

PA News: Upcoming Changes to Physician Assistant Laws



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

Theresa M. Schimmels, PA-C Physician Assistant Member

During the last legislative session, SHB 2378 was passed, authorizing the following changes to Physician Assistant (PA) Laws:

1. The former practice agreement, aka practice plan or delegation agreement, will be set up by the Physician and PA at the place of practice then filed with the Washington Medical Commission (WMC). Practice agreements can be modified or amended at any time with your supervising physician. The PA is then responsible for filing these changes with the WMC. It will become the Physician and the PA's responsibility to determine the PA's practice duties or scope of practice and how much supervision the PA may or may not need.
2. PAs will be able to practice at remote site settings without requiring approval from the WMC, if it is within the scope of their practice agreement.

3. There will no longer be a separate licensing section for osteopathic Physician Assistants. Chapter 18.71A RCW will replace the osteopathic physician assistant license found in chapter 18.57A RCW.

In May, the WMC filed the paperwork to get the rulemaking process started to meet the implementation date of July 1, 2021. Our first workshop to discuss rulemaking takes place January 13 from 2-4 pm. Due to COVID-19, all meetings are held electronically.

You can find information on how to be part of the conversation, either for comment or just to follow along on the process [here](#). The workshop packet will be available in the beginning of January and will contain the rulemaking language to be discussed. [Sign-up here](#) to receive the workshop packet when it becomes available.

We look forward to written testimony or feel free to [contact us](#) with comments or concerns.

The Department of Health (department) filed an [Interpretive Statement](#) with the Office of the Code Reviser on December 16, 2020. The Interpretive Statement clarifies that health care providers (not physician's licensed under chapter 18.71) are required to take telehealth training on or after January 1, 2021.

[RCW 43.70.495](#) was updated by Substitute Senate Bill 6061 ([SSB 6061](#)) passed during the 2020 legislative session requiring any health care provider incorporating telehealth services into their practice to take training. This legislation *does apply* to Physician Assistants licensed by the Washington Medical Commission.

The Washington Telehealth Collaborative at the University of Washington has developed free training to meet the new requirements and it is available on their [website](#).

The department, boards, and commissions encourage providers to take the required training as soon as possible and no later than June 30, 2021.

PA
Telehealth
Training
Requirement