

Chapter 9.26A RCW
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CRIME

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Civil cause of action: RCW 9A.56.268.

Telecommunications crimes: RCW 9A.56.262 through 9A.56.266.

RCW 9.26A.090 Telephone company credit cards—Prohibited acts.

Every person who sells, rents, lends, gives, advertises for sale or rental, or publishes the credit card number of an existing, canceled, revoked, expired, or nonexistent telephone company credit card, or the numbering or coding that is employed in the issuance of telephone company credit cards or access devices, with the intent that it be used or with knowledge or reason to believe that it will be used to avoid the payment of any lawful charge, shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [1990 c 11 § 3; 1974 ex.s. c 160 § 1.]

RCW 9.26A.100 Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Access device" shall have the same meaning as that contained in RCW 9A.56.010.

(2) "Computer" means an electronic, magnetic, optical, electrochemical, or other high-speed data processing device performing logical, arithmetic, or storage functions, and includes any data storage facility or communications facility directly related to or operating in conjunction with such device, but does not mean an automated typewriter or typesetter, portable handheld calculator, or other similar device.

(3) "Computer trespass" shall have the same meaning as that contained in chapter 9A.52 RCW.

(4) "Credit card number" means the card number or coding appearing on a credit card or other form of authorization, including an identification card or plate issued to a person by any telecommunications provider that permits the person to whom it has been issued to obtain telecommunications service on credit. The term includes the number or description of the card or plate, even if the card or plate itself is not produced at the time the telecommunications service is obtained.

(5) "Publish" means the communication or dissemination of information to any one or more persons: (a) Orally, in person, or by

telephone, radio, or television; (b) in a writing of any kind, including without limitation a letter or memorandum, circular or handbill, newspaper or magazine article, or book; or (c) electronically, including by the use of recordings, computer networks, bulletin boards, or other means of electronic storage and retrieval.

(6) "Telecommunications" shall have the same meaning as that contained in RCW 80.04.010 and includes telecommunications service that originates, terminates, or both originates and terminates in this state.

(7) "Telecommunications company" shall have the same meaning as that contained in RCW 80.04.010.

(8) "Telecommunications device" means any operating procedure or code, instrument, apparatus, or equipment designed or adapted for a particular use, and which is intended or can be used in violation of this chapter, and includes, but is not limited to, computer hardware, software, and programs; electronic mail system; voice mail system; private branch exchange; or any other means of facilitating telecommunications service.

(9) "Telephone company" means any local exchange company, as defined in RCW 80.04.010. [1990 c 11 § 1.]

RCW 9.26A.110 Fraud in obtaining telecommunications service—

Penalty. (1) Every person who, with intent to evade the provisions of any order or rule of the Washington utilities and transportation commission or of any tariff, price list, contract, or any other filing lawfully submitted to the commission by any telephone, telegraph, or telecommunications company, or with intent to defraud, obtains telephone, telegraph, or telecommunications service from any telephone, telegraph, or telecommunications company through: (a) The use of a false or fictitious name or telephone number; (b) the unauthorized use of the name or telephone number of another; (c) the physical or electronic installation of, rearrangement of, or tampering with any equipment, or use of a telecommunications device; (d) the commission of computer trespass; or (e) any other trick, deceit, or fraudulent device, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) If the value of the telephone, telegraph, or telecommunications service that any person obtains in violation of this section during a period of ninety days exceeds fifty dollars in the aggregate, then such person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

(3) If the value of the telephone, telegraph, or telecommunications service that any person obtains in violation of this section during a period of ninety days exceeds two hundred fifty dollars in the aggregate, then such person is guilty of a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(4) For any act that constitutes a violation of both this section and RCW 9.26A.115 the provisions of RCW 9.26A.115 shall be exclusive. [2003 c 53 § 20; 1990 c 11 § 2; 1981 c 252 § 1; 1977 ex.s. c 42 § 1; 1974 ex.s. c 160 § 2; 1972 ex.s. c 75 § 1; 1955 c 114 § 1. Formerly RCW 9.45.240.]

Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53: See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

Injunctive relief for violations: RCW 7.40.230.

