Chapter 59.18 RCW
RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD-TENANT ACT

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Reviser's note: This chapter was revised pursuant to *Wash. Ass'n of Apartment Ass'ns v. Evans,* 88 Wn.2d 563, 564 P.2d 788 (1977), which declared invalid the fourteen item and section vetoes to 1973 Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 2226 (1973 1st ex.s. c 207).

Filing fees for unlawful detainer actions: RCW 36.18.012.

Smoke detection devices in dwelling units required: RCW 43.44.110.

RCW 59.18.010 Short title. RCW 59.18.010 through 59.18.420 and 59.18.900 shall be known and may be cited as the "Residential Landlord-Tenant Act of 1973", and shall constitute a new chapter in Title 59 RCW. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.020 Rights and remedies—Obligation of good faith imposed. Every duty under this chapter and every act which must be performed as a condition precedent to the exercise of a right or remedy under this chapter imposes an obligation of good faith in its performance or enforcement. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 2.]

RCW 59.18.030 Definitions. *(Effective until January 1, 2027.)* As used in this chapter:

(1) "Active duty" means service authorized by the president of the United States, the secretary of defense, or the governor for a period of more than 30 consecutive days.

(2) "Certificate of inspection" means an unsworn statement, declaration, verification, or certificate made in accordance with the

requirements of chapter 5.50 RCW by a qualified inspector that states that the landlord has not failed to fulfill any substantial obligation imposed under RCW 59.18.060 that endangers or impairs the health or safety of a tenant, including (a) structural members that are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety, (b) exposure of the occupants to the weather, (c) plumbing and sanitation defects that directly expose the occupants to the risk of illness or injury, (d) not providing facilities adequate to supply heat and water and hot water as reasonably required by the tenant, (e) providing heating or ventilation systems that are not functional or are hazardous, (f) defective, hazardous, or missing electrical wiring or electrical service, (g) defective or hazardous exits that increase the risk of injury to occupants, and (h) conditions that increase the risk of fire.

(3) "Commercially reasonable manner," with respect to a sale of a deceased tenant's personal property, means a sale where every aspect of the sale, including the method, manner, time, place, and other terms, must be commercially reasonable. If commercially reasonable, a landlord may sell the tenant's property by public or private proceedings, by one or more contracts, as a unit or in parcels, and at any time and place and on any terms.

(4) "Comprehensive reusable tenant screening report" means a tenant screening report prepared by a consumer reporting agency at the direction of and paid for by the prospective tenant and made available directly to a prospective landlord at no charge, which contains all of the following: (a) A consumer credit report prepared by a consumer reporting agency within the past 30 days; (b) the prospective tenant's criminal history; (c) the prospective tenant's eviction history; (d) an employment verification; and (e) the prospective tenant's address and rental history.

(5) "Criminal history" means a report containing or summarizing (a) the prospective tenant's criminal convictions and pending cases, the final disposition of which antedates the report by no more than seven years, and (b) the results of a sex offender registry and United States department of the treasury's office of foreign assets control search, all based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(6) "Designated person" means a person designated by the tenant under RCW 59.18.590.

(7) "Distressed home" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(8) "Distressed home conveyance" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(9) "Distressed home purchaser" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(10) "Dwelling unit" is a structure or that part of a structure which is used as a home, residence, or sleeping place by one person or by two or more persons maintaining a common household, including but not limited to single-family residences and units of multiplexes, apartment buildings, and mobile homes.

(11) "Eviction history" means a report containing or summarizing the contents of any records of unlawful detainer actions concerning the prospective tenant that are reportable in accordance with state law, are lawful for landlords to consider, and are obtained after a search based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(12) "Gang" means a group that: (a) Consists of three or more persons; (b) has identifiable leadership or an identifiable name, sign, or symbol; and (c) on an ongoing basis, regularly conspires and acts in concert mainly for criminal purposes.

(13) "Gang-related activity" means any activity that occurs within the gang or advances a gang purpose.

(14) "Immediate family" includes state registered domestic partner, spouse, parents, grandparents, children, including foster children, siblings, and in-laws.

