

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5681

---

---

### C 303 L 13

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Facilitating treatment for persons with co-occurring disorders by requiring development of an integrated rule.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes and Keiser).

**Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections**  
**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**Background:** The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) licenses and performs certification audits for service providers in the fields of mental health and chemical dependency. Minimum standards for the certification of agencies and facilities that provide these services are established in the Washington Administrative Code. The minimum standards that apply to providers in the chemical dependency and mental health fields differ in various ways.

In the past, agencies and facilities that provide simultaneous mental health and chemical dependency to clients with co-occurring chemical dependency and mental health disorders sometimes faced the burden of having to comply simultaneously with multiple regulatory schemes. Some providers of treatment to persons with co-occurring disorders in Washington received waivers from DSHS that allow the provider to comply with only one set of regulations with respect to these clients as long as certain other standards are met.

Following a stakeholder process, DSHS proposed a new set of regulations in late 2012 that are currently undergoing public comment and review. These proposed regulations would consolidate and standardize many of the rules applicable to mental health and chemical dependency providers, but do not go as far as providing a single, consistent body of rules applicable to providers of simultaneous mental health and chemical dependency treatment to clients with co-occurring chemical dependency and mental health disorders.

**Summary:** Any licensed mental health agency that has a waiver from DSHS exempting the agency from chemical dependency rules for services provided to patients with co-occurring mental health and chemical dependency disorders as of January 1, 2013, may request and must receive a three-year renewal of the waiver if a fully integrated rule is not in effect by May 1, 2014.

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 47 0

House 97 0

**Effective:** July 28, 2013.