



# RULE-MAKING ORDER

**CR-103P (May 2009)**  
(Implements RCW 34.05.360)

Agency: Department of Health

**Permanent Rule Only**

**Effective date of rule:**

**Permanent Rules**

- 31 days after filing.
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ (If less than 31 days after filing, a specific finding under RCW 34.05.380(3) is required and should be stated below)

**Any other findings required by other provisions of law as precondition to adoption or effectiveness of rule?**

- Yes
  - No
- If Yes, explain:

**Purpose:** WAC 246-16-800 through 890 - Sanction Schedule. These rules adopt a sanction schedule for disciplinary action in all credentialed health care professions as required by RCW 18.130.390.

**Citation of existing rules affected by this order:**

Repealed: none  
 Amended: none  
 Suspended: none

**Statutory authority for adoption:** RCW 18.130.390

**Other authority :**

**PERMANENT RULE (Including Expedited Rule Making)**

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 09-10-089 on May 6, 2009 (date).  
 Describe any changes other than editing from proposed to adopted version:

Tier descriptions in WAC 246-16-810 (practice below standard of care), WAC 246-16-820 (sexual misconduct or contact), and WAC 246-16-830 (abuse) were changed to clarify the differences between the tiers.

If a preliminary cost-benefit analysis was prepared under RCW 34.05.328, a final cost-benefit analysis is available by contacting:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Date adopted:** 07/22/09

**CODE REVISER USE ONLY**

**NAME (TYPE OR PRINT)**  
Mary C. Selecky

**SIGNATURE**

**TITLE**  
Secretary of Health

**OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER  
 STATE OF WASHINGTON  
 FILED**

**DATE: July 22, 2009  
 TIME: 10:00 AM**

**WSR 09-15-190**

**Note: If any category is left blank, it will be calculated as zero.  
No descriptive text.**

Count by whole WAC sections only, from the WAC number through the history note.  
A section may be counted in more than one category.

The number of sections adopted in order to comply with:

Federal statute:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Federal rules or standards:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Recently enacted state statutes:	New	<u>8</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>

The number of sections adopted at the request of a nongovernmental entity:

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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The number of sections adopted in the agency's own initiative:

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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The number of sections adopted in order to clarify, streamline, or reform agency procedures:

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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The number of sections adopted using:

Negotiated rule making:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Pilot rule making:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Other alternative rule making:	New	<u>8</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>

## SANCTIONS

### NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-16-800 Sanctions--General provisions.** (1) Applying these rules.

(a) The disciplining authorities listed in RCW 18.130.040(2) will apply these rules to determine sanctions imposed for unprofessional conduct by a license holder in any active, inactive, or expired status. The rules do not apply to applicants.

(b) The disciplining authorities will apply the rules in:

(i) Orders under RCW 18.130.110 or 18.130.160; and

(ii) Stipulations to informal disposition under RCW 18.130.172.

(c) Sanctions will begin on the effective date of the order.

(2) Selecting sanctions.

(a) The disciplining authority will select sanctions to protect the public and, if possible, rehabilitate the license holder.

(b) The disciplining authority may impose the full range of sanctions listed in RCW 18.130.160 for orders and RCW 18.130.172 for stipulations to informal dispositions.

(i) Suspension or revocation will be imposed when the license holder cannot practice with reasonable skill or safety.

(ii) Permanent revocation may be imposed when the disciplining authority finds the license holder can never be rehabilitated or can never regain the ability to practice safely.

(iii) Surrender of a credential may be imposed when the license holder is at the end of his or her effective practice and surrender alone is enough to protect the public. The license holder must agree to retire and not resume practice.

(iv) Indefinite suspension may be imposed in default and waiver of hearing orders. If indefinite suspension is not imposed in a default or waiver of hearing order, the disciplining authority shall impose sanctions determined according to these rules.

(v) "Oversight" means a period of time during which respondent must engage in on-going affirmative conduct intended to encourage rehabilitation and ensure public safety. It also includes active compliance monitoring by the disciplining authority. The passage of time without additional complaints or violations, with or without payment of a fine or costs, is not, by itself, oversight.

(c) The disciplining authority may deviate from the sanction schedules in these rules if the schedule does not adequately

address the facts in a case. The disciplining authority will acknowledge the deviation and state its reasons for deviating from the sanction schedules in the order or stipulation to informal disposition.

(d) If the unprofessional conduct is not described in a schedule, the disciplining authority will use its judgment to determine appropriate sanctions. The disciplining authority will state in the order or stipulation to informal disposition that no sanction schedule applies.

(3) Using sanction schedules.

(a) Step 1: The findings of fact in an order or the allegations in an informal disposition describe the unprofessional conduct. The disciplining authority uses the unprofessional conduct described to select the appropriate sanction schedule contained in WAC 246-16-810 through 246-16-860.

