

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
NURSING CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION**

WHPS Procedure Summary 12.01: Cease Practice Requirements

The primary mission of Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS) is to protect the health and safety of the public. When there is reasonable concern about the ability to practice safely, the nurse ceases practice.

NOTE: WHPS does not have authority to take action on a nurse's license. Cessation from practice is applied as a public safety measure and is contractually understood by the nurse and their employer. Any practice during the cessation period will be considered significant material non-compliance and reported to the Nursing care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC).

SUMMARY

1. Cease Practice

A. Nurses will be requested to cease practice and have their Work Site Monitor (WSM) notified in circumstances including, but not limited to:

- Failure to test as requested.
- A positive drug screen.
- A substituted or altered drug screen specimen.
- A report of possible impaired practice or inappropriate behavior.
- Use of prescribed short term narcotic analgesics.
- Material contract non-compliance.
- Self-report of unauthorized substance use.
- Practicing in an unapproved capacity.
- A report of diversion of controlled substances from work.
- Incidences of provable harm, abuse or neglect to patients.

B. Nurses who have ceased practicing will be referred for a substance use evaluation and may be required to re-enter treatment before returning to practice. Additional evaluations (e.g. mental health) may also be required.

C. Nurses may not return to practice until approved by their evaluator/treatment provider and WHPS. Any unauthorized practice will result in referral to the NCQAC.