



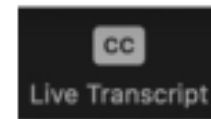
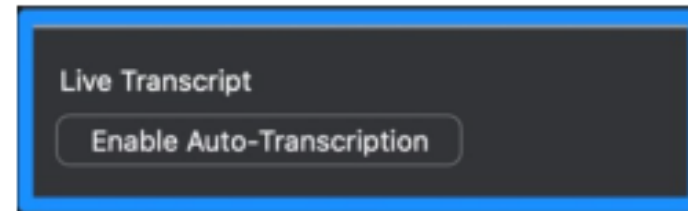
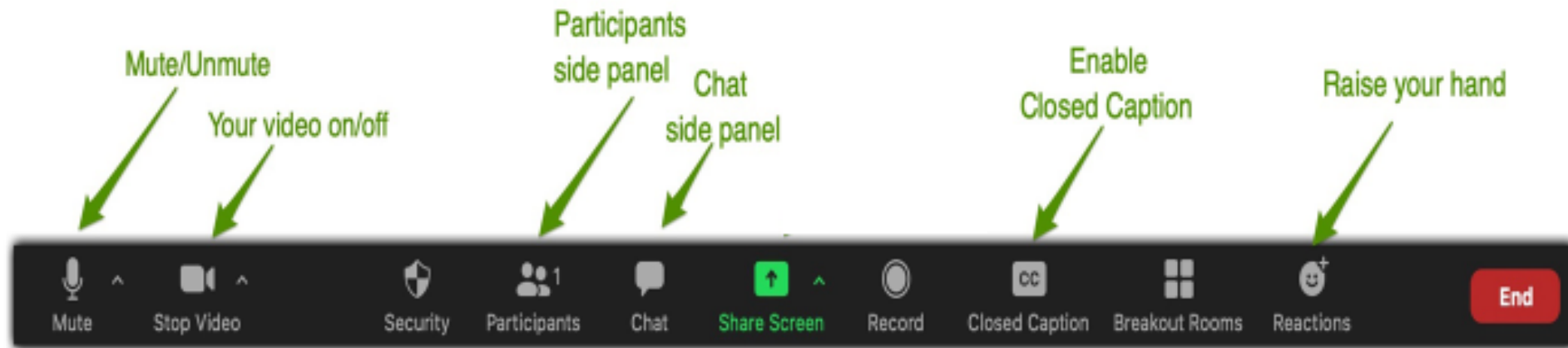
# LISTENING SESSION

Behavioral Health Profession Licensure Requirements

Health Systems Quality Assurance Division/Office of Health Professions



# Zoom Navigation and Accessibility

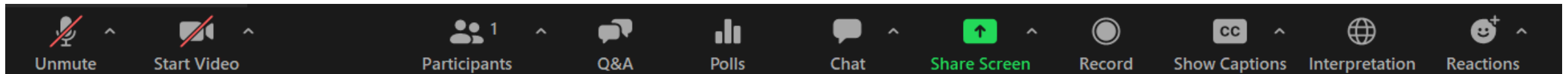
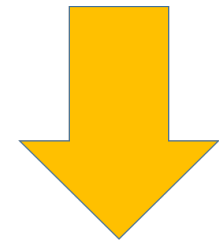


# INTERPRETATION / INTERPRETACIÓN

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Click on the globe shaped icon on the bottom right of your screen. It says "Interpretation" under the icon. Click on the language you would prefer to hear the webinar in. You can choose whether to mute the original audio. This is a feature you would use if you choose to listen to the webinar in a language other than English. It will mute the English speaker so that you only hear the translator speaking in the language of your choice.

Haga clic en el icono con forma de globo en la parte inferior y a la derecha de su pantalla. Dice "interpretation" debajo del icono. Haga clic en el idioma en el que prefiere escuchar el seminario. Puede elegir si silenciar el audio original. Esta es una función que usaría si elige escuchar el seminario en un idioma que no sea inglés. Silenciará al hablante de inglés para que solo escuche al traductor hablar en el idioma de su elección.



# Please Keep In Mind

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- Be mindful and respectful of all attendees and staff.
- Please raise your hand to speak.
  - When you begin, please state your name and the name of the group you represent (if applicable)
- Please limit comments to 2 minutes per person, due to the number of participants.
  - If you go beyond 2 minutes, staff may ask you to finish your thoughts so we can leave space for others to share.
- Please stay on the topic of behavioral health licensing
  - We ask that comments that fall outside of licensing issues be directed to the appropriate program manager via email. (See slide 13 for contacts)
- If you would prefer to provide written comments, please enter them in the chat or email [1724publiccomment@doh.wa.gov](mailto:1724publiccomment@doh.wa.gov)

# Background

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WHY IS DOH DOING LISTENING SESSIONS?

