

WAC 388-97-01201 Individual transfer and discharge rights and procedures—Requirements in effect April 13, 2020, through May 23, 2023, in response to the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department adopted emergency rules under RCW 34.05.350 on April 13, 2020, to amend and repeal portions of WAC 388-97-0120. The emergency rules remained in effect until May 23, 2023. The following rule was in effect during that time:

(1) The skilled nursing facility and nursing facility must comply with all of the requirements of 42 C.F.R. § 483.10 and § 483.12, and RCW 74.42.450, or successor laws, and the nursing home must comply with all of the requirements of RCW 74.42.450 (1) through (4) and (7), or successor laws, including the following provisions and must not transfer or discharge any resident unless:

(a) At the resident's request;

(b) The transfer or discharge is necessary for the resident's welfare and the resident's needs cannot be met in the facility;

(c) The transfer or discharge is appropriate because the resident's health has improved enough so the resident no longer needs the services provided by the facility;

(d) The safety of individuals in the facility is endangered;

(e) The health of individuals in the facility would otherwise be endangered; or

(f) The resident has failed, after reasonable and appropriate notice, to pay for a stay at the facility.

(2) The following notice requirements apply if a nursing home/facility initiates the transfer or discharge of a resident. The notice must:

(a) Include all information required by 42 C.F.R. § 483.12 when given in a nursing facility;

(b) Be in writing, in language the resident understands;

(c) Be given to the resident, the resident's surrogate decision maker, if any, the resident's family and to the department;

(d) Beginning December 9, 2021, through May 23, 2023, the following amendment was in effect for subsection (2)(d) of this section, see WSRs 22-01-072, 22-08-062, 22-16-063, 22-23-155, 23-07-108, and 23-11-139: Be provided thirty days in advance of a transfer or discharge initiated by the nursing facility, except that the notice may be given as soon as practicable when the facility cannot meet the resident's urgent medical needs, or under the conditions described in (1)(c), (d), and (e) of this section; or for cohorting purposes related to the COVID-19 pandemic as allowed under any applicable Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) emergency waivers; and

(e) Be provided fifteen days in advance of a transfer or discharge initiated by the nursing home, unless the transfer is an emergency.

(3) The nursing home must:

(a) Provide sufficient preparation and orientation to the resident to ensure safe and orderly transfer or discharge from the nursing home;

(b) Attempt to avoid the transfer or discharge of a resident from the nursing home through the use of reasonable accommodations unless agreed to by the resident and the requirements of WAC 388-97-0080 are met; and

(c) Develop and implement a bed-hold policy. This policy must be consistent with any bed-hold policy that the department develops.

(4) Beginning April 13, 2020, through August 3, 2021, the following repeal was in effect for subsection (4) of this section, see WSRs 20-09-074, 20-17-048, 21-01-035, and 21-08-055: The nursing home bed-hold policy must state, at a minimum:

(a) The number of days, if any, the nursing home will hold a resident's bed pending return from hospitalization or social/therapeutic leave;

(b) That a medicaid eligible resident, whose hospitalization or social/therapeutic leave exceeds the maximum number of bed-hold days will be readmitted to the first available semi-private bed, provided the resident needs nursing facility services. Social/therapeutic leave is defined under WAC 388-97-0001. The number of days of social/therapeutic leave allowed for medicaid residents and the authorization process is found under WAC 388-97-0160; and

(c) That a medicaid eligible resident may be charged if he or she requests that a specific bed be held, but may not be charged a bed-hold fee for the right to return to the first available bed in a semi-private room.

(5) The nursing facility must send a copy of the federally required transfer or discharge notice to:

(a) The department's home and community services when the nursing home has determined under WAC 388-97-0100, that the medicaid resident's health has improved sufficiently so that the resident no longer needs the services provided by the facility; and

(b) The department's designated local office when the transfer or discharge is for any of the following reasons:

(i) The resident's needs cannot be met in the facility;

(ii) The health or safety of individuals in the facility is endangered; or

(iii) The resident has failed to pay for, or to have paid under medicare or medicaid, a stay at the facility.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.42.620. WSR 26-08-015, s 388-97-01201, filed 3/20/26, effective 4/20/26.]