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Washington

Non-Medicare

Home Health Agency Administrative Policies *and* Procedures Manual

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EDITING YOUR MANUAL

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There are several text placeholders that will need to be replaced with your agency's information. Text placeholders are as follows:

[AGENCY NAME] — Your agency's business name

[BUSINESS TYPE] — Your agency's business type

[GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE AREA] — Your agency's geographic coverage area, including cities, towns, and/or counties

[HOURS OF OPERATION] — Your agency's normal hours of operation

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[AGENCY NAME]

[LOGO]

WASHINGTON NON-MEDICARE HOME HEALTH ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

UPDATED 2026-10-29

THE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

I attest that the following administrative policies and procedures have been reviewed by me and have been accepted and approved by the Owner/Governing Body as the policies and procedures that guide the practices and services for [AGENCY NAME].

Owner/Administrator Date

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ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

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POLICY AND PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

DEFINITIONS

Policy: A Statement of principles formulated, approved, and enforced by the Owner/designees to direct and limit its actions as related to a specific subject.

Procedure: A set of established steps or a prescribed method to be followed routinely for optimally effective achievement of a desired result.

POLICY

[AGENCY NAME] follows an established process for the development, approval, implementation, and access to its policies and procedures. Agency policies and procedures reflect an emphasis of quality service, current and ethical standards of practice, patient rights, and the agency's mission Statement.

Policies and procedures will be reviewed and revised if needed at least annually by the Owner/designees.

Administrative policies and procedures delineate lines of authority and responsibilities for governance, planning, public communications, and financial control of the agency.

Operational policies and procedures define personnel management, infection control, and compliance with State employment regulations.

Agency patient care policies and procedures are developed by the clinical management with staff input, reviewed, and approved by the Owner/Designees.

PURPOSE

1. To ensure accountability and responsibility in the oversight, review, and approval of policies and procedures that direct the services of the agency.
2. To delineate the authority for the approval process.

PROCEDURE

1. The home health agency is licensed in the State of Washington.
3. Policies and procedures will be written in a standardized format, approved by the Owner/designees, maintained on the Internet, and organized for efficient reference and access.

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4. The Owner/designees will review annually all policies and procedures for needed changes.
5. The Clinical Supervisor may develop or amend policies and procedures and forward them to the Administrator for review. If the policy as amended or developed meets with the Administrator's approval, the Owner/Governing Body will be asked to approve it. Upon approval, the Administrator will sign and date the "Acceptance of the Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual." This form will appear at the front of the manual.
6. Once approved, the Administrator will implement the policy notifying affected persons and distributing related instructions (if needed) to related personnel education. If a policy or procedure requires competency testing to confirm new practice, the Administrator or designee will arrange for that competency testing.
7. Policies and procedures may be shared with community resources and facilities serving the agency patients for continuity of care, patients or their representatives, and federal and State authorities upon request. Personnel will have access to all policies including personnel policies.

REFERENCES:

WAC 246-335-515

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AGENCY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

POLICY

The [AGENCY NAME] Owner/Designees understands that as a licensed home health agency in the State of Washington that is has certain rights and responsibilities and will adhere and to those responsibilities.

PURPOSE

To assure all responsibilities are met under WAC 246-335-335

PROCEDURE

1. An applicant or licensee must:
    a. Comply with the provisions of chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter.
    b. Maintain at least one in-State office location where records are kept, secured, and accessible.
    c. Display the license issued by the Department of Health in an area within the main office that is visible to the public, including branch office locations if applicable.
    d. Cooperate with the Department of Health during surveys which may include reviewing licensee records and conducting on-site visits with client or patient consent.
    e. At least thirty days before the expiration date of the current license, the licensee must submit to the department:
        i. A completed renewal licensing application on forms provided by the department.
        ii. Evidence of continuing insurance coverage according to WAC 246-335-320 (2)(b);
        iii. A completed and signed full-time equivalent employee worksheet on forms provided by the department.
        iv. Copies of the most current criminal history background checks and disclosure statements for the administrator, director of clinical services, or supervisor of direct care services in accordance with WAC 246-335-320 (2)(d). All criminal history background checks and disclosure statements required under this chapter must be renewed within two years from the date of the previous check.