(15) "In danger of foreclosure" means any of the following:

(a) The homeowner has defaulted on the mortgage and, under the terms of the mortgage, the mortgagee has the right to accelerate full payment of the mortgage and repossess, sell, or cause to be sold the property;

(b) The homeowner is at least 30 days delinquent on any loan that is secured by the property; or

(c) The homeowner has a good faith belief that he or she is likely to default on the mortgage within the upcoming four months due to a lack of funds, and the homeowner has reported this belief to:

(i) The mortgagee;

(ii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.134 RCW;

(iii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.146 RCW;

(iv) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 18.85 RCW;

(v) An attorney-at-law;

(vi) A mortgage counselor or other credit counselor licensed or certified by any federal, state, or local agency; or

(vii) Any other party to a distressed property conveyance.

(16) "Landlord" means the owner, lessor, or sublessor of the dwelling unit or the property of which it is a part, and in addition means any person designated as representative of the owner, lessor, or sublessor including, but not limited to, an agent, a resident manager, or a designated property manager.

(17) "Mortgage" is used in the general sense and includes all instruments, including deeds of trust, that are used to secure an obligation by an interest in real property.

(18) "Orders" means written official military orders, or any written notification, certification, or verification from the service member's commanding officer, with respect to the service member's current or future military status.

(19) "Owner" means one or more persons, jointly or severally, in whom is vested:

(a) All or any part of the legal title to property; or

(b) All or part of the beneficial ownership, and a right to present use and enjoyment of the property.

(20) "Permanent change of station" means: (a) Transfer to a unit located at another port or duty station; (b) change in a unit's home port or permanent duty station; (c) call to active duty for a period not less than 90 days; (d) separation; or (e) retirement.

(21) "Person" means an individual, group of individuals, corporation, government, or governmental agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, or association, two or more persons having a joint or common interest, or any other legal or commercial entity.

(22) "Premises" means a dwelling unit, appurtenances thereto, grounds, and facilities held out for the use of tenants generally and any other area or facility which is held out for use by the tenant.

(23) "Property" or "rental property" means all dwelling units on a contiguous quantity of land managed by the same landlord as a single, rental complex.

(24) "Prospective landlord" means a landlord or a person who advertises, solicits, offers, or otherwise holds a dwelling unit out as available for rent.

(25) "Prospective tenant" means a tenant or a person who has applied for residential housing that is governed under this chapter.

(26) "Qualified inspector" means a United States department of housing and urban development certified inspector; a Washington state licensed home inspector; an American society of home inspectors certified inspector; a private inspector certified by the national association of housing and redevelopment officials, the American association of code enforcement, or other comparable professional association as approved by the local municipality; a municipal code enforcement officer; a Washington licensed structural engineer; or a Washington licensed architect.

(27) "Reasonable attorneys' fees," where authorized in this chapter, means an amount to be determined including the following factors: The time and labor required, the novelty and difficulty of the questions involved, the skill requisite to perform the legal service properly, the fee customarily charged in the locality for similar legal services, the amount involved and the results obtained, and the experience, reputation and ability of the lawyer or lawyers performing the services.

(28) "Reasonable manner," with respect to disposing of a deceased tenant's personal property, means to dispose of the property by donation to a not-for-profit charitable organization, by removal of the property by a trash hauler or recycler, or by any other method that is reasonable under the circumstances.

(29) "Rent" or "rental amount" means recurring and periodic charges identified in the rental agreement for the use and occupancy of the premises, which may include charges for utilities. Except as provided in RCW 59.18.283(3), these terms do not include nonrecurring charges for costs incurred due to late payment, damages, deposits, legal costs, or other fees, including attorneys' fees.

(30) "Rental agreement" or "lease" means all agreements which establish or modify the terms, conditions, rules, regulations, or any other provisions concerning the use and occupancy of a dwelling unit.

(31) "Service member" means an active member of the United States armed forces, a member of a military reserve component, or a member of the national guard who is either stationed in or a resident of Washington state.

(32) A "single-family residence" is a structure maintained and used as a single dwelling unit. Notwithstanding that a dwelling unit shares one or more walls with another dwelling unit, it shall be deemed a single-family residence if it has direct access to a street and shares neither heating facilities nor hot water equipment, nor any other essential facility or service, with any other dwelling unit.

