



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH SYSTEMS QUALITY ASSURANCE
PO Box 47850, Olympia, WA 98504-7850

July 17, 2023

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing today to provide information about rulemaking regarding education and training requirements for massage therapy.

The Board of Massage (board) in coordination with the Department of Health (department) is considering amendments to the education and training rule to include parameters on online and virtual education and adding health equity awareness training.

To address the difficulties related to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic that impacted massage therapy schools, in March 2020 the Board of Massage allowed all massage programs to continue to operate their board-approved program in a distance learning format upon approval by and in accordance with the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's requirements. Hybrid massage programs continue to operate, but no rules exist to guide a school on what topics or how many hours may be in a virtual/online/remote format versus what must be in person.

In 2021, the legislature passed [ESSB 5229](#) concerning health equity continuing education for health care professionals codified as [RCW 43.70.613](#) which directs the rule-making authority for each health profession licensed under [Title 18 RCW](#) subject to continuing education, to adopt rules requiring a licensee to complete health equity continuing education training at least once every four years. The board is addressing this in a current rules project. In addition to continuing education requirements, the board would also like to consider adding health equity awareness to initial education and training requirements for licensure.

For additional information and to provide written feedback, contact Megan Maxey, Program Manager, at (360) 236-4945 or megan.maxey@doh.wa.gov. For tribal relations issues, please contact the department's Tribal Relations Director at DOHTribalRelations@doh.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Megan Maxey, Program Manager

Health Systems Quality Assurance

cc: Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, Secretary, Department of Health
Jessica Todorovich, Chief of Staff, Department of Health
Kristopher Holiday, Chief, Office of Strategic Partnerships, Department of Health
Lacy Fehrenbach, Chief, Office of Prevention, Safety and Health, Department of Health
Kristin Peterson, Chief, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health
Candice Wilson – Quatz'tenaut (Lummi), Tribal Policy Director, Department of Health
Sasha De Leon, Assistant Secretary, Health Systems Quality Assurance, Department of Health
Shawna Fox, Director, Office of Health Professions, Department of Health