(i) If the act of unprofessional conduct falls in more than one sanction schedule, the greater sanction is imposed.

(ii) If different acts of unprofessional conduct fall in the same sanction schedule, the highest sanction is imposed and the other acts of unprofessional conduct are considered aggravating factors.

(b) Step 2: The disciplining authority identifies the severity of the unprofessional conduct and identifies a tier using the sanction schedule tier descriptions.

(c) Step 3: The disciplining authority identifies aggravating or mitigating factors using the list in WAC 246-16-890. The disciplining authority describes the factors in the order or stipulation to informal disposition.

(d) Step 4: The disciplining authority selects sanctions within the identified tier. The starting point for duration of the sanctions is the middle of the tier range.


(i) Aggravating factors move the appropriate sanctions towards the maximum end of the tier range.

(ii) Mitigating factors move the appropriate sanctions towards the minimum end of the tier range.

(iii) Mitigating or aggravating factors may result in determination of a sanction outside the range in the tier. The disciplining authority will state its reasons for deviating from the tier range in the sanction schedule in the order or stipulation to informal disposition. The disciplining authority has complied with these rules if it acknowledges the deviation and states its reasons for deviating from the sanction schedules in the order or stipulation to informal disposition.

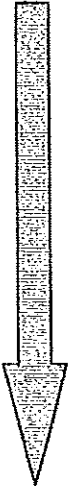
NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-16-810 Sanction schedule--Practice below standard of care.**

<b>PRACTICE BELOW STANDARD OF CARE</b>				
<b>Severity</b>	<b>Tier / Conduct</b>	<b>Sanction Range In consideration of Aggravating &amp; Mitigating Circumstances</b>		<b>Duration</b>
		<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	
least    greatest	<b>A – Caused no or minimal patient harm or a risk of minimal patient harm</b>	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 3 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, etc.	0-3 years
	<b>B – Caused moderate patient harm or risk of moderate to severe patient harm</b>	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. OR revocation.	2 years - 5 years unless revocation
	<b>C – Caused severe harm or death to a human patient</b>	Oversight for 3 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. In addition - demonstration of knowledge or competency.	Permanent conditions, restrictions or revocation.	3 years - permanent

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-16-820 Sanction schedule--Sexual misconduct or contact.**


<b>SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR CONTACT</b> (including convictions for sexual misconduct)				
Severity	Tier / Conduct	Sanction Range In consideration of Aggravating & Mitigating Circumstances		Duration
		Minimum	Maximum	
least    greatest	A – Inappropriate conduct, contact, or statements of a sexual or romantic nature	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, probation, supervision, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 3 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, etc.	0-3 years
	B – Sexual contact, romantic relationship, or sexual statements that risk or result in patient harm	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. OR revocation.	2 years - 5 years unless revocation
	C – Sexual contact, including but not limited to contact involving force and/or intimidation, and convictions of sexual offenses in RCW 9.94A.030.	1 year suspension AND oversight for 5 additional years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. AND demonstration of successful completion of evaluation and treatment.	Permanent conditions, restrictions, or revocation.	6 years - permanent

NEW SECTION

WAC 246-16-830


Sanction schedule--Abuse--Physical and

emotional.

<b>ABUSE -- Physical and/or Emotional</b>				
<b>Severity</b>	<b>Tier / Conduct</b>	<b>Sanction Range</b> In consideration of Aggravating & Mitigating Circumstances		<b>Duration</b>
		<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	
least    greatest	<b>A</b> – Verbal or nonverbal intimidation, forceful contact, or disruptive or demeaning behavior, including general behavior not necessarily directed at a specific patient or patients	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, probation, supervision, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 3 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, etc.	0-3 years
	<b>B</b> – Abusive unnecessary or forceful contact or disruptive or demeaning behavior causing or risking moderate mental or physical harm, including general behavior not directed at a specific patient or patients.	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. OR revocation.	2 years - 5 years unless revocation
	<b>C</b> – Severe physical, verbal, or forceful contact, or emotional disruptive behavior, that results in or risks significant harm or death	1 year suspension AND oversight for 5 additional years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. AND demonstration of successful completion of evaluation and treatment.	Permanent conditions, restrictions, or revocation.	6 years - permanent

NEW SECTION

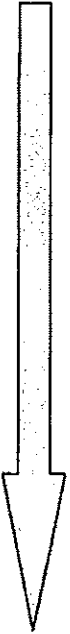
**WAC 246-16-840 Sanction schedule--Diversion of controlled substances or legend drugs.**

