



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Home and Community Living Administration
P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

February 26, 2026

HCLA: ALF #2026-009

Certification of Memory Care Services Application

Dear Assisted Living Facility Administrator:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and interested parties have been working on developing rule related to [Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5337](#) Certification of Memory Care Services. These new rules will amend and add sections to Chapter 388-78A WAC, Assisted Living Facility (ALF) Licensing Rule.

This legislation requires ALFs with restricted egress for residents with cognitive impairment, and facilities marketing or representing themselves as providing memory care services or specialized dementia care within a dedicated facility or unit to be certified by July 1, 2026. Concerns have been expressed about the completion of the certification process and the type of information ALFs will be required to provide to complete the certification process.

To address the period between when a facility applies for certification and when the certification is issued, the following is being developed in rule:

- An ALF submitting their certification application by July 1, 2026, will be seen as compliant even if the application has not been reviewed or finalized by the department.
- The department will work with the ALF to complete the certification process. If the provider does not respond to a request for information from the department in a reasonable amount of time, the application will be voided and results in the ALF being viewed as an uncertified memory care facility or memory care unit. Please note, this could result in enforcement actions by the department.
- During the first full inspection after certification, the time between when the application was submitted and approval of the certification application will not be subject to citation as long as the application was submitted by July 1, 2026.
- If an ALF determines during the application review, they do not wish to become certified or the department determines they will not certify the provider, then the department will work with the provider to transition memory care residents to a certified memory care facility or memory care unit. During the period of application review and transition of memory care residents will not be subject to citation as long as the application was submitted to the department prior to the July 1, 2026 deadline.

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To better prepare ALFs for the certification application process the department has provided a **draft** of the certification application for review on the [Assisted Living Facility Professionals](#) website. The draft document is not an approved DSHS application and will not be processed by the department if submitted. The DSHS approved application should be available in May 2026.

The fee for the initial certification application is \$331.00, which is due at the time the application is submitted. The annual recertification will cost \$676.00 per memory care facility or memory care unit.

The department will be offering training sessions on the certification process as the timeline gets closer; watch for future Dear Provider Letters to notify you of upcoming training opportunities.

For questions related to the rulemaking process or comments on the draft application, please contact Tamara Tredo, Assisted Living Facility and Enhances Services Facilities Policy Program Manager at 360-999-0237 or RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*