(33) "Subsidized housing" refers to rental housing for very low-income or low-income households that is a dwelling unit operated directly by a public housing authority or its affiliate, or that is insured, financed, or assisted in whole or in part through one of the following sources:

(a) A federal program or state housing program administered by the department of commerce or the Washington state housing finance commission;

(b) A federal housing program administered by a city or county government;

(c) An affordable housing levy authorized under RCW 84.52.105; or

(d) The surcharges authorized in RCW 36.22.250 and any of the surcharges authorized in chapter 43.185C RCW.

(34) A "tenant" is any person who is entitled to occupy a dwelling unit primarily for living or dwelling purposes under a rental agreement.

(35) "Tenant representative" means:

(a) A personal representative of a deceased tenant's estate if known to the landlord;

(b) If the landlord has no knowledge that a personal representative has been appointed for the deceased tenant's estate, a person claiming to be a successor of the deceased tenant who has provided the landlord with proof of death and an affidavit made by the person that meets the requirements of RCW 11.62.010(2);

(c) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection or a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, a designated person; or

(d) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection, a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, or a designated person under (c) of this subsection, any person who provides the landlord with reasonable evidence that he or she is a successor of the deceased tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005. The landlord has no obligation to identify all of the deceased tenant's successors.

(36) "Tenant screening" means using a consumer report or other information about a prospective tenant in deciding whether to make or accept an offer for residential rental property to or from a prospective tenant.

(37) "Tenant screening report" means a consumer report as defined in RCW 19.182.010 and any other information collected by a tenant screening service.

(38) "Transitional housing" means housing units owned, operated, or managed by a nonprofit organization or governmental entity in which supportive services are provided to individuals and families that were formerly homeless, with the intent to stabilize them and move them to permanent housing within a period of not more than 24 months, or longer if the program is limited to tenants within a specified age range or the program is intended for tenants in need of time to complete and transition from educational or training or service programs.

(39) "Wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises" means deterioration that results from the intended use of a dwelling unit, including breakage or malfunction due to age or deteriorated condition. Such wear does not include deterioration that results from negligence, carelessness, accident, or abuse of the premises, fixtures, equipment, appliances, or furnishings by the tenant, immediate family member, occupant, or guest. [2023 c 331 s 2; 2023 c 277 s 10. Prior: 2021 c 212 s 1; prior: 2019 c 356 s 5; 2019 c 232 s 24; 2019 c 23 s 1; prior: 2016 c 66 s 1; prior: 2015 c 264 s 1; prior: 2012 c 41 s 2; 2011 c 132 s 1; prior: 2010 c 148 s 1; 2008 c 278 s 12; 1998 c 276 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 3.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2023 c 277 s 10 and by 2023 c 331 s 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Deposits and moving fees often present significant barriers to helping low-income tenants secure new housing. Without clear guidance governing when landlords may withhold a security deposit for damage to a unit, renters are often unable to contest improper charges and fall into debt to their landlords;

(b) Low-income renters holding unpaid tenant debt face greater housing instability. Low-income renters can be barred from entering into new tenancies by debt to a previous landlord, even if that debt is based on undocumented, inflated, or fraudulent charges; and

(c) The burden of debt to a previous landlord falls most heavily on low-income renters, people with disabilities, single parents, and people with housing vouchers, who are disproportionately people of color.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to protect renters from the financial instability caused by improper and inflated damage charges that prevent tenants from receiving their deposit back, to ease the debt burden on renting families, and to reduce the disproportionate harm to low-income renters of color." [2023 c 331 s 1.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 10, 2021]." [2021 c 212 s 7.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

Finding—2012 c 41: See note following RCW 59.18.257.

RCW 59.18.030 Definitions. ***(Effective January 1, 2027.)*** As used in this chapter:

(1) "Active duty" means service authorized by the president of the United States, the secretary of defense, or the governor for a period of more than 30 consecutive days.

(2) "Authentication data" means the data generated or collected at the point of authentication in connection with granting a user entry to a smart access building, common area, or dwelling unit through such building's smart access system, excluding data generated through or collected by a video, audio, or camera system that is used to monitor entrances but not grant entry.

(3) "Biometric identifier information" means a physiological, biological, or behavioral characteristic that is used to identify, or assist in identifying, an individual including, but not limited to:

(a) A retina or iris scan;

(b) A fingerprint;

(c) A voiceprint; or

(d) A scan or record of a palm, hand, or face geometry.

