

Title: Tobacco as it relates to religious or ceremonial use

PEBB Program Administrative Policy 91-2

Contact:	Policy and Rules Coordinator, ERB Division	Effective:	January 1, 2022
		Rescinded:	
Associated RCW:	41.05.065 Laws of 2019, ch. 415, §§ 212 & 939	Supersedes:	N/A
Associated PEB Board Policy Resolutions:	PEBB 2019-06		
Associated WAC:	182-08-015 182-12-300(3)		
Assoc. fed law/reg:	45 CFR 146.121(f)	Owner:	Policy, Rules & Compliance Manager, ERB Division
Associated Procedures:			
Associated Forms & Communication	HCA 50-0100 HCA 51-0205	Approved by:	
		Position:	Director of the PEBB Program
		Date approved:	August 25, 2021

Purpose:

This policy applies whenever a Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) subscriber is attesting to an enrolled member's tobacco use status. The purpose of the policy is to clarify the exception for the religious or ceremonial use of tobacco.

WAC 182-08-015 Definitions: "Tobacco use" means any use of tobacco products within the past two months. Tobacco use, however, does not include the religious or ceremonial use of tobacco.

Policy:

1. "Religious use of tobacco" means the use of tobacco products as part of a formal tradition, rite, or ritual. An example of this would be the use of tobacco products during a Native American religious ritual.
2. "Ceremonial use of tobacco" means the use of tobacco products for ceremonial purposes in connection with the practice of a traditional ceremony or ritual.
3. A subscriber may attest that an enrolled member does not use tobacco products if that enrollee's only use within the past two months falls within the exception for religious or ceremonial use.