RCW 9.26A.115 Fraud in obtaining telecommunications service—Use of telecommunications device—Penalty. Every person is guilty of a class B felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW who:

(1) Makes, possesses, sells, gives, or otherwise transfers to another a telecommunications device with intent to use it or with knowledge or reason to believe it is intended to be used to avoid any lawful telephone or telegraph toll charge or to conceal the existence or place of origin or destination of any telephone or telegraph message; or

(2) Sells, gives, or otherwise transfers to another plans or instructions for making or assembling a telecommunications device described in subsection (1) of this section with knowledge or reason to believe that the plans may be used to make or assemble such device. [2003 c 53 § 21.]

Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53: See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

RCW 9.26A.120 Fraud in operating coin-box telephone or other receptacle. Any person who shall knowingly and wilfully operate, or cause to be operated, or who shall attempt to operate, or attempt to cause to be operated, [any] coin-box telephone or other receptacle designed to receive lawful coin of the United States of America in connection with the sale, use or enjoyment of property or service, by means of a slug or any false, counterfeited, mutilated, sweated or foreign coin, or by any means, method, trick or device whatsoever not lawfully authorized by the owner, lessee, or licensee of such machine, coin-box telephone or other receptacle designed to receive lawful coin of the United States of America in connection with the sale, use or enjoyment of property or service, any goods, wares, merchandise, gas, electric current, article of value, or the use or enjoyment of any telephone or telegraph facilities or service without depositing in and surrendering to such machine, coin-box telephone or receptacle lawful coin of the United States of America to the amount required therefor by the owner, lessee or licensee of such machine, coin-box telephone or receptacle, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. [1929 c 184 § 1; RRS § 5842-1. Formerly RCW 9.45.180.]

RCW 9.26A.130 Penalty for manufacture or sale of slugs to be used for coin. Any person who, with intent to cheat or defraud the owner, lessee, licensee or other person entitled to the contents of any coin-box telephone or other receptacle, depository or contrivance, designed to receive lawful coin of the United States of America in connection with the sale, use or enjoyment of property or service, or who, knowing or having cause to believe, that the same is intended for unlawful use, shall manufacture for sale, or sell or give away any slug, device, or substance whatsoever intended or calculated to be placed or deposited in any coin-box telephone or other such receptacle, depository or contrivance, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. [1929 c 184 § 2; RRS § 5842-2. Formerly RCW 9.45.190.]

RCW 9.26A.140 Unauthorized sale or procurement of telephone records—Penalties—Definitions.

(1) A person is guilty of the unauthorized sale or procurement of telephone records if the person:

(a) Intentionally sells the telephone record of any resident of this state without the authorization of the customer to whom the record pertains;

(b) By fraudulent, deceptive, or false means obtains the telephone record of any resident of this state to whom the record pertains;

(c) Knowingly purchases the telephone record of any resident of this state without the authorization of the customer to whom the record pertains; or

(d) Knowingly receives the telephone record of any resident of this state without the authorization of the customer to whom the record pertains.

(2) This section does not apply to:

(a) Any action by a government agency, or any officer, employee, or agent of such agency, to obtain telephone records in connection with the performance of the official duties of the agency;

(b) A telecommunications company that obtains, uses, discloses, or permits access to any telephone record, either directly or indirectly through its agents, that is:

(i) With the lawful consent of the customer or subscriber;

(ii) Authorized by law;

(iii) Necessarily incident to the rendition of the service or to the protection of the rights or property of the provider of that service, or to protect users of those services and other carriers from fraudulent, abusive, or unlawful use of, or subscription to, such services; or

(iv) In connection with the sale or transfer of all or part of its business, or the purchase or acquisition of a portion or all of a business, or the migration of a customer from one carrier to another.

(3) A violation of subsection (1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section is a class C felony. A violation of subsection (1)(d) of this section is a gross misdemeanor.

(4) A person who violates this section is subject to legal action for injunctive relief and either actual damages, including mental pain and suffering, or liquidated damages of five thousand dollars per violation, whichever is greater. Reasonable attorneys' fees and other costs of litigation are also recoverable.

(5) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Telecommunications company" has the meaning provided in RCW 9.26A.100 and includes "radio communications service companies" as defined in RCW 80.04.010.

(b) "Telephone record" means information retained by a telecommunications company that relates to the telephone number dialed by the customer or the incoming number or call directed to a customer, or other data related to such calls typically contained on a customer telephone bill such as the time the call started and ended, the duration of the call, the time of day the call was made, and any charges applied. "Telephone record" does not include any information collected and retained by customers using caller identification or other similar technologies.

(c) "Procure" means to obtain by any means, whether electronically, in writing, or in oral form, with or without consideration. [2006 c 193 § 1.]