



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Olympia, Washington 98504

August 29, 2024

Dear Residential Treatment Facility Operator:

SUBJECT: Residential Substance Use Disorder and Withdrawal Management Behavioral Health Agency (BHA)- Legislation Implementation

RE: Transfer and Discharge Policies

Please read carefully as there are legal requirements for behavioral health agencies.

Greetings!

In 2024, the legislature passed Second Substitute [6228-S2.SL.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#) requiring behavioral health agencies providing voluntary residential substance use disorder treatment or withdrawal management services to submit certain policies to the department and directing the department to develop a model policy and establish reporting requirements in rule.

Your agency has been identified as meeting the criteria in the law that requires one-time submission of the policies as described below.

Required Policy Submission

By October 1, 2024, all licensed and certified BHAs providing voluntary residential substance use disorder treatment or withdrawal management must submit to the department any policies related to:

- Situations in which the agency transfers or discharges a person without the person's consent
- Therapeutic progressive disciplinary processes that the agency maintains
- Procedures to assure safe transfers and discharges when a patient is discharged without the patient's consent

If your BHA does not have any applicable policies the law requires you to notify the department by October 1, 2024.

If you feel any of the information above is incorrect, please alert us so that we may have an opportunity to correct any errors.

Please submit these policies or an attestation that the agency has no applicable policies by email to the Office of Health System Quality Assurance – Inpatient Behavioral Health Facilities Program Manager Dan Overton (Dan.Overton@doh.wa.gov).

This letter is also to invite you to subscribe to the BHA GovDelivery list to be notified of upcoming work on this topic and ways to be involved.

If you wish to, please go to [Subscribe to GovDelivery](#) on the DOH Webpage ([Behavioral Health Agencies \(BHA\) | Washington State Department of Health](#)), enter your email address and then select Health Systems Quality Assurance (HSQA) and Behavioral Health Care Integration, along with any other topics that are of interest to you. We look forward to engaging with you on this exciting project!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Overton", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Overton
RTF/Psych Hospital Program Manager
Department of Health
Health Systems Quality Assurance