

Executive Director Report



WASHINGTON
**Medical
Commission**
Licensing. Accountability. Leadership.

Compliance – The Last Act in our Behind the Curtain Series

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The last step in the disciplinary process is compliance, which begins after the Commission determines that a provider has violated the Uniform Disciplinary Act, RCW 18.130.180. Once the case has been resolved through a stipulation to informal disposition (STID) or a Statement of Charges (SOC), the case is transferred from the Commission's Legal Unit to the Compliance Unit.

This unit is comprised of two Compliance Officers and a Physician Medical Consultant. Their role is to work with the respondent practitioner to insure they understand the requirements of the WMC sanctions, help the practitioner find any required education or training, review any papers required by the WMC and mentor them through the compliance process.

When a case is moved into the compliance phase, the Compliance team schedules a phone call with every practitioner (and their attorney, if applicable) to explain what the practitioner's next steps should be, how to pay any fines, where to go to get any required evaluations and answer any questions. The Compliance Unit becomes the main point of contact with the practitioner throughout this phase and keeps in contact with the practitioner every step of the way.

Except in a very few cases, the WMC requires practitioners to appear in front of a Commission panel at least once to discuss their case, what they learned after taking any required education or training and what they would do differently in the future, if applicable. Typically, a practitioner is in the compliance phase for three years depending on what the WMC deems appropriate. Once a practitioner has completed the requirements set forth in the WMC sanctions and met any required timelines, the practitioner may request that the WMC terminate the STID or order and close the case.

WMC Adopts New Telemedicine Policy to Help those in Need

The pandemic continues to teach us how important telemedicine is. Now more than ever telemedicine technology is needed to reach patients in underserved areas. With this in mind, the Washington Medical Commission (WMC) adopted a [new 2021 Telemedicine Policy](#).

The WMC has been forward thinking about the use of telemedicine across borders for many years. The WMC first guideline was adopted in 2014 and additions regarding continuity of care were adopted in 2018. This new policy supersedes even those.

Many people contact the WMC looking for clarity on telemedicine in Washington. Our policy answers several of those questions. Such as:

- What are the WA licensure requirements for using telemedicine?
- What are the best practices when using telemedicine?
- What about mobile apps or artificial intelligence? How does the WMC address those?

One of the most frequent questions we get asked about our policy is how it relates to the law and what are the licensure exemptions? Washington state recently passed a telemedicine law that legalizes practitioner-to-practitioner consultations across state borders. WMC policy has always been in alignment with this recent statute change and encourages other regulators to adopt similar positions.

WMC policy takes it a step further to encourage WA citizens to get a second opinion or a consultation with a specialist out of state, such as a cancer center. This second opinion provider can give input on treatment directly with the patient. Learn about this exemption and more, in the [2021 Telemedicine Policy](#).

The WMC holds business and policy committee meetings approximately every six weeks in which we address important issues impacting public health and the medical profession. These meetings are open to the public. If you would like to weigh-in on decisions like the telemedicine policy, you may do so at a policy committee meeting. The public may provide comments not only to the policy committee members but to other interested parties in attendance. If you would like all-inclusive notifications for these meetings, including dates, locations or links to register for virtual sessions, please subscribe to the [Meetings Listserv](#).