



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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October 23, 2017

The Honorable Ann Rivers, Chair
Senate Health Care Committee
Post Office Box 40418
Olympia, Washington 98504-0418

The Honorable Eileen Cody, Chair
House Health Care and Wellness Committee
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

Dear Senator Rivers and Representative Cody:

This report fulfills the requirements of RCW 18.225.800, which directs the Department of Health (department) to annually report, through 2020, the number of times mental health providers with an associate's license renew their credential four, five, and six times. We submitted our first report in October 2014.

Major Finding

The bottom line is that for state fiscal year 2017 (SFY 2017) 89 percent of those who obtained their "full" mental health provider licensure did so with four or fewer renewals of their associate license. Another 4 percent did so with five renewals and 7 percent with six renewals.

Background

The department began issuing associate licenses for these mental health professions in July 2009. At the time, an associate license could be renewed annually no more than four times. This meant associates had five years (initial associate licensure plus four annual renewals) to complete the additional education and supervisory requirements to apply for "full" licensure as a mental health counselor, marriage and family therapist, advanced social worker, or licensed independent clinical social worker.

In 2013, the legislature expanded the number of renewals allowed for an associate license from four to six (Chapter 73, Laws of 2013). At the same time, the department was directed to submit this annual report to help the legislature assess whether these expanded limits on associate licensure renewals remain adequate.

Data

Graph 1 and Table 1 represent the total number of people (licensees) during the fiscal year with an associate license and displays the number of times they have renewed their associate license under chapter 18.225 RCW. Table 1 gives additional detail by showing renewal information by each profession.

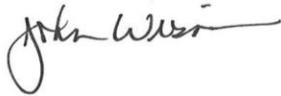
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Graph 2 and Table 2 show data for those people (licensees) who achieved “full” licensure during the year and thus is a subset of the people in Graph 1 and Table 1.

The data show that the vast majority of people achieve “full” licensure (89 percent) with four or fewer renewals.

Please contact Brad Burnham, program manager in the department’s Office of Health Professions, at 360-236-4912 or brad.burnham@doh.wa.gov if you have any questions or require further information.

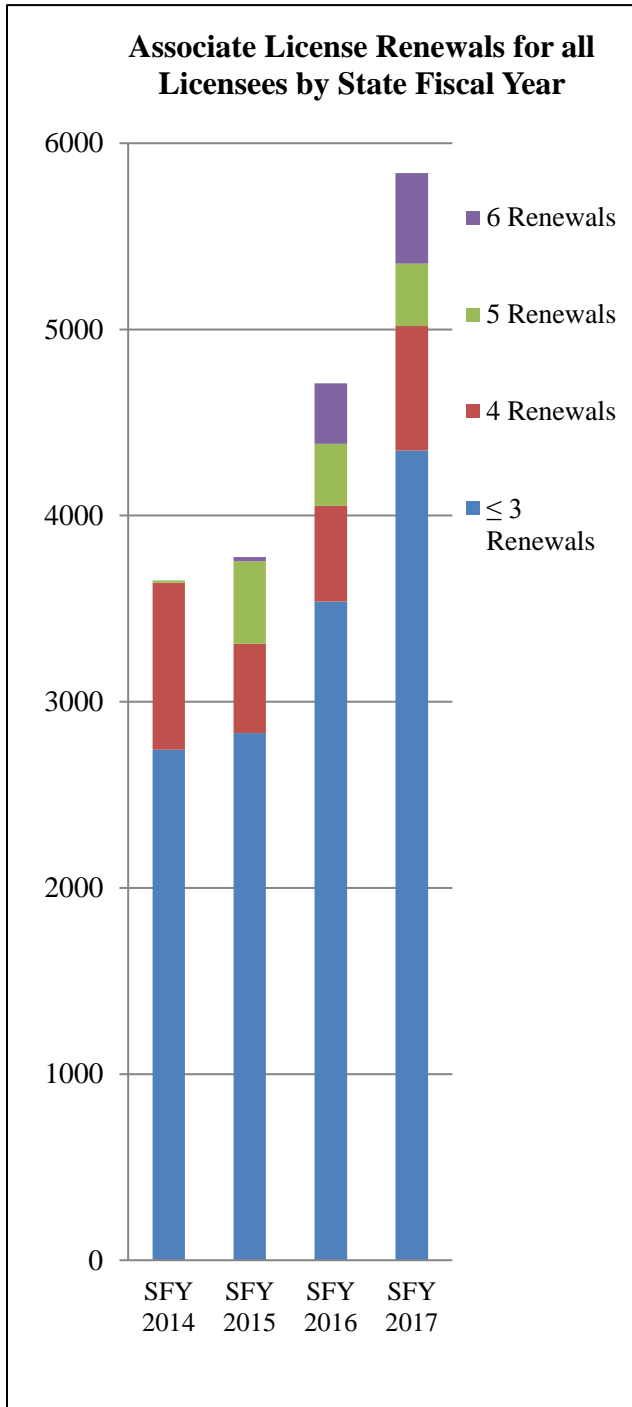
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Wiesman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH
Secretary of Health