(4) "Certificate of inspection" means an unsworn statement, declaration, verification, or certificate made in accordance with the

requirements of chapter 5.50 RCW by a qualified inspector that states that the landlord has not failed to fulfill any substantial obligation imposed under RCW 59.18.060 that endangers or impairs the health or safety of a tenant, including (a) structural members that are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety, (b) exposure of the occupants to the weather, (c) plumbing and sanitation defects that directly expose the occupants to the risk of illness or injury, (d) not providing facilities adequate to supply heat and water and hot water as reasonably required by the tenant, (e) providing heating or ventilation systems that are not functional or are hazardous, (f) defective, hazardous, or missing electrical wiring or electrical service, (g) defective or hazardous exits that increase the risk of injury to occupants, and (h) conditions that increase the risk of fire.

(5) "Commercially reasonable manner," with respect to a sale of a deceased tenant's personal property, means a sale where every aspect of the sale, including the method, manner, time, place, and other terms, must be commercially reasonable. If commercially reasonable, a landlord may sell the tenant's property by public or private proceedings, by one or more contracts, as a unit or in parcels, and at any time and place and on any terms.

(6) "Comprehensive reusable tenant screening report" means a tenant screening report prepared by a consumer reporting agency at the direction of and paid for by the prospective tenant and made available directly to a prospective landlord at no charge, which contains all of the following: (a) A consumer credit report prepared by a consumer reporting agency within the past 30 days; (b) the prospective tenant's criminal history; (c) the prospective tenant's eviction history; (d) an employment verification; and (e) the prospective tenant's address and rental history.

(7) "Criminal history" means a report containing or summarizing (a) the prospective tenant's criminal convictions and pending cases, the final disposition of which antedates the report by no more than seven years, and (b) the results of a sex offender registry and United States department of the treasury's office of foreign assets control search, all based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(8) "Designated person" means a person designated by the tenant under RCW 59.18.590.

(9) "Distressed home" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(10) "Distressed home conveyance" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(11) "Distressed home purchaser" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(12) "Dwelling unit" is a structure or that part of a structure which is used as a home, residence, or sleeping place by one person or by two or more persons maintaining a common household, including but not limited to single-family residences and units of multiplexes, apartment buildings, and mobile homes.

(13) "Eviction history" means a report containing or summarizing the contents of any records of unlawful detainer actions concerning the prospective tenant that are reportable in accordance with state law, are lawful for landlords to consider, and are obtained after a search based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(14) "Gang" means a group that: (a) Consists of three or more persons; (b) has identifiable leadership or an identifiable name, sign, or symbol; and (c) on an ongoing basis, regularly conspires and acts in concert mainly for criminal purposes.

(15) "Gang-related activity" means any activity that occurs within the gang or advances a gang purpose.

(16) "Immediate family" includes state registered domestic partner, spouse, parents, grandparents, children, including foster children, siblings, and in-laws.

(17) "In danger of foreclosure" means any of the following:

(a) The homeowner has defaulted on the mortgage and, under the terms of the mortgage, the mortgagee has the right to accelerate full payment of the mortgage and repossess, sell, or cause to be sold the property;

(b) The homeowner is at least 30 days delinquent on any loan that is secured by the property; or

(c) The homeowner has a good faith belief that he or she is likely to default on the mortgage within the upcoming four months due to a lack of funds, and the homeowner has reported this belief to:

(i) The mortgagee;

(ii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.134 RCW;

(iii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.146 RCW;

(iv) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 18.85 RCW;

(v) An attorney-at-law;

(vi) A mortgage counselor or other credit counselor licensed or certified by any federal, state, or local agency; or

(vii) Any other party to a distressed property conveyance.

(18) "Landlord" means the owner, lessor, or sublessor of the dwelling unit or the property of which it is a part, and in addition means any person designated as representative of the owner, lessor, or sublessor including, but not limited to, an agent, a resident manager, or a designated property manager.

(19) "Mortgage" is used in the general sense and includes all instruments, including deeds of trust, that are used to secure an obligation by an interest in real property.

(20) "Orders" means written official military orders, or any written notification, certification, or verification from the service member's commanding officer, with respect to the service member's current or future military status.

(21) "Owner" means one or more persons, jointly or severally, in whom is vested:

(a) All or any part of the legal title to property; or

(b) All or part of the beneficial ownership, and a right to present use and enjoyment of the property.

