are no new costs imposed by adopting into rule the existing guidelines because no new or addi-

tional requirements are added beyond those existent in the current guidance document.

A copy of the detailed cost calculations may be obtained by contacting Julia Katz-Ukropina, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4946, fax 360-236-2260, TTY 711, email PharmacyRules@doh.wa.gov.

September 10, 2026
Ann Wolken, PharmD, RPh, Chair
Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission

RDS-7261.4

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 20-12-072, filed 6/1/20, effective 7/1/20)

WAC 246-945-503 Humane societies, animal control agencies, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs—Authorized personnel. (1) Each ((~~registered~~)) humane society, animal control agency, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture program location registered with the commission shall ensure only authorized personnel possess or administer approved legend drugs and approved controlled substances at the registered location.

(2) For registered humane societies and animal control agencies, authorized personnel are those individuals who have:

(a) Successfully completed a ((~~commission-approved~~)) euthanasia training program ((~~or training that is substantially equivalent~~)) approved by the commission under WAC 246-945-504; and

(b) Been approved by the designated person.

(3) For registered department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs, authorized personnel are those individuals who have:

(a) Successfully completed a ((~~commission-approved~~)) euthanasia training program ((~~or training that is substantially equivalent~~)) approved by the commission under WAC 246-945-504;

(b) Been approved by the department of fish and wildlife; and

(c) Are a department of fish and wildlife officer, biologist, or veterinarian.

((~~(4) A commission-approved training program shall include didactic and practical training under the direction of a licensed veterinarian. The commission-approved training program should ensure that authorized personnel shall be able to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the potential hazards and proper techniques used in administering approved legend and controlled substances.~~))

NEW SECTION

WAC 246-945-504 Humane societies, animal control agencies, and department of fish and wildlife chemical capture programs—Euthanasia training programs. (1) The commission shall approve a euthanasia training program for authorized personnel of a humane society, animal control agency, or department of fish and wildlife chemical capture

program location registered with the commission prior to the initiation of the training program.

(2) A humane society or animal control agency shall submit to the commission an application for approval of a euthanasia training program for authorized personnel. The application must demonstrate the training program meets the following requirements:

(a) Be at a minimum four hours in length;

(b) Be instructed by a licensed veterinarian;

(c) Require a passing score of no less than 75 percent on a final examination; and

(d) Require both didactic and practical training, as applicable, in the following topics:

(i) Anatomy and physiology;

(ii) Methods of euthanasia;

(iii) Routes of drug administration;

(iv) Use of sedatives;

(v) Drug dosing;

(vi) Use of restraints;

(vii) Process and verification of death;

(viii) Pharmacology of the drugs;

(ix) Use of approved legend drugs and sodium pentobarbital under the direction of a licensed veterinarian;

(x) Potential hazards and proper techniques used in administering approved legend and sodium pentobarbital;

(xi) Indications, contraindications, and adverse effects;

(xii) Human hazards;

(xiii) Disposal of medical waste including, but not limited to, needles and syringes;

(xiv) Recordkeeping and security requirements; and

(xv) Applicable federal and state laws and rules.

(3) A department of fish and wildlife chemical capture program shall submit to the commission an application for approval of a euthanasia training program for authorized personnel. The application must demonstrate the training program meets the following requirements:

(a) Be at a minimum four hours in length;

(b) Be instructed by a licensed veterinarian;

(c) Require a passing score of no less than 75 percent on a final examination; and

(d) Require both didactic and practical training, as applicable, in the following topics:

(i) Anatomy and physiology;

(ii) Methods of euthanasia;

(iii) Routes of drug administration;

(iv) Use of sedatives;

(v) Drug dosing;

(vi) Use of restraints;

(vii) Process and verification of death;

(viii) Pharmacology of the drugs;

(ix) Use of approved legend drugs and controlled substances under the direction of a licensed veterinarian;

(x) Potential hazards and proper techniques used in administering approved legend and controlled substances;

(xi) Indications, contraindications, and adverse effects;

(xii) Human hazards;

(xiii) Disposal of medical waste including, but not limited to, needles and syringes;

(xiv) Recordkeeping and security requirements; and

(xv) Applicable federal and state laws and rules.