



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600*

June 26, 2020

**AL TSA: NH #2020-042**  
**EMERGENCY RULES (CR-103E) AMENDING WAC 388-97-1740 DISASTER AND**  
**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, 388-97-1760 QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND ASSURANCE,**  
**AND 388-97-2400 RESIDENT ROOMS**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

The Department of Social and Health Services filed an emergency rule (WSR [20-14-026](#)) effective June 23, 2020 related to fire drills, windows in resident rooms and quality assurance requirements. This rule making is necessary to respond to the significant threat of COVID-19 to our most vulnerable populations, especially for those receiving care in nursing homes.

- Current nursing home rules require periodic fire drills, as well as staff training about how to respond to a fire. WAC 388-97-1740 was amended to remove the requirement for periodic fire drills. Training on responding to a fire is still required.
- Amendment of WAC 388-97-1760 reduced the scope of quality assurance activities. Facilities must continue to review adverse events and infection control.
- Current nursing home rules require a transparent glass window in each resident room. Amendment of WAC 388-97-2400 waives the requirement for a transparent glass window. This will increase the ability for facilities to increase capacity temporarily by utilizing windowless space for resident rooms.

The adoption of the emergency rule helps to align state rules with rules the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have waived or amended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state emergency rule expires October 21, 2020.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Herke, Nursing Home Policy Program Manager, at (509) 209-3088 or [lisa.herke@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:lisa.herke@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Candace Goehring, Director  
Residential Care Services

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