cc: Members, House of Representatives Health Care and Wellness Committee
Members, Senate Health Care Committee
Drew Shirk, Executive Director of Legislative Affairs, Governor’s Office
Kristin Peterson, Department of Health

Graph 1.



Graph 2.

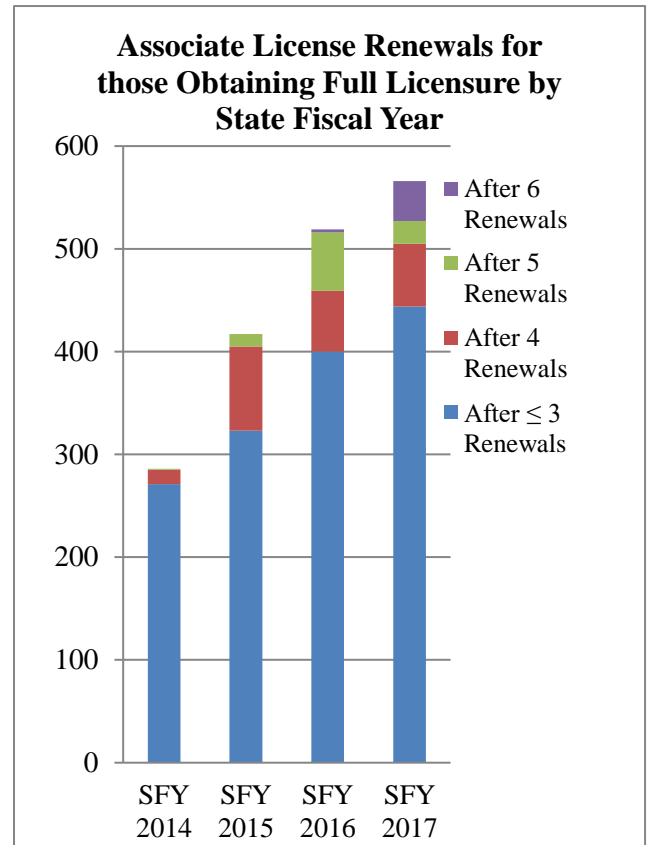


Table 1.

**Associate License Renewals by State Fiscal Year,
Professionals Licensed Under Chapter 18.225 RCW, by State Fiscal Year**

Associate Profession	Times Renewed	SFY 14	SFY 15	SFY 16	SFY 17	SFY 18	SFY 19
Mental Health Counselor	Three or fewer	1,419	1,388	1,722	2,108		
	Four	250	233	245	299		
	Five	5	190	139	134		
	Six	NA	7	139	211		
	Total	1,647	1,808	2,247	2,752		
Marriage and Family Therapist	Three or fewer	283	389	483	620		
	Four	216	50	57	77		
	Five	0	44	37	39		
	Six	NA	1	26	42		
	Total	499	484	603	778		
Advanced Social Worker	Three or fewer	238	125	151	157		
	Four	61	28	21	37		
	Five	1	55	33	22		
	Six	NA	4	46	64		
	Total	300	212	251	280		
Independent Clinical Social Worker	Three or fewer	979	930	1,182	1,465		
	Four	193	179	191	255		
	Five	7	154	124	141		
	Six	NA	10	114	168		
	Total	1,179	1,273	1,611	2,029		
Grand Total - All Renewals		3,625	3,777	4,712	5,839		

Table 2.

**Full Licensees: Times Renewed Prior to Obtaining Full Licensure,
Professionals Licensed Under Chapter 18.225 RCW, by State Fiscal Year**

Times Renewed Prior to Full Licensure	SFY 14	SFY 15	SFY 16	SFY 17	SFY 18	SFY 19
Three or fewer	271	323	400	444		
Four	14	82	59	61		
Five	1	12	57	22		
Six	NA	0	3	39		
Grand Total - All Renewals	286	417	519	566		