

WAC 246-341-0300 Agency licensure and certification—General information. The department licenses behavioral health agencies and certifies them to provide behavioral health treatment services. To obtain and maintain licensure and certification, an applicant must meet the requirements of this chapter, applicable local and state rules, and applicable state and federal statutes and regulations. In addition, the applicant must meet the applicable specific service requirements for all behavioral health treatment services certified by the department.

The following licensure process in this section does not apply to a tribe that is licensed or seeking licensure via attestation as described in WAC 246-341-0367.

(1) Initial licensure of a behavioral health agency - Main site. The applicant shall submit a licensing application to the department that is signed by the agency's designated official. The application must include the following:

(a) The physical address of the agency;

(b) A list of the specific services for which the applicant is seeking certification;

(c) A statement assuring the location where the services will be provided meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and that any agency-operated facility where behavioral health services will be provided is:

(i) Suitable for the purposes intended, including having adequate space for private personal consultation with an individual and clinical record storage that adheres to confidentiality requirements;

(ii) Not a personal residence; and

(iii) Approved as meeting all local and state building and safety requirements, as applicable.

(d) Payment of associated fees according to WAC 246-341-0365;

(e) A copy of the applicant's master business license that authorizes the organization to do business in Washington state;

(f) A copy of the disclosure statement and report of findings from a background check of the administrator completed within the previous three months of the application date; and

(g) A copy of the policies and procedures specific to the agency and the services for which the applicant is seeking certification that address all of the applicable requirements of this chapter.

(2) The department may issue a single agency license when the applicant identifies behavioral health treatment services will be provided in multiple buildings and either:

(a) The applicant operates the multiple buildings on the same campus as a single integrated system with governance by a single authority or body over all staff and buildings; or

(b) All behavioral health treatment services will be provided in buildings covered under a single hospital license.

(3) Initial licensure of a behavioral health agency - Branch site. To add a branch site, an existing behavioral health agency shall meet the application requirements in subsection (1)(a) through (c) of this section and submit to the department:

(a) A written declaration that a current copy of agency policies and procedures that address all of the applicable requirements of this chapter are accessible to the branch site;

(b) A copy of policies and procedures for any behavioral health service that is unique to the branch site location, if applicable; and

(c) A copy of the disclosure statement and report of findings from a background check of the administrator completed within the previous three months of the application date, if the administrator of the branch site is different than the administrator of the main site location.

(4) License renewal.

(a) To renew a main site or branch site license and certification, an agency shall submit to the department a renewal request signed by the agency's designated official. The renewal request must:

(i) Be received by the department before the expiration date of the agency's current license; and

(ii) Include full payment of the specific renewal fee according to WAC 246-341-0365.

(b) The department shall renew an agency's main site or branch site license if all the requirements for renewal are met and the renewal request is received before the expiration date of the agency's current license.

(5) Amending a license. A license amendment is required when there is a change in the administrator, when adding or removing a service, or when closing a location. To amend a license the agency shall submit to the department a licensing application requesting the amendment that is signed by the agency's designated official. The application process shall include the following requirements as applicable to the amendment being requested:

(a) Change of the administrator. The application must include a copy of the disclosure statement and report of findings from a background check of the new administrator completed within the previous three months of the application date and within thirty days of the change;

(b) Adding a service. The application must include:

(i) The physical address or addresses of the agency-operated facility or facilities where the new service(s) will be provided;

(ii) A copy of the agency's policies and procedures relating to the new service(s); and

(iii) Payment of fees according to WAC 246-341-0365.

(c) Canceling a service.

(i) The agency must provide notice to individuals who receive the service(s) to be canceled. The notice shall be provided at least thirty days before the service(s) are canceled and the agency must assist individuals in accessing services at another location.

(ii) The application must include the physical address or addresses of the agency-operated facility or facilities where the service(s) will no longer be provided.

(d) Closing a location.

(i) The application must include the name of the licensed agency or entity storing and managing the records, including:

(A) The method of contact, such as a telephone number, electronic address, or both; and

(B) The mailing and street address where the records will be stored.

(ii) When a closing agency that has provided substance use disorder services arranges for the continued storage and management of clinical records by a qualified service organization (QSO), the closing agency must enter into a written agreement with the QSO that meets the requirements of 42 C.F.R. Part 2.

(iii) In the event of an agency closure the agency must provide each individual currently being served:

(A) Notice of the agency closure at least thirty days before the date of closure;

(B) Assistance with accessing services at another location; and

(C) Information on how to access records to which the individual is entitled.

(6) Change of ownership.

(a) Change of ownership means one of the following:

(i) The ownership of a licensed behavioral health agency changes from one distinct legal owner to another distinct legal owner;

(ii) The type of business changes from one type to another, such as, from a sole proprietorship to a corporation; or

(iii) The current ownership takes on a new owner of five percent or more of the organizational assets.

(b) When a licensed behavioral health agency changes ownership, the department shall require:

(i) An initial license application from the new owner in accordance with subsection (1) of this section. The new agency must receive a new license under the new ownership before providing any behavioral health service; and

(ii) A statement from the current owner regarding the disposition and management of clinical records in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

(7) Change in location. A licensed behavioral health agency must receive a new license under the new location's address before providing any behavioral health service at that address. The agency shall submit to the department a licensing application requesting a change in location that is signed by the agency's designated official. The application must include:

(a) The new address;

(b) A statement assuring the location meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and that any agency-operated facility where behavioral health services will be provided is:

(i) Suitable for the purposes intended, including having adequate space for private personal consultation with an individual and clinical record storage that adheres to confidentiality requirements;

(ii) Not a personal residence; and

(iii) Approved as meeting all local and state building and safety requirements, as applicable.

(c) Payment of initial licensure fees.

(8) Granting a license. A new or amended license or service-specific certification will not be granted to an agency until:

(a) All of the applicable notification and application requirements of this section are met; and

(b) The department has reviewed and approved the policies and procedures for initial licensure or addition of new services that demonstrate that the agency will operate in compliance with the licensure and service-specific certification standards.

(9) Effective date. An agency's license and any behavioral health services certification is effective for up to twelve months from the effective date, subject to the agency maintaining compliance with the minimum license and certification standards in this chapter.

(10) After receiving the license. The agency shall post the department-issued license and certification(s) in a conspicuous place on the agency's premises, and, if applicable, on the agency's branch site premises.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 71.24.037, 71.05.560, 71.34.380, 18.205.160, 71.24.037 and chapters 71.05, 71.24, and 71.34 RCW. WSR 21-12-042, § 246-341-0300, filed 5/25/21, effective 7/1/21. Statutory Authority: 2018 c 201 and 2018 c 291. WSR 19-09-062, § 246-341-0300, filed 4/16/19, effective 5/17/19.]