



Positive Changes for PAs in the Near Future

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Physician Assistants (PA) in Washington State, some major changes have occurred over the last quarter. There has been a multitude of people working behind the scenes and advocating on our behalf with the Washington legislative bodies, which have recently approved the compact that allows Physician Assistants to practice across state lines in other compact states without needing to acquire a license in those separate states. This is a change that will be especially significant to those who have telemedicine practices but will also be extremely helpful for PAs who have Locum Tenens practices that cross state lines. On March 13th, Governor Jay Inslee signed [House Bill 1917](#) making Washington the fourthth state to join the compact. Since then, three additional states required to enact the compact, have also joined. As of April 4th, 2024, the PA compact has been enacted in the participating seven states:

Delaware	Nebraska
Utah	Virginia
Wisconsin	Washington
West Virginia	

Before you send your application to [the compact commission](#), keep in mind, there is still an estimated 18-to-24-month process before the compact is fully operational and PAs can apply for privilege to practice. As states become able to successfully communicate licensure and privilege information with one another through the data system, the compact commission will open applications for privileges to PAs. Other states with pending compact legislation include:

Colorado (SB 24-018)	Maine (LD 2043)
Michigan (HB 5117)	Nebraska (LB 823)
New Hampshire (SB 486)	New York (SB 7711/ AB 8172)
Ohio (SB 28)	Rhode Island (HB 7083)
Tennessee (HB 1862)	Vermont (HB 572)

More information about the interstate compact can be found: [HB 1917 Adopting the physician assistant compact](#).

No More Practice Agreements

Other big news on the Washington PA front includes a change made to Washington state Physician Assistant practice agreements. The supervisory nature of the physician's involvement has been changed to a more collaborative one. For many PAs this has already been

the case, but many employers, physicians, and laypersons, interpret the wording in the practice plan literally and it has sometimes led to a misunderstanding of the PA role in their practice of medicine. This change will go a long way toward better definition of the PA role in medical care for those who are unfamiliar with PAs.

Prior to this new change it was necessary for PAs to complete a Practice Agreement that designated a supervising physician. The participating physician, physician's employer, or their designee had to verify the Physician Assistant's credentials. There were limits to the number of PAs a physician could supervise and as previously stated, the wording was limiting in its description of the relationship between PAs and the physicians with whom they work.

[With the changes](#), the practice agreements are being replaced with "Collaboration Agreements". Collaboration Agreements are defined as a written agreement that describes the manner in which a Physician Assistant is supervised by or collaborates with at least one physician, which must be signed by the physician assistant and one or more physicians or the Physician Assistant's employer. A Collaboration Agreement must be available at the Physician Assistant's primary location of practice and made available to the Commission (WMC) upon request. Physician Assistants are not required to file Collaboration Agreements with the Commission (WMC).

The Washington Medical Commission (WMC) [hosts a model practice agreement](#) on our website, and the practice agreement portal has been decommissioned. The WMC held a webinar to discuss the changes, [the recording is available here](#). If you have additional questions, you can reach out to us at medical.licensing@wmc.wa.gov.

Keep yourself informed about medical changes in the state by regularly checking in to the [WMC website](#) or [subscribing to our emails](#). Stay informed and support the administrations that supports you; Washington Medical Commission, Washington Association of Physician Assistants, and the American Academy of Physician Assistants. Take time to visit their websites and take advantage of the information and access they have to offer.