

## Overview

Residential Care Services' (RCS) core mission is to protect the vulnerable in all RCS-regulated settings. The policy unit enables RCS to achieve its mission by providing good stewardship for the regulatory system on which RCS relies. This means the policy unit has the responsibility for careful planning, management, and monitoring of the rules, policies, procedures, and legislation affecting RCS. The policy unit is not the owner of any rule, policy, or procedure, but acts on behalf of RCS leadership, staff, and the public.

The five main functions of the policy unit are:

- Writing rules (WACs) and policies in response to changes in the legal landscape of Washington State, such as new laws, regulations, or RCS business needs and processes.
- Promoting transparency, accountability, and democracy by conducting collaborative stakeholder activities, consensus-building, and other good governance processes.
- Supporting RCS leadership decision making by providing recommendations founded on evidence-based research, consultations, and input from RCS staff and the Assistant Attorney Generals (AAGs), and sound legal and business process analysis.
- Reviewing, analyzing, and drafting legislation that affects RCS regulated settings, including timely responses to the Governor's office, legislators, and public inquiries.
- Providing rule and policy interpretation and advice to RCS leadership, staff, and the public.

The policy unit is comprised of subject matter experts in each of the regulated settings which RCS oversees. However, it is also the responsibility of the policy unit to listen to, understand, and incorporate the advice of the many experts across RCS.

These procedures are not covered by [DSHS Administrative Policies](#) as they are specific to Residential Care Services. These procedures will be reviewed for accuracy and compliance at least every five years.

## Contacts

- RCS Policy Unit General Contact: [RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov)
- RCS Quality Improvement Unit General Contact: [ImproveRCS@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:ImproveRCS@dshs.wa.gov)

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ALTSA Residential Care Services, Standard Operating Procedures Manual

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#### A. [Glossary of Terms](#)

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**Agency** – State agency

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**Department** – This term refers to the Washington state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

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**Facility/home/provider** – Refers to the following statutes: [RCW 74.34.020\(5\)](#), these terms refer to a residence licensed or certified under [Chapter 18.20 RCW](#) (Assisted Living Facilities); [Chapter 70.97 RCW](#) (Enhanced Services Facilities); [Chapter 18.51 RCW](#) (Nursing Homes); [Chapter 70.128 RCW](#) (Adult Family Homes); [Chapter 72.36 RCW](#) (Soldiers' Homes); or [Chapter 71A.20 RCW](#) (Residential Habilitation Centers); or any other facility licensed or certified by the Department.

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**Working days (business days)** – defined as Monday through Friday, excluding federal and state holidays.

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#### B. [Acronym List](#)

AA4	Administrative Assistant 4
AAG	Assistant Attorney General
AFH	Adult Family Homes
ALF	Assisted Living Facilities
CC	Carbon Copy (in emails)
CCRSS	Certified Community Residential Services and Supports
CES	Concise Explanatory Statement
CPM	Communications Program Manager
DPL	Dear Provider Letter
DSHS	Department of Social and Health Services
ESF	Enhanced Services Facilities
ICF/IID	Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities
IP	Interested Parties
IT	Information Technology
MB	Management Bulletin
NH	Nursing Homes
OC5D	Office Chief Five Day Review
PPM	Policy Program Manager
PUM	Policy Unit Manager
PUP Tracker	Policy Unit Project Tracker
QI	Quality Improvement
QIC	Quality Improvement Coordinator
QIUM	Quality Improvement Unit Manager
RA	Regional Administrator
RCS	Residential Care Services
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
WAC	Washington Administrative Code



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#### C. [Change Log](#)

Eff. Date	Chapter/ Section #	Description of Change	Reason for Change	Communication and Training Plan
09/08/2023	Full Chapter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SOP Management moved to Chapter 10 (Quality Management)</li><li>• Reformat Chapter</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SOP Management responsibility transferred to newly created Quality Improvement Unit</li><li>• Provide for easier navigation</li></ul>	MB R23-075
09.27.2019	Full Chapter	Establishment of Chapter 8	Chapter development	<a href="#">MB R19-073</a>

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