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

July 14, 2026

HCLA: ALF #2026-028
HCLA: AFH #2026-028
HCLA: ESF #2026-021
HCLA: ICFIID #2026-008

Update on Community Program Pilots for Investigation of Facility-Reported Incidents

Dear Provider/Administrator:

This letter is to inform you Residential Care Services (RCS) will launch its community program pilots for investigation of facility-reported incidents (FRIs) on July 17th. Refer to HCLA 026-019, 026-017, 026-014, and 026-004 Dear Provider Letters. RCS announced in these letters it would be conducting "proof of concept" pilots in the assisted living facility (ALF), enhanced service facility (ESF), intermediate care for individuals with intellectual disabilities facility (ICF/IID), and adult family home (AFH) programs to test investigation of medium- and low-level harm FRIs using an administrative review/offsite investigation process. The AFH pilot is in Region 1 only.

FRI is an alleged incident providers must report to the state hotline as mandatory reporters. Medium- and low-level harm FRIs are not imminent danger (immediate jeopardy in ICF/IID program) or actual harm level incidents.

The pilots will last six months, July 17, 2026, through mid-January 2027. Their purpose is to test the feasibility and viability of conducting administrative review/offsite investigations of FRIs not requiring onsite investigations.

Washington Health Care Association, LeadingAge WA, the Adult Family Home Council, and RCS conducted joint provider trainings in June 2026, respectively for their specific programs. They introduced pilot expectations, timelines, scope, and structure.

All providers will continue reporting incidents as mandatory reporters to the Department. RCS asks ALF, ESF, and AFH facilities/providers to make 5 working days follow up reports in Online Incident Reporting portal (OIR) after their initial mandatory report, for the purpose of the pilot, for medium- and low-level harm reported incidents. The ICF/IID facilities will continue to make 5 working days follow up reports as a federal requirement. Please use OIR to submit documents instead of fax and emails.

The Department added document upload functions to initial mandatory reporting and follow-up reporting screens in OIR. Refer to the Upload Guide for guidance. Upload the below forms for your follow up reports.

Exhibit 359 Form - 27-257 (ICF/IID)
Exhibit 359 Form - 27-274 (ESF)
Exhibit 359 Form - 27-275 (AFH)
Exhibit 359 Form - 27-276 (ALF)

The pilots will not test investigation of imminent danger and actual harm mandatory reported incidents. It will not test public complaints about your facilities. RCS will continue to investigate these incidents and complaints on unannounced onsite visits.

Please take time to inform your key staff about the pilots' expectations, scope, timelines, and structure. Let them know about OIR upload capabilities.

Thank you for your continued commitment to residents' health and safety. If you have questions about this update, please contact Bett Schlemmer, Special Assistant to RCS Director, at bett.schlemmer@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

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