



In 2023, the Washington Academy of PAs (WAPA) has proposed a bill to modernize PA practice in Washington state. House bill 1310, Establishing Collaborative Practice for Washington PAs was introduced on January 12th and will soon be heard in the House Health Care and Wellness subcommittee.

This bill changes the current physician/PA relationship from a supervisory relationship to a collaboration relationship which allows you to practice at the top of your license and improves physician assistant (PA) hireability and retention in Washington.

If you haven't looked for a job recently - the job market is difficult for PAs in Washington due to outdated practice laws and unnecessary administrative burdens. WAPA has seen an increasing trend of employers choosing not to hire PAs. HR and recruiters have reported to the WAPA Legislative chair that they cannot find physicians to "supervise" PAs, so they only hire nurse practitioners (ARNPs). As of December 2022, there were approximately twice as many ARNP positions as PAs in the Seattle area.

## **Main Points of the Bill:**

- Collaborative Practice replaces the supervision model for PAs with a collaboration model where PAs can interact, consult and/or refer to the appropriate member of a healthcare team.
- The degree of collaboration will be decided at the practice level. Collaboration will be different in various settings considering the PA's education, training, and experience.
- Instead of one supervising physician on your agreement, it can be several physicians and/or your employer on the collaboration agreement. This will make it easier to complete the agreement.
- PAs with less than 4,000 hours of practice will have stricter collaboration agreements.
- Removes physician liability from PA's medical decisions.
- PAs can request direct reimbursement for their services, like comparable providers.
- Removes physician/PA ratios to give large employers the flexibility to build their teams as appropriate at their practice site.

Collaborative practice laws for PAs have already been established in the District of Columbia and 20 states, including Idaho and Oregon. Washington PAs deserve to be recognized for their education, experience, and training by being sought after providers with excellent career prospects.

Unfortunately, the Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) has expressed that they will oppose this bill on behalf of their physician members even though they represent over 800 PA members.



## How Can You Help?

**Join WAPA.** Your membership dues pay for our lobbyist and staffing. We are a small organization that is mostly volunteer run.

If you are a member of WSMA – contact them to express your disappointment in their opposition of this bill (HB 1310). Do not renew your membership with WSMA.

Email : [wsma@wsma.org](mailto:wsma@wsma.org)

Phone: (206) 441-9762

Talk to your colleagues about this bill. Encourage PAs to join WAPA. Ask physicians if they will support this bill by writing to their legislators or attending a bill hearing in 2023 (date TBD). Find out who your legislators are by searching <https://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>.

Write and or call your representatives and talk to them about HB 1310. Check the WAPA.com website for a template letter you can personalize.

Follow WAPA on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep up to date and share information.

*For more information, contact the WAPA legislative committee: [Linda Dale Ldale0224@aol.com](mailto:LindaDaleLdale0224@aol.com)*