

# Suicide Assessment, Treatment, and Management Training

## Frequently Asked Questions

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RCW 43.70.442 requires many licensed health professionals, including physicians and physician assistants, to complete suicide prevention training. The Medical Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) recently passed rules setting forth the statutory requirements and exempting allopathic physicians and physician assistants who have brief or limited contact with patients.

### **How many hours of training am I required to take?**

According to RCW 43.70.442(5)(c) you must take a one-time six hours of suicide assessment, treatment, and management training.

### **When do I have to take the training?**

The training must be taken by the end of the first full CME reporting period after January 1, 2016 or during the first full CME reporting period after initial licensure, whichever is later. For example, if an MD's reporting period expires in 2016 he or she will have until their birthday in 2020 to take the training. If a PA's reporting period expires in 2016 he or she will have until their birthday in 2018 to take the training.

### **What does "brief or limited patient contact" mean?**

RCW 43.70.442 permits a disciplining authority may exempt a professional from the training requirements if the professional "has only brief or limited patient contact." The Commission passed a rule exempting allopathic physicians and physician assistants from the training requirement if the physician or physician assistant "has only brief or limited patient contact, or no patient contact." The rule does not define "brief or limited patient contact." Each allopathic physician or physician assistant will have to determine whether he or she meets this exemption.

### **Are residents required to take the training?**

A resident holding a limited license under [RCW 18.71.095\(3\)](#) is not required to take the training during the time they hold the limited license. However, once a resident holds a full license he/she would be required to take the one-time training.



## **Will my psychiatry residency fulfill the training requirement?**

No. Residency training does not fulfill the training requirement, no matter the specialty.

## **Where can I find a list of trainings?**

You must take training listed on the Department of Health model list in order to satisfy the requirement. The model list can be found here:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/SuicidePrevention/TrainingPrograms/2017ModelList>

## **Are government employees exempt from the training requirement?**

According to RCW 43.70.442(11), a state or local government employee is exempt from the training requirement if he or she receives at least six hours of training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management from his or her employer. The training may be in one six-hour block or may be spread among shorter training sessions at the employer's discretion. The statute did not exempt federal employees.

## **Are employees of a community mental health agency exempt from the training requirement?**

According to RCW 43.70.442(12), an employee of a community mental health agency licensed under chapter 71.24 RCW or a chemical dependency program certified under chapter 70.96 RCW is exempt if he or she receives at least six hours of training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management from his or her employer. The training may be in one six-hour block or may be spread among shorter training sessions at the employer's discretion.

## **How do I show the Commission that I have completed the training?**

There is no requirement to send proof of completion of the training to the Commission. The Commission does not conduct audits for completion of required continuing medical education and will not conduct audits for completion of suicide prevention training. However, during the course of investigating a complaint, the Commission may request proof of completion of CME and completion of a suicide prevention training course.

If you have further questions or concerns please contact the Commission's Program Manager, Daidria Underwood, at (360) 236-2727 or [daidria.underwood@doh.wa.gov](mailto:daidria.underwood@doh.wa.gov).

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