(22) "Permanent change of station" means: (a) Transfer to a unit located at another port or duty station; (b) change in a unit's home port or permanent duty station; (c) call to active duty for a period not less than 90 days; (d) separation; or (e) retirement.

(23) "Person" means an individual, group of individuals, corporation, government, or governmental agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, or association, two or more persons having a joint or common interest, or any other legal or commercial entity.

(24) "Premises" means a dwelling unit, appurtenances thereto, grounds, and facilities held out for the use of tenants generally and any other area or facility which is held out for use by the tenant.

(25) "Property" or "rental property" means all dwelling units on a contiguous quantity of land managed by the same landlord as a single, rental complex.

(26) "Prospective landlord" means a landlord or a person who advertises, solicits, offers, or otherwise holds a dwelling unit out as available for rent.

(27) "Prospective tenant" means a tenant or a person who has applied for residential housing that is governed under this chapter.

(28) "Qualified inspector" means a United States department of housing and urban development certified inspector; a Washington state licensed home inspector; an American society of home inspectors certified inspector; a private inspector certified by the national association of housing and redevelopment officials, the American association of code enforcement, or other comparable professional association as approved by the local municipality; a municipal code enforcement officer; a Washington licensed structural engineer; or a Washington licensed architect.

(29) "Reasonable attorneys' fees," where authorized in this chapter, means an amount to be determined including the following factors: The time and labor required, the novelty and difficulty of the questions involved, the skill requisite to perform the legal service properly, the fee customarily charged in the locality for similar legal services, the amount involved and the results obtained, and the experience, reputation and ability of the lawyer or lawyers performing the services.

(30) "Reasonable manner," with respect to disposing of a deceased tenant's personal property, means to dispose of the property by donation to a not-for-profit charitable organization, by removal of the property by a trash hauler or recycler, or by any other method that is reasonable under the circumstances.

(31) "Reference data" means the information against which authentication data is verified at the point of authentication by a smart access system in order to grant a user entry to a smart access building, a dwelling unit of a smart access building, or a common area of a smart access building.

(32) "Rent" or "rental amount" means recurring and periodic charges identified in the rental agreement for the use and occupancy of the premises, which may include charges for utilities. Except as provided in RCW 59.18.283(3), these terms do not include nonrecurring charges for costs incurred due to late payment, damages, deposits, legal costs, or other fees, including attorneys' fees.

(33) "Rental agreement" or "lease" means all agreements which establish or modify the terms, conditions, rules, regulations, or any other provisions concerning the use and occupancy of a dwelling unit.

(34) "Service member" means an active member of the United States armed forces, a member of a military reserve component, or a member of the national guard who is either stationed in or a resident of Washington state.

(35) A "single-family residence" is a structure maintained and used as a single dwelling unit. Notwithstanding that a dwelling unit shares one or more walls with another dwelling unit, it shall be deemed a single-family residence if it has direct access to a street and shares neither heating facilities nor hot water equipment, nor any other essential facility or service, with any other dwelling unit.

(36) "Smart access building" means a building containing a dwelling unit that utilizes a smart access system.

(37) "Smart access system" means any system that uses electronic or computerized technology, such as a radio frequency identification card, a mobile phone application, biometric identifier information, or any other digital technology that is designed to gather information in order to grant entry to a building containing a dwelling unit, its elevators, its common areas, or to an individual dwelling unit. A smart access system does not include methods of entry that solely rely upon a keypad or similar device that utilizes the manual entering of a coded sequence of numbers, letters, or both.

(38) "Subsidized housing" refers to rental housing for very low-income or low-income households that is a dwelling unit operated directly by a public housing authority or its affiliate, or that is insured, financed, or assisted in whole or in part through one of the following sources:

(a) A federal program or state housing program administered by the department of commerce or the Washington state housing finance commission;

(b) A federal housing program administered by a city or county government;

(c) An affordable housing levy authorized under RCW 84.52.105; or

(d) The surcharges authorized in RCW 36.22.250 and any of the surcharges authorized in chapter 43.185C RCW.

(39) A "tenant" is any person who is entitled to occupy a dwelling unit primarily for living or dwelling purposes under a rental agreement.

