STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
Residential Care Services • PO BOX 45600 • Olympia, WA

10/01/2026

HCLA: ALF #2026-041
ESF #2026-030
Submission of an Application for Assisted Living Facility and Enhanced Services Facilities

Dear Administrator:

The Department of Social and Health Services (the department), in response to Executive Order 02-03, Improving Transparency and Building Efficiency in the State's Permitting and Licensing Process, will be implementing a change for when applications are accepted and processed.

The department's process for initial licensing in Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) is found in WAC 388-78A-2750, and Enhanced Services Facilities (ESF) is WAC 388-107-1150. The current process reflects the application as "pending" status while the department waits for approval from the Department of Health Construction Review Services (DOH/CRS), and State Fire Marshal (SFM) when applicable. ALF licensed bed capacity application requirements are found in WAC 388-78A-2800 and ESF application requirements in WAC 388-107-1330. When a licensed bed capacity application requires DOH/CRS and SFM approval, the application reflects the same "pending" status while the department awaits approval from external agencies.

Starting on **October 26, 2026,** to better meet the requirements of Executive Order 02-03 and accurately report application processing timelines, the department will accept and process applications for initial license and changes to licensed bed capacity applications only after receiving required approvals from DOH/CRS and SFM. If an initial or change in licensed bed capacity application for ALF or ESF is submitted to the department prior to receiving the required approvals, the application will be cancelled and the licensee will be asked to resubmit the application after the external agencies have issued approvals.

The changes made to when an application is accepted and processed do not change the licensing process, or the sequence of how applications for initial licensure or change in licensed bed capacity involving DOH/CRS and the SFM are reviewed. The change allows the department to reflect the actual application processing timeline when reporting data for Executive Order 02-03.

For questions related to the submission of an application for assisted living facility and enhanced services facility please contact RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services
DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*