

# Concise Explanatory Statement

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Summary of comments and agency responses regarding rules for birth doula filed under WSR 24-20-008 impacting WAC 246-835-010 and 246-835-025 clarifying “culturally congruent care.”

## Background

The Department of Health (department) received a petition for rulemaking in February of 2024. The petition requested that the department update the definition of “culturally congruent care” in rule. Rulemaking was initiated and included amendments to WAC 246-835-010 and 246-835-025.

The amendments to WAC 246-835-010 update the definition of the term “culturally congruent care” to better reflect the practice of “culturally congruent care” for the birth doula profession. Amendments to WAC 246-835-025, Culturally congruent ancestral practices, training, and education state that applicants are required to demonstrate knowledge of culturally congruent ancestral practices, training, and education that upholds culturally congruent care. The adopted rules address concerns expressed by the birth doula community that best practices for the profession, such as culturally congruent care, were not accurately represented in the rules. The adopted amendments incorporate the updated definition and provide clarity regarding the training and education requirements and the required competency based trainings.

## Comments

During the public hearing there were five individuals who commented in support of the rule. Comments in support expressed appreciation for the adopted rules while also recognizing that many birth doulas are already practicing culturally congruent care, explained how culturally congruent care can improve the experience that pregnant clients have with their doula and the birthing experience, and affirmed that these rules will help make best practices clear for all Washington certified birth doulas.