



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
Residential Care Services Division
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

September 20, 2013

AL TSA: ALF #2013-017
HOME CARE AIDE CERTIFICATION AND PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION

Dear Assisted Living Facility Administrator:

This is a follow-up to Dear Administrator Letter ALF #2013-011 dated June 13, 2013 regarding Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1629. The bill was signed into law by the Governor and became effective on July 28, 2013.

SHB 1629 removes barriers to obtaining home care aide (HCA) certification and eliminates the long-term care (LTC) worker continuing education (CE) requirements for registered nurses (RN) and licensed practical nurses (LPN).

Non-exempt LTC workers hired on or after March 1, 2013 must obtain HCA certification within 200 days of hire. These workers automatically receive the 200 day timeframe. Workers who do not obtain certification within the required 200 days must stop providing care to residents.

Workers hired before March 1, 2013, must have received required HCA certification within 150 days of hire.

SHB 1629 establishes a provisional certification for LTC workers with limited English proficiency (LEP). The bill defines "limited English proficient" to mean that an individual is limited in his or her ability to read, write, or speak English.

A worker hired on or after March 1, 2013 can declare LEP status and receive a provisional certification if the worker is LEP and has not obtained required certification within 200 days. The provisional certification allows an additional 60 days to complete the HCA certification. Workers with a LEP provisional certification must stop providing care to residents if they do not obtain HCA certification within 260 days of hire.

- Workers who have submitted their HCA certification application to the Department of Health (DOH) and want to declare LEP must call the DOH credentialing coordinator at (360) 236-2700.
- If a worker has not submitted a HCA certification application, he/she must declare LEP status on the application.
- LTC workers hired before March 1, 2013 are not eligible for LEP provisional certification.
- DOH credentialing coordinators are available to help applicants and providers through the HCA certification process.

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The Department of Health cannot issue provisional certificates after March 1, 2016.

If you have questions, the following web sites may be helpful. Both web sites contain a link to the "Home Care Aide Certification Checklist" which outlines the step by step process to obtain HCA certification.

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/HomeCareAide>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/HomeCareAide/ApplicationsandForms.aspx>

Thank you for your continued commitment to the health and safety of Washington's assisted living facility residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "E. Irene Owens".

E. Irene Owens, Interim Director
Residential Care Services

Aging & Disability Services
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