(40) "Tenant representative" means:

(a) A personal representative of a deceased tenant's estate if known to the landlord;

(b) If the landlord has no knowledge that a personal representative has been appointed for the deceased tenant's estate, a person claiming to be a successor of the deceased tenant who has provided the landlord with proof of death and an affidavit made by the person that meets the requirements of RCW 11.62.010(2);

(c) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection or a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, a designated person; or

(d) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection, a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, or a designated person under (c) of this subsection, any person who provides the landlord with reasonable evidence that he or she is a successor of the deceased tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005. The landlord has no obligation to identify all of the deceased tenant's successors.

(41) "Tenant screening" means using a consumer report or other information about a prospective tenant in deciding whether to make or accept an offer for residential rental property to or from a prospective tenant.

(42) "Tenant screening report" means a consumer report as defined in RCW 19.182.010 and any other information collected by a tenant screening service.

(43) "Transitional housing" means housing units owned, operated, or managed by a nonprofit organization or governmental entity in which supportive services are provided to individuals and families that were formerly homeless, with the intent to stabilize them and move them to permanent housing within a period of not more than 24 months, or

longer if the program is limited to tenants within a specified age range or the program is intended for tenants in need of time to complete and transition from educational or training or service programs.

(44) "User" means a tenant of a smart access building.

(45) "Wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises" means deterioration that results from the intended use of a dwelling unit, including breakage or malfunction due to age or deteriorated condition. Such wear does not include deterioration that results from negligence, carelessness, accident, or abuse of the premises, fixtures, equipment, appliances, or furnishings by the tenant, immediate family member, occupant, or guest. [2026 c 55 s 1. Prior: 2023 c 331 s 2; 2023 c 277 s 10; prior: 2021 c 212 s 1; prior: 2019 c 356 s 5; 2019 c 232 s 24; 2019 c 23 s 1; prior: 2016 c 66 s 1; prior: 2015 c 264 s 1; prior: 2012 c 41 s 2; 2011 c 132 s 1; prior: 2010 c 148 s 1; 2008 c 278 s 12; 1998 c 276 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 3.]

Effective date—2026 c 55: "This act takes effect January 1, 2027." [2026 c 55 s 5.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Deposits and moving fees often present significant barriers to helping low-income tenants secure new housing. Without clear guidance governing when landlords may withhold a security deposit for damage to a unit, renters are often unable to contest improper charges and fall into debt to their landlords;

(b) Low-income renters holding unpaid tenant debt face greater housing instability. Low-income renters can be barred from entering into new tenancies by debt to a previous landlord, even if that debt is based on undocumented, inflated, or fraudulent charges; and

(c) The burden of debt to a previous landlord falls most heavily on low-income renters, people with disabilities, single parents, and people with housing vouchers, who are disproportionately people of color.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to protect renters from the financial instability caused by improper and inflated damage charges that prevent tenants from receiving their deposit back, to ease the debt burden on renting families, and to reduce the disproportionate harm to low-income renters of color." [2023 c 331 s 1.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 10, 2021]." [2021 c 212 s 7.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

Finding—2012 c 41: See note following RCW 59.18.257.

RCW 59.18.040 Living arrangements exempted from chapter. The following living arrangements are not intended to be governed by the provisions of this chapter, unless established primarily to avoid its application, in which event the provisions of this chapter shall control:

(1) Residence at an institution, whether public or private, where residence is merely incidental to detention or the provision of medical, religious, educational, recreational, or similar services including, but not limited to, correctional facilities, licensed nursing homes, monasteries and convents, and hospitals;

(2) Occupancy under a bona fide earnest money agreement to purchase or contract of sale of the dwelling unit or the property of which it is a part, where the tenant is, or stands in the place of, the purchaser;

(3) Occupancy under a written rental agreement entered into by a seller and buyer of a dwelling unit, for the seller to retain possession of the dwelling unit after closing of the sale of the dwelling unit, if the conditions in (a) through (c) of this subsection are satisfied.

