


**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF NURSING
PROCEDURE**

Title:	Practice Approval	Number: W37.02
Reference:	RCW 18.130.160 - Finding of unprofessional conduct—Orders—Sanctions—Stay—Costs—Stipulations. RCW 18.130.175 - Physician health and voluntary substance use disorder monitoring programs (<i>as amended by 2023 c 425</i>). RCW 18.79.440 - Public posting of enforcement actions restricted—Substance use disorder monitoring stipend program. WAC 246-840-750 - Philosophy governing voluntary substance use monitoring programs. WAC 246-840-760 - Definitions of terms used in WAC 246-840-750 through 246-840-790. WAC 246-840-770 - Approval of substance use monitoring programs WAC 246-840-780 - Conditions for participants entering the approved substance use monitoring program. WAC 246-840-790 - Substance use disorder monitoring stipend program	
Contact:	Catherine Woodard Director, Discipline and Washington Health Professional Services Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON)	
Effective Date:	September 13, 2024	Date for Review: September 13, 2026
Supersedes:	W37.01 – November 4, 2022 W08.01 – January 9, 2016	
Approved:		
	Dawn Morrell, RN, BSN Chair Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON)	

PURPOSE:

Safely returning nurses to practice is a goal of the Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON) and Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS). WHPS recognizes that it takes six to twelve months of approved practice to adequately assess the nurse's ability to practice safely.

PROCEDURE:

I. WHPS Practice Approval

- A. Practicing without WHPS approval places patients at risk and is a serious violation of the nurse's program participation contract. Nurses practicing in unapproved capacities must immediately cease practice and WHPS will refer the nurse to the Substance Use Disorder Review Panel (SUDRP) .
- B. The program participation contract authorizes WHPS to communicate with current or prospective employers and school faculty as appropriate. In some instances, the case manager may visit the nurse's worksite or school/practicum site.
- C. The nurse must notify WHPS and obtain approval prior to starting a new healthcare position or taking on new healthcare duties. (See Procedure W32 *Program Non-Compliance and Discharge Criteria.*)
- D. The case manager and worksite monitor (WSM) will discuss workplace restrictions and other issues related to the nurse returning to work or assuming new duties. The case manager will obtain and review the position or job class description for compatibility with the nurse's program participation contract. The employment contract shall include the list of practice restrictions, if any, and WSM criteria.
- E. If the case manager approves the employment contract, the nurse, WSM, and employer representative must co-sign and return the contract prior to beginning any work involving patient care. The WHPS case manager will co-sign the contract and provide a finalized copy to the nurse allowing practice as stipulated.
- F. The WSM will complete the electronic WHPS orientation module prior to accepting the responsibilities and signing the employment contract.

II. WHPS Practice Approval in an Educational Program

- A. Nurses in an educational program that includes clinical practice must:
 1. Notify the school of their participation in WHPS.
 2. Obtain WHPS approval.
 3. Notify the school faculty member. WHPS will determine the need for monthly worksite/practicum reports on a case-by-case basis.
 4. The nurse and clinical faculty member will complete and co-sign the clinical practicum contract.
- B. The clinical faculty member will complete the electronic WHPS orientation module prior to accepting the responsibilities and signing the clinical practicum contract.