



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

05/05/2026

HCLA: AFH #2026-015
HCLA: ALF #2026-018
HCLA: ESF #2026-013

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Requirements for Healthcare Professionals in Long Term Care Facilities

Dear Provider/Administrator:

The Department of Social and Health Services department and divisions (DSHS) has been receiving questions about direct care staff (Certified Nursing Assistants (NAC) and long-term care workers including home care aides) delaying or not providing cardiopulmonary resuscitations (CPR) when needed. We are seeing instances of when certified or licensed direct care staff seeking out a supervisor to determine what to do rather than implement CPR when a resident has selected to receive CPR.

DSHS wants to remind providers of the importance of not delaying CPR. CPR is defined as a core competency and a “basic technical skill” for nursing assistants under [WAC 246-841A-400](#), requiring them to “demonstrate proficiency in CPR and perform CPR independently.”

DSHS wants to remind administrators and providers of the importance of not delaying CPR, meeting training requirements, honoring resident wishes and meeting resident needs. Please review some resources below, in addition to your own facility resources, when determining requirements around advanced directives and code standards.

Professional Standards of Practice & Competencies

As a reminder, there are CPR requirements when holding a professional certification or license. Though RCS does not regulate the certifications and licenses, RCS does regulate the facilities who are responsible for ensuring staff meet training requirements and keep current the documentation on file. This includes the following requirements:

- [WAC 246-841A-400\(6\)\(a\)](#) Nursing Assistant Certified CPR requirements
- [WAC 388-112A-0720](#) (AFH, ALF, ESF) Long Term Care Worker CPR requirements

Portable Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

What is a POLST and what is the importance of the document?

- A POLST form is a way of summarizing wishes of an individual regarding life-sustaining treatment. It is not an advance directive; it is a physician's order that was designed for use by Emergency Medical personnel only.
- A POLST is optional; the facility/provider should have a policy and procedure on what steps to take in the event a resident does not have a POLST form or advance directive regarding CPR.

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- All staff trained on CPR should be knowledgeable of the facility's policies and procedures as well as their systems for resident identification of CPR/no CPR status. These staff must implement systems to support resident preferences and choices.
- Please refer to the [Washington State Board of Nursing Advisory Opinion](#) regarding the POLST and scope of practice for healthcare professionals for additional information.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident/client health and safety. For questions related to the information in this Dear Provider Letter, please contact RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Amy Abbot, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Partnering with People"

Resources:

POLST, Informed Consent

- Health care and health care decision making: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/node/30893>
- The Department of Health information for POLST: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/PhysiciansOrdersforLifeSustainingTreatment>.
- [Washington State Board of Nursing Advisory Opinion](#)
- The Washington State Medical Association Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at <https://wsma.org/POLST>.

AFH

- [WAC 388-76-10130](#) Qualifications- Provider, entity representative, and resident manager
- [WAC 388-76-10135](#) Qualifications- Caregiver
- [WAC 388-76-10145](#) Qualifications- Licensed nurse as provider, entity representative, or resident manager
- [WAC 388-76-10146](#) Qualifications- Training and home care aide certification
- [WAC 388-76-10198](#) Adult family home- Personnel records

ALF

- [WAC 388-78A-2450](#) Staff
- [WAC 388-78A-2474](#) Training and home care aide certification requirements

ESE

- [WAC 388-107-0200](#) Quality of care
- [WAC 388-107-0230](#) Sufficient staffing
- [WAC 388-107-0250](#) Staffing credentials and qualifications
- [WAC 388-107-0630](#) Training and home care aide certification requirements
- [WAC 388-107-0640](#) Staff development trainings