(a) The rental agreement permits the seller to remain in the dwelling unit for no more than three months after closing, and the buyer does not accept any rent payments from the seller after three months from closing;

(b) At the time of closing of the sale, the dwelling unit was not a distressed home as defined in chapter 61.34 RCW; and

(c) During negotiation of the purchase agreement or at the time of closing of the sale, the seller was represented by an attorney licensed to practice law in this state or by a real estate broker or managing broker licensed under chapter 18.85 RCW;

(4) Residence in a hotel, motel, or other transient lodging whose operation is defined in RCW 19.48.010;

(5) Rental agreements entered into pursuant to the provisions of chapter 47.12 RCW where occupancy is by an owner-condemnee and where such agreement does not violate the public policy of this state of ensuring decent, safe, and sanitary housing and is so certified by the consumer protection division of the attorney general's office;

(6) Rental agreements for the use of any single-family residence that are incidental to leases or rentals entered into in connection with a lease of land to be used primarily for agricultural purposes;

(7) Rental agreements providing housing for seasonal agricultural employees while provided in conjunction with such employment;

(8) Rental agreements with the state of Washington, department of natural resources, on public lands governed by Title 79 RCW;

(9) Occupancy by an employee of a landlord whose right to occupy is conditioned upon employment in or about the premises. [2023 c 22 s 1; 1989 c 342 s 3; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 4.]

RCW 59.18.050 Jurisdiction of district and superior courts. The district or superior courts of this state may exercise jurisdiction over any landlord or tenant with respect to any conduct in this state governed by this chapter or with respect to any claim arising from a transaction subject to this chapter within the respective jurisdictions of the district or superior courts as provided in Article IV, section 6 of the Constitution of the state of Washington. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 5.]

RCW 59.18.055 Notice—Alternative procedure—Court's jurisdiction limited—Application to chapter 59.20 RCW. (1) When the landlord, after the exercise of due diligence, is unable to personally serve the

summons on the tenant, the landlord may use the alternative means of service as follows:

(a) The summons and complaint shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises unlawfully held, not less than nine days from the return date stated in the summons; and

(b) Copies of the summons and complaint shall be deposited in the mail, postage prepaid, by both regular mail and certified mail directed to the tenant's or tenants' last known address not less than nine days from the return date stated in the summons.

(2) When service on the tenant or tenants is accomplished by this alternative procedure, the court's jurisdiction is limited to restoring possession of the premises to the landlord and no money judgment may be entered against the tenant or tenants until such time as jurisdiction over the tenant or tenants is obtained.

(3) Before the entry of any judgment or issuance of a writ of restitution due to the tenant's failure to appear, the landlord shall provide the court with a declaration from the person or persons who served the tenant that describes the service achieved, and if by alternative service pursuant to this section, that describes the efforts at personal service before alternative service was used and a declaration from the landlord stating his or her belief that the tenant cannot be found.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section, the exercise of due diligence is met if the landlord attempts personal service on the tenant at least three times over not less than two days and at different times of the day.

(5) This section shall apply to this chapter and chapter 59.20 RCW. [2019 c 356 s 11; 1997 c 86 s 1; 1989 c 342 s 14.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.057 Notice—Form. (1) Every 14-day notice served pursuant to RCW 59.12.030(3) must be in substantially the following form:

"TO: _____

AND TO: _____

ADDRESS: _____

FOURTEEN-DAY NOTICE TO PAY RENT OR VACATE THE PREMISES

You are receiving this notice because the landlord alleges you are not in compliance with the terms of the lease agreement by failing to pay rent and/or utilities and/or recurring or periodic charges that are past due.

(1) Monthly rent due for (list month(s)): $ (dollar amount)

AND/OR

(2) Utilities due for (list month(s)): $ (dollar amount)

AND/OR

(3) Other recurring or periodic charges identified in the lease for (list month(s)): $ (dollar amount)

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: $ (dollar amount)

Note - payment must be made pursuant to the terms of the rental agreement or by nonelectronic means including, but not limited to, cashier's check, money order, or other certified funds.

You must pay the total amount due to your landlord within fourteen (14) days after service of this notice or you must vacate the

premises. Any payment you make to the landlord must first be applied to the total amount due as shown on this notice. Any failure to comply with this notice within fourteen (14) days after service of this notice may result in a judicial proceeding that leads to your eviction from the premises.

The Washington state Office of the Attorney General has this notice in multiple languages as well as information on available resources to help you pay your rent, including state and local rental assistance programs, on its website at www.atg.wa.gov/landlord-tenant.

