



# RULE-MAKING ORDER PERMANENT RULE ONLY

## CR-103P (December 2017) (Implements RCW 34.05.360)

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
FILED

DATE: August 01, 2023

TIME: 11:43 AM

WSR 23-16-125

Agency: Department of Health - Board of Physical Therapy

**Effective date of rule:**

**Permanent Rules**

31 days after filing.

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ (If less than 31 days after filing, a specific finding under RCW 34.05.380(3) is required and should be stated below)

**Any other findings required by other provisions of law as precondition to adoption or effectiveness of rule?**

Yes  No If Yes, explain:

**Purpose:** Changing English test passing scores and removing a requirement related to an accredited program for licensure as a physical therapist. The Board of Physical Therapy (board) is adopting amendments to WAC 246-915-120 – Foreign educated applicants to change the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) minimum passing scores. Washington state's current passing score requirements were originally established based on the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) passing score recommendation. The FSBPT's minimum passing score recommendations have since been updated. To align with the FSBPT's recommendation, the board is adopting this rule to lower the minimum passing score for the writing and speaking tests and raise the minimum passing score requirements for the reading and listening tests. The board is also adopting amendments to remove the requirement that an applicant's first professional degree must only be from a Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) accredited program, in order to allow applicants who went on to pursue additional professional degrees in physical therapy through a CAPTE accredited program to pursue licensure outside of the foreign-educated pathway.

**Citation of rules affected by this order:**

New: None

Repealed: None

Amended: WAC 246-915-120

Suspended: None

**Statutory authority for adoption:** RCW 18.74.023

**Other authority:**

**PERMANENT RULE (Including Expedited Rule Making)**

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 23-08-031 on March 28 2023 (date).

Describe any changes other than editing from proposed to adopted version: None.

If a preliminary cost-benefit analysis was prepared under RCW 34.05.328, a final cost-benefit analysis is available by contacting:

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Other:

**Note: If any category is left blank, it will be calculated as zero.  
No descriptive text.**

**Count by whole WAC sections only, from the WAC number through the history note.  
A section may be counted in more than one category.**

**The number of sections adopted in order to comply with:**

Federal statute:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Federal rules or standards:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Recently enacted state statutes:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>

**The number of sections adopted at the request of a nongovernmental entity:**

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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**The number of sections adopted on the agency's own initiative:**

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>1</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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**The number of sections adopted in order to clarify, streamline, or reform agency procedures:**

New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
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**The number of sections adopted using:**

Negotiated rule making:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Pilot rule making:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>0</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>
Other alternative rule making:	New	<u>0</u>	Amended	<u>1</u>	Repealed	<u>0</u>

**Date Adopted: July 29, 2023**

**Name: Kathryn Dale PT, DSc**

**Title: Board Chair**

**Signature:**



**WAC 246-915-120 Foreign educated applicants.** (1) An applicant whose (~~first~~) professional degree in physical therapy was awarded from a foreign physical therapy program that is not or was not accredited by the CAPTE shall submit:

(a) An application for review by the board;

(b) A credentials evaluation report of professional education and training prepared by a board-approved credentials evaluation agency. The report must be sent directly from the credentialing agency to the board. It is the responsibility of the applicant to pay the expenses associated with the credentials evaluation:

(i) The report must provide evidence and documentation that the applicant completed education outside a state or territory of the United States that is substantially equivalent to the education of a physical therapist who graduated from a physical therapy education program accredited by CAPTE.

(ii) To be approved as a credentialing agency, the agency must use the appropriate course work tool (CWT) adopted by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy to determine substantial equivalency. The appropriate CWT means the CWT in place at the time the foreign educated physical therapist earned their first professional degree in physical therapy.

(c) Evidence of English language proficiency:

(i) Verification that English is the native language of the country of origin, and the physical therapy program employs English as the language of training; or

(ii) Verification that the applicant has achieved a score of not less than 560 on the paper Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a score of not less than 220 on the computer Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a score of not less than 50 on the Test of Spoken English (TSE) and a score of not less than four and one-half on the Test of Written English (TWE); or

(iii) Verification that the applicant has achieved an overall score of not less than 89, and the following minimum scores for each category of the internet-based TOEFL (ibTOEFL) examination: Writing, ((24)) 22; speaking, ((26)) 24; reading, ((21)) 22; listening, ((18)) 21.

(d) Verification of a valid, unencumbered license or authorization to practice physical therapy in the country in which the physical therapy education was obtained;

(e) Official transcripts from the physical therapy program showing degree date;

(f) Passing scores for the Washington jurisprudence examination;

(g) Passing scores for the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) as described in WAC 246-915-030; and

(h) Any additional supporting documentation as requested by the board.

(2) The applicant shall have received a grade of "C" or higher (or equivalent) in all professional education course work;

(3) The applicant may apply for the college-level education program (CLEP) and their scores may be applied toward college credit. The board will consider the conversion of CLEP scores to college credits provided by a board-approved credentialing agency;

(4) The board may allow applicants to correct general education and professional education course work deficiencies by:

(a) Completing ((~~board-approved~~)) course work pre-approved by the board. To obtain ((~~professional~~)) course work preapproval, the applicant shall submit a written request along with the course description/syllabus for the proposed course; or

(b) Obtaining a new passing education evaluation from a board-approved credentials evaluation agency after correcting deficiencies as recommended by the credentialing agency. The report must be sent directly from the credentialing agency to the board; and

(5) An applicant whose ((~~first~~)) professional degree in physical therapy was awarded from a foreign physical therapy program that is or was accredited by the CAPTE shall follow the requirements under WAC 246-915-030 and 246-915-100.