

RCW 18.170.220 Inability to practice by reason of a mental or physical condition—Statement of charges—Hearing—Sanctions—

Examinations—Presumed consent. (1) If the director believes a license holder or applicant may be unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety to the public by reason of a mental or physical condition, a statement of charges shall be served on the license holder or applicant and notice shall also be issued providing an opportunity for a hearing. The hearing shall be limited to the sole issue of the capacity of the license holder or applicant to practice with reasonable skill or safety. If the director determines that the license holder or applicant is unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety for one of the reasons stated in this subsection, the director shall impose such sanctions as are deemed necessary to protect the public.

(2) In investigating or adjudicating a complaint or report that a license holder or applicant may be unable to practice with reasonable skill or safety by reason of a mental or physical condition, the department may require a license holder or applicant to submit to a mental or physical examination by one or more licensed or certified health professionals designated by the director. The cost of the examinations ordered by the department shall be paid by the department. In addition to any examinations ordered by the department, the licensee may submit physical or mental examination reports from licensed or certified health professionals of the license holder's or applicant's choosing and expense. Failure of the license holder or applicant to submit to examination when directed constitutes grounds for immediate suspension or withholding of the license, consequent upon which a default and final order may be entered without the taking of testimony or presentations of evidence, unless the failure was due to circumstances beyond the person's control. A determination by a court of competent jurisdiction that a license holder or applicant is mentally incompetent or mentally ill is presumptive evidence of the license holder's or applicant's inability to practice with reasonable skill and safety. An individual affected under this section shall at reasonable intervals be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate that the individual can resume competent practice with reasonable skill and safety to the public.

(3) For the purpose of subsection (2) of this section, an applicant or license holder governed by this chapter, by making application, practicing, or filing a license renewal, is deemed to have given consent to submit to a mental, physical, or psychological examination if directed in writing by the department and further to have waived all objections to the admissibility or use of the examining health professional's testimony or examination reports by the director on the ground that the testimony or reports constitute hearsay or privileged communications. [1991 c 334 § 22.]