STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

September 19, 2025
Amended: December 8, 2025

HCLA: AFH #2025-039
HCLA: ALF #2025-037
HCLA: CCRSS #2025-020
HCLA: ESF #2025-025

IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL (SB) 5672: HOME CARE AIDE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND EXTENSION OF DEADLINES INCLUDING NURSING ASSISTANTS

Dear Administrator/Provider/Superintendent:

Residential Care Services (RCS) is notifying you of an emergency rule filed by the Department of Health (DOH) on November 10, 2025, under WSR 25-23-027 (CR-103E), to extend Home Care Aide (HCA) deadlines for certification to 365 days as required by Senate Bill (SB) 5672.

What Was Clarified: This filing now also includes nursing assistant (NA) applicants who are working in community-based settings, 365 days to become certified, the same as home care aides.

In April 2025, the Washington State Legislature passed Senate Bill 5672 (SB5672). The governor approved this bill, and it became statute on May 17, 2025. The Bill requires that DOH adopt rules to allow long-term care workers additional time to become certified as HCA **or NAC**.

The new certification deadline is 365 days from the date of hire – an extension from the previous 200-day requirement. This emergency rule is also **retroactive** for individuals who are currently pending a HCA certification **or NA certification and are now exempt from the home care aide certification per RCW 18.88B.041**. The rule also clarifies that the provisional certificate is not issued after 365 days from the date of hire (instead of the original 200 days) and allows for the additional 60 days, for a total of 425 days, to complete certification requirements as required under RCW 18.88B.035. The change is intended to provide caregivers and employers with additional flexibility and support during the certification process and aligns with ongoing efforts to reduce barriers in the long-term care workforce.

These timelines go into effect August 25, 2025, through December 31, 2027. These timelines apply to a pending applicant or a new applicant who has submitted an original application for certification as a home care aide by **December 31, 2027.**

How The Rules Will Be Implemented:

This means that any LTC provider that applied for HCA **or NA** certification by December 31, 2027 will receive the full 365 days from the date of hire. This also applies to individuals who have had their date of hire reset*.

**Reset means when an individual is "dismissed" by their employer and rehired setting a new timeline. Meaning a hire date was "reset" after the initial 200 days had passed.*

Examples For Clarification:

Applicant is within 200 days of the date of hire and currently pending certification.	The applicant's certification timeline will be re-set to 365-days by DOH.	The applicant and employer need to do nothing. The HCA/**NAC** deadline will be changed to 365 days from Date of Hire.
Applicant is over 365-days since the date of hire, and currently pending certification.	The applicant's certification timeline may be re-set to 365-days if you submit a new Employment Verification Form to the department with valid re-hire date.	The applicant has a PENDING application, and their original Date of Hire is over 365 days: An applicant **that has been rehired** needs to submit a new **Employment Verification Form** to the department with valid re-hire date. a) The applicant receives a NEW 365 days from the rehire date. NO NEW HCA APPLICATION IS REQUIRED.
Applicant is no longer able to work because they are over the original 200-day certification timeline and currently pending certification.	The applicant's certification timeline is re-set to 365-days from the date of hire, so they may continue working.	1. An applicant that has a PENDING application with DOH with a date of hire greater than 200 will automatically have their deadline set (by DOH) to 365 days from the original date of hire and can return to work UP TO this new deadline. 2. An applicant that: a. Has a pending application with DOH with a date of hire greater than 200 b. has been terminated c. and is REHIRED receives a NEW 365 days to get the HCA **or NA** certification if they submit a new **Employment Verification Form** to the department with valid re-hire date. NO NEW HCA/**NA** APPLICATION IS REQUIRED.
Applicant applies for certification on or before December 31, 2027, with a hire date on or before December 31, 2027.	Your certification timeline will be 365-days from your date of hire.	If the applicant has submitted a Home Care Aide application to DOH on or before December 31, 2027, with a hire date on or before December 31, 2027, the applicant receives 365 days from the Date of Hire to become HCA **or NA** certified.
Applicant applies for certification after December 31, 2027,	Your certification timeline will be 200-days from your date of hire.	If the applicant submits an HCA **or NA** application to DOH AFTER 12/31/2027, they receive 200 days from the Date of Hire regardless of what the Date of Hire may be. ** For example: An

regardless of the date of hire.		applicant that has a date of hire of 12/20/2027, but their HCA **or NA** application is submitted on 1/2/2028, has 200 days from 12/20/2027 to be HCA **or NA** certified.

Please note*: Providers who are Limited English Proficient* may request "provisional certification" through DOH. "Limited-English proficient" means that an individual has limited ability to read, write, or speak English. In any of the above situations LTC providers who are granted Provisional Certification by DOH will receive an additional 60 days (for a total of 425 days from the date of hire) to become certified as an HCA **or NA**.

This allowance expires December 31, 2027. The statute regarding the timeframe to complete Basic Training has not changed: RCW 74.39.074

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact RCSpolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

If you have any questions regarding the HCA certification process, please contact the Department of Health's Home Care Aide program at homecareaide@doh.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*

Attachments:

- WSR 25-23-027 (CR-103E)
- Senate Bill 5672 (2025)
- Home Care Aide FAQs and Process (DOH Website)
- DOH's notice of correction