

Staffing Law Timeline: Key Dates

Purpose: This provides key dates associated with safe staffing laws.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Urban Acute Care Hospitals</i>	<i>Rural/Critical Access/Sole Community Hospitals</i>
Jan. 1, 2024	Establish hospital staffing committee (HSC). [RCW 70.41.420 (1)]	Establish hospital staffing committee (HSC). [RCW 70.41.420 (1)]
July 1, 2024	HSC charter due to WA DOH. [RCW 70.41.420 (11)] *includes (11)(d)(e) *HSC establishes processes for staffing complaint review, investigation, and resolution within 90 days of receipt, or longer with majority approval of the HSC.	HSC charter due to WA DOH. [RCW 70.41.420 (11)] *includes (11)(d)(e) *HSC establishes processes for staffing complaint review, investigation, and resolution within 90 days of receipt, or longer with majority approval of the HSC.
	HSC draft of 2025 annual staffing plan due to CEO. ▪ HSC draft approved by 50 percent + one vote. ▪ HSC draft staffing plan due annually on July 1. [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(b)]	HSC draft of 2025 annual staffing plan due to CEO. ▪ HSC draft approved by 50 percent + one vote. ▪ HSC draft staffing plan due annually on July 1. [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(b)]
	WA DOH/L&I establish agency oversight/enforcement role. [RCW 70.41.428]	WA DOH/L&I establish agency oversight and enforcement role. [RCW 70.41.428]
	Meal/rest break requirements expand/tracking begins. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(a)]	Meal/rest break requirements expand/tracking begins. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(a)]
	Mandatory prescheduled on-call restriction begins. [RCW 49.28.140 (3)(b)(iii)]	Mandatory prescheduled on-call restriction begins. [RCW 49.28.140 (3)(b)(iii)]
Oct. 1, 2024	Hospital adopts written policies/procedures to address noncompliance with the staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)]	Not required - per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)] *Refer to list of applicable facilities.
Oct. 30, 2024	First quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
Jan. 1, 2025	Hospital submits final 2025 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]	Hospital submits final 2025 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]
Jan. 30, 2025	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
April 30, 2025	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
July 1, 2025	The hospital adopts written policies and procedures → a direct care RN or direct care NA-C may not be assigned to a nursing unit/clinical area without orientation in the clinical area and demonstrated current competence sufficient to provide competent care to patients in that area. [RCW 70.41.420(g)]	The hospital adopts written policies and procedures → a direct care RN or direct care NA-C may not be assigned to a nursing unit/clinical area without orientation in the clinical area and demonstrated current competence sufficient to provide competent care to patients in that area. [RCW 70.41.420(g)]
July 1, 2025	The hospital implements the annual staffing plan and assigns nursing staff to each patient care unit in accordance with the plan (except unforeseeable emergent circumstance). Begins monthly compliance tracking. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(a)]	Hospital implements the annual staffing plan and assigns nursing staff to each patient care unit in accordance with the plan (except unforeseeable emergent circumstance). [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(a)] Compliance tracking delayed. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv a-d)]
July 1, 2025	Nursing staff may report to the HSC any variations where the nursing staff assignment in a patient care area is not in accordance with the hospital staffing plan and may file a complaint to the committee based on variation. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(c)] The DOH and L & I may only investigate a staffing complaint under this subsection for violations of RCW 70.41.420 (7)(c)(d) submitted to the HSC and remain unresolved for 60 days after receipt by the HSC, excluding complaints determined by the HSC to be resolved/dissolved. [RCW 70.41.425 (B)]	Nursing staff may report to the HSC any variations where the nursing staff assignment in a patient care area is not in accordance with the hospital staffing plan and may file a complaint to the committee based on variation. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(c)] The DOH and L & I may only investigate a staffing complaint under this subsection for violations of RCW 70.41.420 (7)(c)(d) submitted to the HSC and remain unresolved for 60 days after receipt by the HSC, excluding complaints determined by the HSC to be resolved/dissolved. [RCW 70.41.425 (B)]

July 30, 2025	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
Aug. 7, 2025 BEGINS MONTHLY	If a hospital is out of compliance for less than 80 percent of staffing assignments in a month, the hospital reports to DOH within seven calendar days following the end of the month when the hospital was out of compliance. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(ii)] *See WA DOH standard form.	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
Jan. 1, 2026	Hospital submits final 2026 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]	Hospital submits final 2026 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]
Oct. 30, 2025	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
Jan. 30, 2026	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
Jan. 31, 2026	Hospital submits the first semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report submitted on standard WA DOH form. ▪ The form contains a check box for either HSC co-chair to indicate their belief that the report should be investigated by the DOH. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)] *See WA DOH standard form.	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
April 30, 2026	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) until July 1, 2026.
July 1, 2026	Meal and rest break noncompliance penalties may be imposed. [RCW 49.12.483 (2)(b)]	Meal/rest break requirements tracking begins. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)] *Penalties delayed until July 1, 2028 [RCW 49.12.483(b)]
July 30, 2026	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Delayed – the provisions of RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c) exempts hospitals defined in RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(iv) -start tracking July 1, 2026.
July 31, 2026	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
Oct. 30, 2026	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	First quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
Jan. 1, 2027	Hospital submits final 2027 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]	Hospital submits final 2027 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]
Jan. 1, 2027	Begin: WA DOH reviews all reports submitted under RCW 70.41.420(7)(b)(i) (*these are the semiannual staffing compliance reports) to ensure forms are received on time, on correct form, and the checkbox has not been checked. [RCW 70.41.425(3)]	TBD
Jan. 1, 2027	Begin: DOH & L & I require hospitals to submit for their approval a corrective plan of action within 45 calendar days of a report or finding of non-compliance. [RCW 70.41.425(4)]	TBD
Jan. 30, 2027	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
Jan. 31, 2027	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
April 30, 2027	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
July 30, 2027	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
July 31, 2027	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
Oct. 30, 2027	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]

Jan. 1, 2028	Hospital submits final 2028 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]	Hospital submits final 2028 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]
Jan. 30, 2028	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
Jan. 31, 2028	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
April 30, 2028	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
July 1, 2028	N/A	Meal and rest break noncompliance penalties may be imposed. [RCW 49.12.483 (2)(b)]
July 30, 2028	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
July 31, 2028	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
Oct. 30, 2028	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
Jan. 1, 2029	Hospital submits final 2029 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]	Hospital submits final 2029 staffing plan to WA DOH. (Staffing plan due to WA DOH annually thereafter and any time the staffing plan is updated.) [RCW 70.41.420 (6)(f)]
Jan. 30, 2029	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
Jan. 31, 2029	Hospital submits semiannual report on compliance with the adopted nurse staffing plan. [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(i)]	Not required – per [RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv)]
April 30, 2029	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(b)]	Quarterly meal/rest break report due. [RCW 49.12.480 (2)(c)]
*July 1, 2029	N/A	No earlier than July 1, 2029, the advisory committee on hospital staffing must discuss the issues related to applicability of RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b) (i) and (ii) for hospitals listed under RCW 70.41.420 (7)(b)(iv). This includes possible data collection options, potential costs, sources of funding, and implementation timeline. [RCW 43.70.855]