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v. A description of the agency's current organizational structure. For example, an organizational chart or narrative describing key positions and duties.

vi. Documentation required under WAC 246-335-350, if initially applying or reapplying for substantial equivalency status; (7) Other information as required by the department; and (8) Fees specified in WAC 246-335-990.

f. Notify the Department of Health in writing within thirty days of any of the following:

i. Changes of administrator, director of clinical services, or supervisor of direct care services.

ii. Beginning or ceasing operation of any office location(s).

iii. Ceasing operation of home care, home health, hospice, or hospice care centers services.

iv. Decreasing home care, home health, or hospice service areas; and

v. Survey or monitoring decisions and findings from a Department of Health approved accrediting organization, DSHS, or area agency on aging for agencies approved through substantial equivalency according to WAC 246-335-350.

g. Request approval to expand State licensing home care, home health, or hospice service areas, by submitting an amended application, on forms provided by the Department of Health, which lists all service areas for which the agency is seeking approval and information based on the criteria in WAC 246-335-415(6), 246-335-515(6), or 246-335-615(6).

i. To request approval to expand services areas for home health or hospice agencies that are certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, a licensee must contact the Department of Health's certificate of need program and follow their separate application and approval process.

ii. Licensees must receive Department of Health approval for service area expansion prior to providing services in the proposed expanded service area(s).

8. [AGENCY NAME] understands that the Department of Health may:

a. Conduct unannounced surveys at any time and at least once during a licensure period, except for agencies approved through substantial equivalency according to WAC 246-335-350.

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b. Survey a licensee at any time if the Department of Health has reason to believe the licensee is providing unsafe, insufficient, inadequate, or inappropriate client or patient care.

c. Investigate any person suspected of advertising, operating, managing, conducting, opening, or maintaining an in-home service [AGENCY NAME] or providing in-home services, including hospice care center services, without a license unless exempt from licensure under RCW 70.127.040 and 70.127.050.

d. Investigate complaints against in-home services licensees that allege noncompliance with chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter.

e. Investigate allegations of noncompliance with RCW 43.43.830 through 43.43.842, and, when necessary, in consultation with law enforcement personnel.

f. Require the licensee to complete additional criminal history background checks and disclosure Statements for an individual associated with the licensee or having direct contact with children under sixteen years of age, people with developmental disabilities, or vulnerable persons if the Department of Health has reason to believe that offenses specified under RCW 43.43.830 have occurred since completion of the previous disclosure Statement and criminal background inquiry.

9. [AGENCY NAME] cooperates with the Department of Health during surveys which may include reviewing licensee records and conducting on-site visits with patient or client consent.

10. [AGENCY NAME]understands that to ensure compliance with chapters 246-335 WAC and 70.127 RCW, the Department of Health may:

    a. Issue a Statement of deficiencies following a survey which identifies noncompliance with chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter. The Statement of deficiencies will include a brief Statement of what is required to achieve compliance, the date by which the Department of Health requires compliance to be achieved, contact information for any technical assistance services provided by the Department of Health and notice of the process and timeline for requesting an extension of time for good cause to achieve compliance.

    b. Require licensee to submit a written plan of correction within ten working days of receipt of the Statement of deficiencies to address deficiencies that are determined to not be significant, broadly systemic, or recurring.

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c. Under this chapter, a "plan of correction" is a form developed by the Department of Health and completed by the licensee that describes:
    i. How each deficiency will be or was corrected.
    ii. What measures or monitors will be put in place to ensure the deficiencies do not recur.
    iii. Who is responsible for correcting each deficiency; and when each deficiency will be or has been corrected.
    iv. The licensee must complete all corrections within sixty days unless the Department of Health authorizes a longer time frame for correction of some of the deficiencies. Implementation of the plan of correction is subject to verification by the Department of Health.
d. Issue a directed plan of correction following a survey which identifies deficiencies that are determined to be significant, broadly systemic, and are not in the categories specified in RCW 70.127.180(3) for which a licensee may be subject to a formal enforcement action.
    i. The Department of Health may choose to issue a directed plan of correction if the Department of Health deems the plan of correction submitted by the licensee to be unacceptable because the actions proposed will not correct the deficiencies, will take too long, or fails to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
    ii. Implementation, progression, and completion of the directed plan of correction may be verified by the Department of Health.
e. Deny, restrict, condition, modify, suspend, or revoke a li-cense and assess civil monetary penalties as authorized in RCW 70.127.170 and 70.127.180(3).
f. Summarily suspend or limit a license pending an enforcement action as authorized in RCW 34.05.479 if deficiencies are identified that pose an imminent risk of harm to clients or patients.

