

## HB 1781 - DIGEST

Finds that professional discipline is a critical function of ensuring quality health care for the people of the state of Washington, and that an alternative disciplinary process for some professions will strengthen that process.

Provides that, for license holders and applicants under chapter 18.71 or 18.71A RCW, the disciplining authority shall file the statement of charges with the superior court in the county in which the license holder provided the care or committed the act that is the subject of the complaint.

Authorizes a complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the disciplining authority regarding a license holder or applicant under chapter 18.71 or 18.71A RCW to appeal that decision to the prosecuting attorney in the county in which the license holder provided the care or committed the act that is the subject of the complaint.

Provides that, if the prosecuting attorney determines, upon investigation, that there is reason to believe a violation of RCW 18.130.180 has occurred, a statement of charge or charges shall be prepared and served upon the license holder or applicant at the earliest practical time.

Declares that the decision of the prosecuting attorney as to filing charges is final and may not be appealed by the complainant or disciplining authority in any forum.

Directs the prosecuting attorney to file the statement of charges with the superior court.

Provides that, if a disciplinary authority under RCW 18.130.090 or a prosecuting attorney under this act files a statement of charges in superior court, the superior court shall serve as the disciplinary authority for purposes of RCW 18.130.160 and shall serve as the hearing authority for purposes of RCW 18.130.170(1).

Provides that the superior court shall hold hearings requested under RCW 18.130.090 or section 3 of this act in accordance with the civil and related rules of the superior courts.

Directs the superior court to grant an expedited hearing upon a petition filed by:

- (1) The disciplinary authority or county prosecutor on the grounds of jeopardy to the health and safety of patients caused by delay; or

- (2) The license holder on the grounds of undue prejudice caused by delay.

Provides that appeals from the decision of the superior court are governed by the court rules governing appeals in civil matters from the superior courts.