

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Changes to Rule 251

1. What are the areas affected by the proposed Rule?

Briefly, the changes relate to the following areas, as detailed within the proposed rule:

- Combined technician/pharmacist and student/pharmacist ratio to a ceiling of 6:1
- Registration and national certification requirements for technicians
- Requirements for registration/licensure with the Board of Pharmacy to access the secured area in a pharmacy on a regular basis

2. Have the proposed changes to Rule 251 gone into effect yet?

No. The proposed changes to Rule 251 will not go into effect until the State Legislature does not disapprove these changes. After this approval, the changes to Rule 251 will go into effect at the conclusion of the 2009 legislative session, [REDACTED]

3. What does the change in the technician to pharmacist ratio from 3:1 to 6:1 entail?

The change covers all supportive personnel in the pharmacy: pharmacy technicians, pharmacy technicians in training, and student pharmacists. Clerks are not included in the ratio because the position of clerk will be eliminated. With these changes, everyone in the secured area of a pharmacy on a regular basis will be required to be registered with or licensed by the Idaho State Board of Pharmacy.

4. As a pharmacist, will I be required to work with a 6:1 ratio?

No. The 6:1 ratio is a ceiling, not a mandatory staffing level. A pharmacy or PIC may be disciplined for allowing a ratio that results in, or is reasonably expected to result in, harm to public health and safety.

5. Will pharmacy technicians be subject to new minimum requirements for registration?

Yes. By increasing the ratio, the proposed changes require that pharmacy technicians registered before July 1, 2009, meet the following requirements:

1. Be at least 18 years old
2. Have a high school diploma or its equivalent
3. Be of good moral character and temperate habits
4. Submit a completed application and fee to the Board of Pharmacy

After July 1, 2009, pharmacy technicians that register with the Board of Pharmacy will need to be nationally certified by either the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) or the Institute for Certification of Pharmacy Technicians (ICPT), along with meeting the other requirements stated above.

6. I am currently a pharmacy technician. How will this certification requirement affect me?

Pharmacy technicians registered with the Board of Pharmacy before July 1, 2009, will be exempt from having to be nationally certified as long as they work for the same pharmacy employer. If they go to work for a different pharmacy employer, they will need to obtain national certification in order to maintain their status as a pharmacy technician. The option to register as a pharmacy technician in training for up to two (2) consecutive years will be available to give an individual sufficient time to complete the national certification process.

7. I am a student pharmacist looking to work part-time at a pharmacy that already has a student pharmacist. Will we be able to work at the same time?

Yes. Under the proposed ratio change, the old student pharmacist/pharmacist ratio is abolished, and a pharmacist will be able to work with more than one student pharmacist if they so choose and as long as it is within the 6:1 ratio. Having to register as a pharmacy technician, in addition to registering as a student pharmacist, will no longer be necessary for student pharmacists working part-time outside of their college of pharmacy curriculum.

8. I am a high school student working in a pharmacy through a school-to-work program at my school. With the new technician qualifications, will I still be able to work in the pharmacy?

Yes. Pharmacy technician applicants who do not meet the requirements of 18 years of age and/or having received a high school diploma or GED will be able to apply for a waiver. The waiver must be approved by the Executive Director of the Board of Pharmacy and is intended to be utilized for high school students working in a school-to-work program.

9. If all pharmacy personnel have to be registered or licensed with the Board of Pharmacy, will IT workers or the custodial staff be allowed within the secured area of the pharmacy?

Yes. The pharmacy or pharmacist-in-charge may authorize other persons to be present temporarily in the secured area of the pharmacy for legitimate business purposes, provided that such persons are under the observation of the pharmacist-in-charge (or another pharmacist designated by the pharmacist-in-charge or the pharmacy) during their temporary presence in the secured area of the pharmacy.