
HOUSE BILL 1400

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Representatives Vick and Kirby

1 AN ACT Relating to alternative licensing standards of
2 professional licenses; adding a new section to chapter 43.24 RCW;
3 adding a new chapter to Title 18 RCW; creating a new section; and
4 providing an effective date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that there are
7 many ways to gain demonstrated competency of skills in a profession.
8 Furthermore, conditions such as educational requirements, course
9 fees, and training hours, which an individual must fulfill before
10 receiving a professional license to practice in a profession, create
11 unnecessary barriers to an individual's right to employment if the
12 individual can demonstrate full competency of the skills required of
13 that profession.

14 (2) The legislature also finds that such redundant requirements
15 are likely to discriminate against people of color, low-income
16 individuals, and trained or untrained immigrant populations, who may
17 possess the ability to excel in a profession but lack the ability to
18 readily fulfill the professional licensing requirements to practice.

19 (3) It is therefore the intent of the legislature to authorize
20 the Washington state department of licensing, after consulting with
21 relevant trade groups, to develop a competency-based assessment which

1 allows individuals to demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge and
2 skills otherwise required by a professional licensing examination.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.24
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) The department of licensing may issue a professional license,
6 without regard to other requirements, to an applicant if the
7 applicant meets all competency-based licensing requirements for a
8 specific professional license issued by the department.

9 (2) For the purposes of this section:

10 (a) (i) "Competency-based licensing requirement" means a practical
11 assessment of knowledge and skills that clearly demonstrate a person
12 is prepared to engage in a profession regulated by the department,
13 and which the director of the department of licensing determines is
14 at least as effective as examination-based professional licensing
15 requirements at demonstrating proficiency and protecting the health
16 and safety of the public.

17 (ii) "Competency-based licensing requirement" may include, but is
18 not limited to, any combination of training, experience, testing, or
19 observation.

20 (b) "Professional license" means a license, certificate,
21 registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law
22 or a state agency rule that must be obtained by an individual to
23 engage in a profession which is regulated by the department of
24 licensing.

25 (3) This section does not apply when there is a reciprocity
26 licensing agreement with a national organization in place to
27 facilitate reciprocal professional licensing of an individual
28 licensed in another state.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new chapter is added to Title 18 RCW to
30 read as follows:

31 (1) The department of licensing may issue a professional license,
32 without regard to other requirements, to an applicant if the
33 applicant meets all competency-based licensing requirements for a
34 specific professional license issued by the department.

35 (2) For the purposes of this section:

36 (a) (i) "Competency-based licensing requirement" means a practical
37 assessment of knowledge and skills that clearly demonstrate a person
38 is prepared to engage in a profession regulated by the department,

1 and which the director of the department of licensing determines is
2 at least as effective as examination-based professional licensing
3 requirements at demonstrating proficiency and protecting the health
4 and safety of the public.

5 (ii) "Competency-based licensing requirement" may include, but is
6 not limited to, any combination of training, experience, testing, or
7 observation.

8 (b) "Professional license" means a license, certificate,
9 registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law
10 or a state agency rule that must be obtained by an individual to
11 engage in a profession which is regulated by the department of
12 licensing.

13 (3) This section does not apply when there is a reciprocity
14 licensing agreement with a national organization in place to
15 facilitate reciprocal professional licensing of an individual
16 licensed in another state.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act takes effect January 1, 2022.

--- END ---