

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1129

C 204 L 21
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the licensure of international medical graduates.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Valdez, Stonier, Ortiz-Self, Goodman, Cody, Santos and Macri).

House Committee on Health Care & Wellness
Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care

Background:

Limited Licensure of International Medical Graduates.

International medical graduates (IMGs) are physicians who receive their medical school education outside the United States and Canada.

International medical graduates must go through medical licensing examinations and credential verifications to receive certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). International medical graduates who receive ECFMG certification become eligible to enter the United States' graduate medical education process, where they provide supervised patient care. The ECFMG certification is a requirement for IMGs to take Step 3 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination, as well as a prerequisite to obtaining an unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States.

The Washington Medical Commission (WMC) may issue a limited license to an applicant for the purpose of gaining clinical experience at an approved facility or program if the applicant:

- does not qualify for licensure as a United States or Canadian medical graduate; and
- meets the requirements established by the WMC.

Limited Licensure of United States and Canadian Medical Graduates.

The WMC may, upon the written request of the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or the Secretary of the Department of Corrections (DOC), issue

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limited licenses to persons who work with patients, residents, or inmates of state institutions under the control and supervision of the DSHS or the DOC. In 2019 the Department of Children, Youth, and Families assumed control of programs previously administered by the DSHS, including juvenile rehabilitation facilities, community facilities, and parole services.

Summary:

Limited Licensure of International Medical Graduates.

The Washington Medical Commission (WMC) may issue limited licenses to international medical graduates (IMGs) upon nomination by the chief medical officer of any hospital, appropriate medical practice, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Department of Corrections (DOC), or a county or city health department.

An IMG applying for a limited license must:

- be a state resident for at least one year;
- provide proof of certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates;
- pass the United States Medical Licensing Examination; and
- submit to the WMC background check as generally required of applicants.

An IMG practicing with a limited license may only practice within the nominating facility or organization, under the control of a licensed supervising physician of the same or substantially similar clinical specialty. An IMG must also file a practice agreement with the WMC between the IMG and the supervising physician. A supervising physician is limited to supervising two limited license holders, unless the WMC grants an increase upon the supervising physician's request. A supervising physician must retain professional and personal responsibility for any act by a limited license holder that constitutes the practice of medicine and hold medical malpractice insurance for any claim against a limited license holder.

A limited license for an IMG is valid for two years and may be renewed once by the WMC upon application by the nominating entity.

Limited Licensure of United States and Canadian Medical Graduates.

The WMC may, upon the written request of the Secretary of the DCYF, issue limited licenses to persons who work with patients, residents, or inmates of state institutions under the control and supervision of the DCYF.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	4	
Senate	33	15	(Senate amended)
House	93	5	(House concurred)

Effective: July 25, 2021