WHAT ARE THEY FOR?

# Why is DOH doing listening sessions?

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- Washington State is experiencing a critical shortage of behavioral health providers which is limiting access to needed services, causing staffing and other issues for facilities and employers, and negatively impacting overall public health.
- Behavioral health is a central priority for the department
  - [Transformational Plan: A Vision for Health in Washington State \(2022-24\)](#)
    - Health and Wellness: All Washingtonians have the opportunity to attain their full potential of physical, mental, and social health and well-being.
    - Health Systems and Workforce Transformation: All Washingtonians are well served by a health ecosystem that is robust and responsive, while promoting transparency, equity, and trust.

# Why is DOH doing listening sessions?

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The Department of Health is working to address this problem by:

- reducing barriers to entering or remaining in behavioral health professions
- streamlining credentialing processes, and
- improving equity in credentialing behavioral health providers.

It is important to acknowledge there are many other factors influencing this shortage or causing barriers for professionals, employers, and patients such as:

- Provider pay, reimbursement rates, educational opportunities, etc.
- These are important factors, but they are outside the department's authority and outside the scope of the listening session.

# Why is DOH doing listening sessions?

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2SHB 1724 passed during the 2023 session. Section 5 of the bill directs the department to review licensing requirements and make recommendations that would:

- Remove barriers to entering or remaining in the workforce
- Streamline and shorten the credentialing process, and
- Improve equity in behavioral health licensing.

For the purposes of Section 5 and this discussion, “behavioral health provider” includes:

- Advanced Social Workers and Independent Clinical Social Workers
- Marriage and Family Therapists
- Mental Health Counselors
- Substance Use Disorder Professionals and
- Psychologists.



# What will your input be used for?

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Your ideas will help us:

- determine where barriers to entry or remaining in the professions exist
- identify potential solutions or suggestions to overcome these barriers, and
- identify barriers that disproportionately burden disadvantaged communities.

We will use the information you share with us to:

- direct our research and discussion
- prioritize which issues most urgently need action
- inform recommendations we will make to the legislature (as directed by 2SHB 1724)

# Public Comment

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- What licensing or credentialing barriers exist that prevent providers from entering or staying in the behavioral health workforce?
  - A la hora de obtener autorización o credenciales, ¿qué obstáculos impiden que los proveedores se sumen a la fuerza laboral de salud conductual o permanezcan en ella?
- 
- What licensing or credentialing barriers exist that place an unfair burden on applicants from disadvantaged communities?
  - A la hora de obtener autorización o credenciales, ¿qué obstáculos representan una carga injusta para los solicitantes que vienen de comunidades desfavorecidas?
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- What licensing or credentialing barriers exist that cause delays in applying for and receiving a credential from the department?
  - A la hora de obtener autorización o credenciales, ¿qué obstáculos causan retrasos en el proceso de solicitar y recibir credenciales del departamento?
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- What other licensing or credentialing related barriers does the department need to be aware of and consider?
  - ¿Qué otros obstáculos debe tener en cuenta o considerar el departamento acerca de la obtención de autorización o credenciales?

## Next Steps

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- DOH staff will review all comments received during listening sessions or in writing, perform any needed research, and draft preliminary recommendations.
- DOH will then hold a second round of listening sessions to review the preliminary recommendations and get feedback from interested parties
  - Anticipated timeframe: August/September 2023
- DOH will present preliminary recommendations to the legislature in November 2023.
- Note: the department will make a final presentation to the legislature in November 2024. We will repeat this engagement process beginning in early 2024.

## Other related projects

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- New behavioral health professions created during 2023 session:
  - 5189 - Behavioral Health Support Specialist
    - This bill creates a new bachelor level credential that can provide low-level interventions
    - Contact Brandon Williams for more information at [Brandon.Williams@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Brandon.Williams@doh.wa.gov)
  - 5555 - Certified Peer Specialist
    - Creates an optional independent credential for providing peer services
    - Contact Ted Dale for more information at [Ted.Dale@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Ted.Dale@doh.wa.gov)
  - 5214 - Music Therapists
    - Creates a new credential to provide music therapy services
    - Contact Kendra Pitzler for more information at [Kendra.Pitzler@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Kendra.Pitzler@doh.wa.gov)
- To be notified of work around these bills, please [join our GovDelivery](#) mailing lists.

# Contacts

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