

610 CMR 16.00: Notice of Public Hearing

610 CMR 16.00: Degree Granting Regulation for Pilot Proposals on Innovation

Notice is hereby given pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 30, M.G.L. c. 30A § 2 and c. 15A, § 9 that the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education will open a comment period relative to the adoption of regulation 610 CMR 16.00: "Degree Granting Regulation for Pilot Proposals on Innovation."

The Department of Higher Education's proposed regulation 610 CMR 16.00 seeks to provide the Board of Higher Education (Board or BHE) with flexibility to modify or temporarily waive its own regulations or standards in those instances where existing BHE regulations may impede responsible experimentation in higher education offerings. Specifically, the proposed BHE regulation establishes a framework for the Board to carefully consider, advance, and evaluate "pilot proposals" – from public or independent institutions of higher education subject to the Board's jurisdiction – that may be inconsistent with one or more specific BHE regulatory or policy requirement(s) related to an institution's degree-granting authority, but are responsive to significant changes in society, demographics, technology, educational research, or expectations regarding post-secondary education. The criteria, requirements, and procedures set forth therein will allow for responsible experimentation and advance innovation within a controlled, monitored environment, with the intention of broadening student access to sustainable degree-granting programs in high-demand fields.

The public comment period will begin when the proposed regulation is published in the *Massachusetts Register* on November 21, 2025, and will close three weeks thereafter, on December 12, 2025.

The public hearing will be held virtually on Friday, December 12, 2025, at 12:00 noon via Zoom:

When: December 12, 2025 -- 12:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Participants must register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/-iG_IHKxRF-wQRYqNQbPQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Written comments on the proposed amendments may be submitted at any time prior to 5:00pm EST on December 12, 2025, by directing the same to the following:

Email:

BHERegulationsComments@dhe.mass.edu

Postal Mail:

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108
Attn: Christopher J. Grimaldi, Assistant General Counsel

Please submit electronic comments as an attached Word document and type "610 CMR 16.00" in the subject line. All submissions must include the sender's full name and address.

A copy of the proposed regulations, as well as the Department of Higher Education's fiscal effect and small business impact statement, are available on the Department of Higher Education's website at <https://www.mass.edu/bhe/review.asp>. Copies may also be obtained by calling Christopher J. Grimaldi at 617-994-6983.

For special accommodations for submission of public comments or information regarding submission of public comments in an alternative format, please contact Christopher J. Grimaldi.