

September 24, 2020

The Honorable Debra Stephens
415 12th Ave SW PO Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929



Whatcom Community College
Amy Riedel, M.Ed.
Associate Director of Student Access & Career Pathways, Adjunct Faculty
237 West Kellogg Rd., Bellingham, WA
360-383-3194 ariedel@whatcom.edu

Dear Chief Justice Stephens,

Please authorize the additional LLLT testing request from the LLLT Board. Adding tests will still comply with the July 2022 deadline for licensure completion. Students and LLLT candidates already in the pipeline need this critical accommodation for personal and financial reasons. More than 70 Students are currently enrolled at Whatcom Community College in LLLT core curriculum courses and the LLLT practice area classes. The shortened timeline necessitated by the sunset deadline already places a significant burden on these candidates and on this educational institution.

We ask the Court to allow the LLLT licensing testing dates of February 2021, July 2021, February 2022, and May 2022. These dates are determined by the end of quarter dates at Whatcom Community College for both the LLLT Core Curriculum and LLLT Practice Area courses. This enables the more than 70 Students currently in the LLLT pipeline to finish the academic and licensing requirements at a reasonable pace and sequence while still meeting the final deadline imposed by the Court of July 2022.

Students need this accommodation to relieve the pressure and the challenges of appropriate LLLT educational course sequencing and licensing completion:

- The 70+ Students currently enrolled in the LLLT educational pipeline are scrambling to complete both the core curriculum and the practice area classes, prepare for and schedule all of the required exams, and obtain the experience hours. This is logistically impossible for many Students in the LLLT pathways, as these requirements are typically sequenced over 2.5-3 year period, and progressively build on knowledge and content;
- Students who have started into the LLLT pathway have invested precious finite Financial Aid resources, tremendous time in school, as well as personal and government loans to finance their education;
- The College has a responsibility to accommodate Students with special learning needs and be sensitive to Students with learning disabilities, with Veteran's status, and others who simply need to pace their LLLT sequencing to be successful in their coursework without added undue pressure and stress of shortened time;
- The College has a duty to ensure that when a program is offered, all of the support needed is in place to allow those Students who have already entered the program to have adequate time for completion, financial planning, and support. I ask the Court to permit the request for additional exams because this will, without changing the deadline for completion, allow Students who are near LLLT completion to finish what they started;

- The LLLT Practice Area courses are not eligible for Financial Aid, so Students have to pay for these out of pocket or through other funding sources. Additional time allows Students of moderate means to secure the money needed to complete the coursework.

We are grateful to the Court for its consideration of this critical issue for our LLLT Students at this important time in their education.

Sincerely,
Amy Riedel, M.Ed.