

---

<b>Document Type:</b> <sup>1</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy & Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Process Guideline	Adopted:	08/02/05
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> System Description	Last Reviewed:	06/03/10
			Retired:	_____

Revisions: 10/12/07

---

**Document Scope:** (applies to Policy & Procedure only)

- The requirements herein apply only to the GCBH Central Office and its functions.
  - The requirements herein apply, verbatim, to GCBH and its network providers<sup>2</sup>.
  - X - The requirements herein apply both to GCBH and its network providers<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, network providers must have internal documents outlining their processes for implementing the requirements, insofar as they relate to actions for which network providers are responsible.
- 

**PURPOSE:** To clarify the requirements of 42 CFR §438.214(b) and WAC 388-865-0405 as they relate to the credentialing and re-credentialing of Mental Health Professionals (MHP's) within the GCBH provider network, and to establish minimum requirements for those processes.

**DEFINITIONS**

- I. Credentials – Documented evidence of registration, licensure, education, training, experience, or other qualifications.
- II. Credentialing – The process of assessing and validating the qualifications of a registered and/or licensed individual.
- III. Mental Health Professional (MHP) – An individual who meets the criteria established by WAC 388-865-0150, or its successors. This policy applies to MHP's who are employed by a licensed/certified Network Provider or at the GCBH Central Office.
- IV. Network Provider – An entity holding a contract with GCBH, or a GCBH Member Government, for the provision of RSN-funded mental health services.
- V. Primary Source Verification – The process of validating stated credentials from their original source.
- VI. Re-credentialing – The process whereby the credentialing information is updated.

**POLICY**

- A. GCBH delegates to its Network Providers the responsibility for ensuring that all MHP's providing RSN-funded services to consumers have the required credentials. The GCBH Central Office is responsible for carrying out the required credentialing/recredentialing processes for MHP's it employs or contracts with directly.
- B. Only individuals presenting validated credentials qualifying them to function as MHP's are hired or contracted with to provide the services which, by State law, must be provided by MHP's. In the event a Network Provider wishes to employ or contract with an individual who does not clearly meet these requirements, the Network Provider works with the GCBH Central Office to obtain an exception via the process required and defined by WAC 388-865-0265.
- C. GCBH Network Providers have formal, internal processes for credentialing and re-credentialing MHP's which are in substantial compliance with the procedures set forth in

this policy. Should Providers be required by other external agencies to implement procedures substantially different from those described herein, GCBH will grant an exception to its “substantial compliance” requirement upon demonstration that the Provider’s program meets generally accepted industry standards.

- D. Network Providers’ compliance with the requirements of this policy is assessed by GCBH during its administrative review process. Results of such reviews are reported to the GCBH Director, or his/her designee, who is responsible for ensuring any necessary follow-up, and if necessary, for recommending sanctions relating to non-compliance with this policy to the Board of Directors.

## PROCEDURE

1. During the hiring process for MHP’s who will provide direct care or clinical oversight for consumers, each applicant’s credentials are validated, as follows:
  - 1.1. The applicant signs a statement attesting to the accuracy and completeness of all information he/she has provided and consenting to inspection of records and documents pertinent to the application.
  - 1.2. The applicant’s qualifications are reviewed to confirm that he/she meets the minimum requirements for the position.
  - 1.3. Information provided by the applicant regarding his/her credentials (i.e., those essential to the job functions) is confirmed through primary source verification. Additionally, as necessary, credentials relevant to the position but not originally provided by the applicant are obtained and confirmed.
  - 1.4. The applicant is responsible for requesting certified copies of academic credentials and certificates of insurance when required.
2. Provider agencies review each MHP’s credentials at least every two (2) years via a process that includes primary source verification of all credentials that are subject to change (e.g., licenses). Background checks are renewed if circumstances suggest there may have been charges or convictions since the last check.
3. Evidence of primary source verification must be kept on file to demonstrate compliance during contractual compliance reviews. This requirement may be satisfied as follows:
  - 3.1. For Licenses: A print-out, in the employee’s file, of the page from the State of Washington, Department of Health “Provider Credential” website which bears the statement “This site is a Primary Source for Verification of Credentials,” and provides information regarding the status of the MHP’s license.
    - 3.1.1. URL: <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/providercredentialsearch/>
  - 3.2. For Criminal History Background Checks: A copy of the report, present in the employee’s file.
4. Changes in licensure or certification status, and any adverse actions affecting licensure or certification, are reported by Network Providers to the GCBH Director, or his/her designee.
5. The competence of all contracted and employed MHP’s who provide direct care or clinical oversight is continually assessed, maintained and improved via the development

and implementation of training plans that reflect the requirements of the positions and the individuals' current skills.

**APPROVAL**

/S/ Ken Roughton, Ph.D.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ken Roughton, Ph.D.  
Director

06/03/10  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date