



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Olympia, Washington 98504

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AN INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT

Title of Interpretive Statement: Medical Assistants and Telemedicine Training |
Interpretive Statement Number IS21-01

Issuing Entity: Department of Health

Subject Matter: Clarifying that telemedicine training is not a requirement for medical assistants

Effective Date: July 25, 2021

Contact Person: Tracie Drake, 360-236-4766

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: August 11, 2021
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Interpretive Statement

Revised – 10/18/11

<i>Title:</i>	Medical Assistants and Telemedicine Training	<i>Number:</i> IS21-01
<i>References:</i>	RCW 43.70.495 RCW 70.41.020 RCW 18.360.060	
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<i>Effective Date:</i>	July 25, 2021	
<i>Supersedes:</i>	Not applicable	
<i>Approved By:</i>	Christie Spice, HSQA Assistant Secretary	

Medical assistants are not required to take mandatory telemedicine training under [RCW 43.70.495](#).

Medical assistants assist other health care practitioners with telemedicine visits by providing hands-on care to the patient while the practitioner provides care via technology. This care may include the taking of health history, recording signs and symptoms, and the taking of vital signs of the patient while the health care practitioner provides telemedicine services via technology. Because the care provided by the medical assistant is in-person and does not meet the definition of telemedicine, medical assistants do not need to take mandatory telemedicine training under [RCW 43.70.495](#).

Effective January 1, 2021, [RCW 43.70.495](#) requires licensed, registered, or certified health care professionals, other than allopathic and osteopathic physicians, who provide clinical services through telemedicine, to complete telemedicine training. The definition of telemedicine is provided under [RCW 70.41.020](#) as:

(14) "Telemedicine" means the delivery of health care services through the use of interactive audio and video technology, permitting real-time communication between the patient at the originating site and the provider, for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment. "Telemedicine" includes audio-only telemedicine, but does not include facsimile or email.

In addition to the above, a medical assistant is not required to take mandatory telemedicine training because it is not within the scope of practice of a medical assistant to function as a clinical provider for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment, as required by the

definition of telemedicine in [RCW 70.41.020](#). The medical assistant functions in an assistive role under the direction and supervision of a health care practitioner.

When a medical assistant is assisting with a telemedicine visit, the care they provide is not via technology, but in-person with the patient while the health care practitioner provides care via technology. A medical assistant also does not function as a clinical provider for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment. For these reasons, the care the medical assistant provides does not meet the definition of telemedicine in [RCW 70.41.020](#). Because the care provided by the medical assistant does not meet the definition of telemedicine, medical assistants performing this care do not need to take mandatory telemedicine training under [RCW 43.70.495](#).