DIVERSION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES OR LEGEND DRUGS				
Severity	Tier/Conduct	Sanction Range In consideration of Aggravating & Mitigating Circumstances		Duration
		Minimum	Maximum	
least  greatest	A – Diversion with no or minimal patient harm or risk of harm	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, probation, supervision, evaluation, treatment, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, treatment etc.	0-5 years
	B – Diversion with moderate patient harm or risk of harm or for distribution	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, treatment, etc.	Oversight for 7 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, treatment, etc. OR revocation.	2 - 7 years unless revocation
	C – Diversion with severe physical injury or death of a patient or a risk of severe physical injury or death or for substantial distribution to others	1 year suspension AND oversight for 5 additional years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. AND demonstration of successful completion of evaluation and treatment.	Permanent conditions, restrictions OR revocation.	6 years - permanent

NEW SECTION


WAC 246-16-850 Sanction schedule--Substance abuse.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE				
Severity	Tier / Conduct	Sanction Range In consideration of Aggravating & Mitigating Circumstances		Duration
		Minimum	Maximum	
least    greatest	A – Misuse of drugs or alcohol with no to minimal patient harm or risk of harm	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, probation, supervision, evaluation, treatment, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, treatment, etc.	0-5 years
	B – Misuse of drugs or alcohol with moderate patient harm or risk of harm	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, treatment, etc.	Oversight for 7 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, treatment, etc. OR revocation.	2 - 7 years unless revocation
	C – Misuse of drugs or alcohol with severe physical injury or death of a patient or a risk of significant physical injury or death	1 year suspension AND oversight for 5 additional years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. AND demonstration of successful completion of evaluation and treatment.	Permanent conditions, restrictions OR revocation.	6 years - permanent

NEW SECTION

WAC 246-16-860 Sanction schedule--Criminal convictions.

<b>CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS (excluding sexual misconduct)</b>				
<b>Severity</b>	<b>Tier / Conviction</b>	<b>Sanction Range In consideration of Aggravating &amp; Mitigating Circumstances</b>		<b>Duration</b>
		<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	
least    greatest	<b>A – Conviction of a Gross Misdemeanor except sexual offenses in RCW 9.94A.030</b>	Conditions that may include reprimand, training, monitoring, probation, supervision, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include reprimand, training, monitoring, supervision, evaluation, probation, suspension, etc.	0-5 years
	<b>B – Conviction of a Class B, C, OR Unclassified Felony, except sexual offenses in RCW 9.94A.030</b>	Oversight for 2 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc.	Oversight for 5 years which may include suspension, probation, practice restrictions, training, monitoring, supervision, probation, evaluation, etc. OR revocation.	2 years - 5 years unless revocation
	<b>C – Conviction of a Class A Felony, except sexual offenses in RCW 9.94A.030</b>	5 years suspension	Permanent revocation	5 years - permanent revocation

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-16-890 Sanctions--Aggravating and mitigating factors.**

The following nonexclusive list identifies factors that may mitigate or aggravate the sanctions that should be imposed in an order or stipulation to informal disposition.

- (1) Factors related to the unprofessional conduct:
  - (a) Gravity of the unprofessional conduct;
  - (b) Age, capacity and/or vulnerability of the patient, client or victim;
  - (c) Number or frequency of the acts of unprofessional conduct;
  - (d) Injury caused by the unprofessional conduct;
  - (e) Potential for injury to be caused by the unprofessional conduct;
  - (f) Degree of responsibility for the outcome;
  - (g) Abuse of trust;
  - (h) Intentional or inadvertent act(s);
  - (i) Motivation is criminal, immoral, dishonest or for personal

gain;

- (j) Length of time since the unprofessional conduct occurred.
- (2) Factors related to the license holder:
  - (a) Experience in practice;
  - (b) Past disciplinary record;
  - (c) Previous character;
  - (d) Mental and/or physical health;
  - (e) Personal circumstances;
  - (f) Personal problems having a nexus with the unprofessional conduct.
- (3) Factors related to the disciplinary process:
  - (a) Admission of key facts;
  - (b) Full and free disclosure to the disciplining authority;
  - (c) Voluntary restitution or other remedial action;
  - (d) Bad faith obstruction of the investigation or discipline process or proceedings;
  - (e) False evidence, statements or deceptive practices during the investigation or discipline process or proceedings;
  - (f) Remorse or awareness that the conduct was wrong;
  - (g) Impact on the patient, client, or victim.
- (4) General factors:
  - (a) License holder's knowledge, intent, and degree of responsibility;
  - (b) Presence or pattern of other violations;
  - (c) Present moral fitness of the license holder;
  - (d) Potential for successful rehabilitation;
  - (e) Present competence to practice;
  - (f) Dishonest or selfish motives;
  - (g) Illegal conduct;
  - (h) Heinousness of the unprofessional conduct;
  - (i) Ill repute upon the profession;
  - (j) Isolated incident unlikely to reoccur.