11. The licensee shall sign and return the completed plan of correction or directed plan of correction to the Department of Health on or before the required date.
12. Neither the requirement to submit a plan of correction nor a directed plan of correction is an [AGENCY NAME] action for which an adjudicative hearing must be afforded to the licensee.
13. The failure to correct the deficiencies in the Statement of deficiencies or the failure to comply with the plan of correction or directed plan of

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correction may be grounds for an action against the license or a civil monetary penalty under RCW 70.127.170 and 70.127.180(3).

14. If the Department of Health initiates action to deny, restrict, condition, modify, suspend, or revoke a license or to assess civil monetary penalties as authorized in RCW 70.127.170 and 70.127.180(3), the applicant or licensee will be afforded an adjudicative hearing opportunity under chapter 34.05 RCW, RCW 43.70.115, and chapter 246-10 WAC.
15. Responding to a "Directed plan of correction" developed by the Department of Health, based on a current Statement of deficiencies and a licensee's survey history, which specifies the corrective actions the licensee must take and time frames in which those actions are to be completed by submitting to the Department of Health within ten working days of receipt, a written plan of correction for each deficiency. It is further understood that all corrections will be completed within sixty days after the survey exit date, unless otherwise specified by the Department of Health; and no longer than ninety days after the survey exit date, a progress report describing corrections made and ongoing monitoring actions, unless otherwise specified by the Department of Health.
16. The Department of Health is responsible to provide a licensee with:
    a. a written Statement of deficiencies found during a survey; and
    b. a written service area approval or denial.
17. It is understood that the licensed Home Health [AGENCY NAME] may:
    a. Discuss findings observed during a survey with the surveyor, and
    b. Discuss the Statement of deficiencies, denial of service area or denial of an exemption with the Department of Health's manager.
18. Further it is understood that the [AGENCY NAME] has the right to respond to and contest a Statement of charges according to the following provisions:
    a. RCW 43.70.115, Department of Health authority for license approval, denial, restriction, conditioning, modification, suspension, and revocation.
    b. Chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act, and Chapter 246-10 WAC, Adjudicative proceedings.
19. To request an exemption from specific requirements in these WACs the applicant or licensee must submit a written request to the department including:

a. A description of the requested exemption and alternatives, if appropriate.

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b. Rationale for the exemption.

c. Impact of the exemption on public health and safety; and

d. Any other information the department requests.

e. The department may grant the applicant or licensee an exemption from a requirement of this chapter if:

   i. The department determines the exemption will not jeopardize public health or safety; and

   ii. The exemption is not contrary to the intent of chapter 70.127 RCW and the requirements of this chapter.

f. The licensee must retain a copy of each approved exemption and have them available at all times.

g. An exemption is limited to a specific requirement and for the licensee who receives it. The exemption does not apply to a new owner due to a change of ownership under WAC 246-335-330.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. The Department of Health may, in accordance with chapter 70.127 RCW:

   a. Issue an initial license including the in-home services category(ies) and Department of Health approved service area(s), if applicable, for twelve months following submission of a completed application and appropriate fee and following a survey that documents the applicant meets all the requirements of this chapter.

   b. Issue a renewal license including the in-home services category(ies) and Department of Health approved service area(s), if applicable, for a twenty-four-month period following submission of a completed application and appropriate fee.

   c. Issue a license for change of ownership including the in-home services category(ies) and Department of Health approved service area(s), if applicable, to the new licensee for the remainder of the current license period following submission of the required information and appropriate fee, under WAC 246-335-330.

