

**Concise Explanatory Statement for WAC 246-341-0903 Licensing and certification standards for 23-hour crisis relief centers (CRC) serving minors in Washington state.**

The Department of Health (department) is adopting amendments to WAC 246-341-0903 to implement Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (E2SSB) 5853 (chapter 367, Laws of 2024) codified in RCW 71.24.916, extending the CRC model to provide behavioral health crisis relief services to minors eight years of age and older. The amendments align with the statutory changes made in E2SSB 5853. The adopted rules will become effective June 30, 2026.

The adopted amendments include training standards for staff who treat minors; standards for consent to treat minors; policies on admission, treatment, and discharge of minors; and protocols for allowing a minor to stay beyond 23 hours and 59 minutes. The proposed amendments also add definitions of terms used in this section and update terms that are used in the context of healthcare.

Multiple comments were received with concerns about the provision directing CRCs serving minors to adopt and implement a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) regarding how the CRC will collaborate with DCYF. Based on these comments, the department changed the proposed language to ensure that DCYF has an active role with CRCs serving minors without increasing barriers to licensure that may limit access of crisis relief services to minors.

One comment was received that the proposed rule does not objectively identify non-psychiatric issues in the child’s life contributing to their crisis. No changes were made to the rule based on this comment because the scope of the rulemaking was limited to implementation of E2SSB 5853, extending the CRC model to provide behavioral health crisis services to minors.

The adopted rule language is different from the proposed rules language as published in WSR 25-16-075 and outlined in the table below.

<b>Proposed language in WSR 25-16-075</b>	<b>Adopted language in WSR 26-05-025</b>
(3) General requirements: An agency certified for 23-hour crisis relief center services must:	(3) General requirements: An agency certified for 23-hour crisis relief center services must:

<p>...</p> <p>(n) Establish and maintain relationships with entities capable of providing for reasonably anticipated ongoing service needs of admitted persons, unless the licensee itself provides sufficient services:</p> <p>...</p>	<p>...</p> <p>(n) Establish and maintain relationships with entities capable of providing for reasonably anticipated ongoing service needs of admitted persons, unless the licensee itself provides sufficient services:</p> <p>...</p> <p><u>(iii) For facilities serving minors, relationships will include the DCYF;</u></p>
<p>(11) An agency providing 23-hour crisis relief center services for minors must follow these additional requirements. The agency must:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(e) Adopt and implement a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with DCYF regarding how the agency will collaborate with DCYF regarding children, youth, and families.</p>	<p>(11) An agency providing 23-hour crisis relief center services for minors must follow these additional requirements. The agency must:</p> <p>...</p> <p><del>(e) Adopt and implement a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with DCYF regarding how the agency will collaborate with DCYF regarding children, youth, and families.</del></p>