

**RCW 18.205.105 Co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement—**

**Training standards.** (1) The department shall develop training standards for the creation of a co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement which may be added to the license or registration held by one of the following:

- (a) Psychologists licensed under chapter 18.83 RCW;
- (b) Independent clinical social workers licensed under chapter 18.225 RCW;
- (c) Marriage and family therapists licensed under chapter 18.225 RCW;
- (d) Mental health counselors licensed under chapter 18.225 RCW;
- and
- (e) An agency affiliated counselor licensed under chapter 18.19 RCW.

(2) To obtain the co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement, the applicant must meet training standards and experience requirements. The training standards must be designed with consideration of the practices of the health professions listed in subsection (1) of this section and consisting of sixty hours of instruction consisting of (a) thirty hours in understanding the disease pattern of addiction and the pharmacology of alcohol and other drugs; and (b) thirty hours in understanding addiction placement, continuing care, and discharge criteria, including the American society of addiction medicine criteria; treatment planning specific to substance abuse; relapse prevention; and confidentiality issues specific to substance use disorder treatment.

(3) In developing the training standards, the department shall consult with the examining board of psychology established in chapter 18.83 RCW, the Washington state mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and social workers advisory committee established in chapter 18.225 RCW, the substance use disorder certification advisory committee established in chapter 18.205 RCW, and educational institutions in Washington state that train psychologists, marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, independent clinical social workers, and substance use disorder professionals.

(4) The department shall approve educational programs that meet the training standards, and must not limit its approval to university-based courses.

(5) The secretary shall issue a co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement to any applicant who demonstrates to the secretary's satisfaction that the following requirements have been met:

- (a) Completion of the training standards;
- (b) Successful completion of an approved examination based on core competencies of substance use disorder counseling;
- (c) Successful completion of an experience requirement of:
  - (i) Eighty hours of supervised experience for an applicant listed under subsection (1) of this section with fewer than five years of experience; or
  - (ii) Forty hours of supervised experience for an applicant listed under subsection (1) of this section with five or more years of experience; and
- (d) Payment of any fees that may be established by the department.

(6) An applicant for the co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement may receive supervised experience from any person who meets or exceeds the requirements of a certified substance use

disorder professional in the state of Washington and who would be eligible to take the examination required for substance use disorder professional certification.

(7) A person who has obtained a co-occurring disorder specialist enhancement may provide substance use disorder counseling services which are equal in scope with those provided by substance use disorder professionals under this chapter, subject to the following limitations:

(a) A co-occurring disorder specialist may only provide substance use disorder counseling services if the co-occurring disorder specialist is employed by:

- (i) An agency that provides counseling services;
- (ii) A federally qualified health center; or
- (iii) A hospital;

(b) Following an initial intake or assessment, a co-occurring disorder specialist may provide substance use disorder treatment only to clients diagnosed with a substance use disorder and a mental health disorder;

(c) Prior to providing substance use disorder treatment to a client assessed to be in need of 2.1 or higher level of care according to American society of addiction medicine criteria, a co-occurring disorder specialist must make a reasonable effort to refer and connect the client to the appropriate care setting, as indicated by the client's American society of addiction medicine level of care; and

(d) A co-occurring disorder specialist must comply with rules promulgated by the department under subsection (11) of this section.

(8) The secretary shall establish by rule what constitutes adequate proof of meeting the criteria.

(9) Applicants are subject to the grounds for denial of a certificate or issuance of a conditional certificate under chapter 18.130 RCW.

(10) The department may adopt a fee to defray the cost of regulatory activities related to the issuance of co-occurring disorder specialist enhancements and any related disciplinary activities.

(11) The department shall adopt rules regarding the role of co-occurring disorder specialists across the American society of addiction medicine continuum of care.

(12) Any increase in fees necessary to cover the cost of regulating co-occurring disorder specialists who receive an enhancement under this section must be borne by persons licensed as psychologists under chapter 18.83 RCW, independent clinical social workers under chapter 18.225 RCW, marriage and family therapists under chapter 18.225 RCW, or mental health counselors under chapter 18.225 RCW. The cost of regulating co-occurring disorder specialists who receive an enhancement under this section may not be borne by substance use disorder professionals or substance use disorder professional trainees certified under this chapter and may not be included in the calculation of fees for substance use disorder professionals or substance use disorder professional trainees certified under this chapter. [2023 c 425 s 24; 2019 c 444 s 25.]

**Effective date—2023 c 425 ss 1-7, 13-20, and 22-26:** See note following RCW 18.83.170.