20. The Department of Health may:

   a. Conduct surveys at any time and at least once during a licensure period to determine compliance with chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter, except for agencies with deemed status;

   b. Conduct one licensing survey inclusive of all in-home services categories.

   c. Investigate any person suspected of:

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i. Advertising, operating, managing, conducting, opening, or maintaining an in-home service [AGENCY NAME] or providing in-home services, including hospice care center services, without a license unless exempt from licensure under RCW 70.127.040 and 70.127.050; or

ii. Survey a licensee at any time if the Department of Health has reason to believe the licensee is providing unsafe, insufficient, inadequate, or inappropriate care.

d. Investigate allegations of noncompliance with RCW 43.43.830 through 43.43.845, when necessary, in consultation with law enforcement personnel.

e. Require licensees to complete additional disclosure Statements and background inquiries for an individual associated with the licensee or having direct contact with children under sixteen years of age, people with developmental disabilities, or vulnerable adults if the Department of Health has reason to believe that offenses specified under RCW 43.43.830 have occurred since completion of the previous disclosure Statement and criminal background inquiry.

f. Approve, deny, or revoke requests by home health, hospice or home care agencies for initial service area or service area expansion based on:

i. The licensee's demonstrated ability or inability to comply with this chapter as illustrated by substantiated complaint history, survey outcomes or enforcement action; and

ii. Evidence of the licensee's ability or inability to manage and supervise services throughout the approved service area under criteria listed in WAC 246-335-515.

g. Approve, deny, restrict, condition, modify, suspend, or revoke a license under this chapter under RCW 70.127.170 and 70.127.180(3).

h. Issue a Statement of deficiencies following a survey which identifies noncompliance with chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter; and

i. Prepare and serve upon the licensee or applicant at the earliest practical time a Statement of charges following a survey which identifies noncompliance with chapter 70.127 RCW and this chapter. The Statement of charges shall be accompanied by a notice that the licensee or applicant may request a hearing to contest the charges.

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SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCY

According to WAC 246-335-350 Substantial equivalency to the State survey requirement. To ensure compliance with chapters 246-335 WAC and 70.127 RCW the Department of Health has the following substantial equivalency options apply that satisfy the State survey requirement:

1. An in-home services licensee that is approved to provide home health or hospice services and is certified by the federal Medicare program is not subject to the STATE survey requirement when the following have been met:
    a. The Department of Health has determined that the applicable survey standards of the certification program are substantially equivalent to those required by this chapter and chapter 70.127 RCW.
    b. Verification that an on-site Medicare survey has been conducted during the previous twenty-four months; and
    c. The licensee or the federal Medicare program submits to the Department of Health the information required in subsection (4) of this section.

21. An in-home services licensee that is approved to provide home health or hospice services and is accredited by a Department of Health approved certification or accrediting organization is not subject to the STATE survey requirement when the following have been met:
    a. The Department of Health has determined that the applicable survey standards of the certification or accrediting program are substantially equivalent to those required by this chapter and chapter 70.127 RCW.
    b. Verification that an on-site accreditation survey has been conducted during the previous twenty-four months; and
    c. The licensee or the certification or accrediting program submits to the Department of Health the information required in subsection (4) of this section.

22. An in-home services licensee that is approved to provide home care services under contract with and monitored by DSHS or the AAA to provide home care services is not subject to the STATE sur-vey requirement when the following have been met:
    a. The Department of Health has determined that the applicable survey standards of DSHS or the AAA are substantially equivalent to those required by this chapter and chapter 70.127 RCW.
    b. Verification that an on-site DSHS or AAA monitoring has been conducted during the previous twenty-four (24) months.

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c. The licensee has submitted to the Department of Health a copy of the final executed contract; and

d. DSHS or the AAA submits to the Department of Health copies of monitoring reports and other relevant reports or finding that indicate compliance with licensure requirements, and the monitoring reports include samples of private pay patients, if applicable.

23. An in-home services licensee that is approved to provide home health or hospice services and is accredited by a Department of Health approved accrediting organization or certified by the federal Medicare program, which wants to be exempt from the State survey requirement as authorized in RCW 70.127.085, must submit to the Department of Health:

    a. Verification of initial or ongoing accreditation or certification; and

    b. A copy of the most recent decisions and findings of the ac-crediting organization or the federal Medicare program based on an on-site survey within the twenty-four-month period preceding the request for State 108 survey exemption.

24. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Department of Health from:

    a. Conducting validation surveys of agencies consistent with RCW 70.127.085

    b. Conducting initial surveys for applicants applying for initial licensure or licensees applying to add a new service category to their existing license under this chapter.

    c. Surveying in-home services licensees who have service categories that are not Medicare certified, accredited, or monitored by DSHS or the AAA; and

    d. Investigating complaints against in-home services licensees approved through substantial equivalency.

REFERENCES:

WAC 246-335-515
WAC 246-335-330
WAC 246-335-350
WAC 246-335-335
RCW 70.127
RCW 70.127.085
RCW 70.127.040 and 70.127.050
RCW 43.43.830 through 43.43.845
RCW 70.127.170 and 70.127.180(3)

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PLAN OF OPERATIONS

POLICY

[AGENCY NAME] has an established plan of operations for agency and has a system in place to assure updates the plan of operation that reflect current practice, and services provided by the [AGENCY NAME], and State and local laws.

PURPOSE

To ensure accountability and responsibility for compliance with State requirements.

To delineate the authority for the approval process.

PROCEDURE

[AGENCY NAME] has established and implemented policies and procedures which include a written plan of operation identifying:

1. A description of the organizational structure.
2. Personnel job descriptions.
3. Responsibilities of contractors and volunteers.
4. Services to be provided.
5. The days and hours of [AGENCY NAME] operation; and
6. Criteria for management and supervision of services throughout the service area(s) which include:
    a. How the initial assessment and development of the plan of care will be completed per WAC 246-335-540.
    b. How patient needs will be met when assigned personnel, volunteers, or contractors are unable to serve the patient.
    c. How supervision of personnel and volunteers and monitoring of services provided by contractors will occur which meet the requirements of WAC 246-335-545.
    d. How performance evaluations for personnel and volunteers and evaluation of services provided by contractors will be conducted per WAC 246-335-525; and
    e. How the quality improvement program required in WAC 246-335-555 will be applied throughout the approved service area.
7. A process to inform patients of alternative services prior to ceasing operation or when the licensee is unable to meet the patient's needs.

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8. A plan for preserving records, including the process to preserve or dispose of records prior to ceasing operation according to WAC 246-335-550 (7) and (8).
9. Time frames for filing documents in the patient records.
10. Emergency preparedness that addresses service delivery when natural disasters, man-made incidents, or public health emergencies occur that prevent normal agency operations. Include, at minimum: Risk assessment and emergency planning, communication plan, informing local officials of patients in need of evacuation, and staff training and drills to test emergency plan.
11. Have an identified Administrator who is responsible for:
    a. Overseeing the day-to-day operation and fiscal affairs of the [AGENCY NAME].
    b. Implementing the provisions of this section.
    c. Designating in writing an alternate to act in the administrator's absence.
    d. Providing management and supervision of services throughout all approved service areas according to subsection (6) of this section.
    e. Arranging for necessary services.
    f. Keeping contracts current and consistent with WAC 246-335-525.
    g. Serving as a liaison between the licensee, personnel, contractors, and volunteers.
    h. Ensuring personnel, contractors and volunteers are currently credentialed by the State of Washington, when appropriate, according to applicable practice acts and consistent with WAC 246-335-525.
    i. Ensuring personnel, contractors and volunteers comply with the licensee's policies and procedures.
    j. Implementing a quality improvement process consistent with WAC 246-335-555.
    k. Managing recordkeeping according to WAC 246-335-550.
    l. Ensuring supplies and equipment necessary to patient care are available, maintained, and in working order.
    m. Ensuring the accuracy of public information materials; and
    n. Ensuring current written policies and procedures are accessible to personnel, contractors, and volunteers during hours of operation.
12. The licensee must continue to update its plan of operation to reflect current practice, services provided by the [AGENCY NAME], and State and local laws.

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REFERENCES:

WAC 246-335-540
WAC 246-335-545
WAC 246-335-525
WAC 246-335-550 (7) and (8)

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