State law provides you the right to legal representation and the court may be able to appoint a lawyer to represent you without cost to you if you are a qualifying low-income renter. If you believe you are a qualifying low-income renter and would like an attorney appointed to represent you, please contact the Eviction Defense Screening Line at 855-657-8387 or apply online at https://nwjustice.org/apply-online. For additional resources, call 2-1-1 or the Northwest Justice Project CLEAR Hotline outside King County (888) 201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., or (888) 387-7111 for seniors (age 60 and over). You may find additional information to help you at http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org. Free or low-cost mediation services to assist in nonpayment of rent disputes before any judicial proceedings occur are also available at dispute resolution centers throughout the state. You can find your nearest dispute resolution center at https://www.resolutionwa.org.

State law also provides you the right to receive interpreter services at court.

OWNER/LANDLORD:_____DATE:_____

WHERE TOTAL AMOUNT DUE IS TO BE PAID: ___(owner/landlord name)___ _____(address)_____"

(2) The form required in this section does not abrogate any additional notice requirements to tenants as required by federal, state, or local law. [2023 c 336 s 3; 2021 c 115 s 10; 2020 c 315 s 2; 2019 c 356 s 3.]

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: "The legislature finds that despite the passage of several eviction reforms during the 2019 regular legislative session there is a need to clarify certain reforms and to address the unintended effects and oversights that have limited the impact and remedial nature of these reforms available to tenants. Specifically, the legislature finds that further clarity is required as to how and when tenants can access emergency rental assistance to pay off unlawful detainer judgment amounts and have their tenancies reinstated before judgment, when landlords can issue pay or vacate notices to tenants whose primary source of income is regular, monthly governmental assistance, and that a landlord cannot threaten a tenant with eviction for failure to pay fees not related to rent. As a result, the legislature intends with this act to make such

modifications to ensure that tenants with limited to no resources maintain stable housing." [2020 c 315 s 1.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.058 Notice—Translated versions—Legal or advocacy resource information. (1) The office of the attorney general shall produce and maintain on its website translated versions of the notice under RCW 59.18.057 in the top ten languages spoken in Washington state and, at the discretion of the office of the attorney general, other languages. The notice must be made available upon request in printed form on one letter size paper, eight and one-half by eleven inches, and in an easily readable font size.

(2) The office of the attorney general shall also provide on its website information on where tenants can access legal or advocacy resources, including information on any immigrant and cultural organizations where tenants can receive assistance in their primary language.

(3) The office of the attorney general may also produce and maintain on its website translated versions of common notices used in unlawful detainer actions, including those relevant to subsidized tenancies, low-income housing tax credit programs, or the federal violence against women act. [2019 c 356 s 4.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.060 Landlord—Duties. The landlord will at all times during the tenancy keep the premises fit for human habitation, and shall in particular:

(1) Maintain the premises to substantially comply with any applicable code, statute, ordinance, or regulation governing their maintenance or operation, which the legislative body enacting the applicable code, statute, ordinance or regulation could enforce as to the premises rented if such condition endangers or impairs the health or safety of the tenant;

(2) Maintain the structural components including, but not limited to, the roofs, floors, walls, chimneys, fireplaces, foundations, and all other structural components, in reasonably good repair so as to be usable;

(3) Keep any shared or common areas reasonably clean, sanitary, and safe from defects increasing the hazards of fire or accident;

(4) Provide a reasonable program for the control of infestation by insects, rodents, and other pests at the initiation of the tenancy and, except in the case of a single-family residence, control infestation during tenancy except where such infestation is caused by the tenant;

(5) Except where the condition is attributable to wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, make repairs and arrangements necessary to put and keep the premises in as good condition as it by law or rental agreement should have been, at the commencement of the tenancy;

(6) Provide reasonably adequate locks and furnish keys to the tenant;

(7) Maintain and safeguard with reasonable care any master key or duplicate keys to the dwelling unit;

(8) Maintain all electrical, plumbing, heating, and other facilities and appliances supplied by him or her in reasonably good working order;

(9) Maintain the dwelling unit in reasonably weathertight condition;

(10) Except in the case of a single-family residence, provide and maintain appropriate receptacles in common areas for the removal of ashes, rubbish, and garbage, incidental to the occupancy and arrange for the reasonable and regular removal of such waste;

(11) Provide facilities adequate to supply heat and water and hot water as reasonably required by the tenant;

(a) The landlord may not effect an involuntary termination of electric utility or water service due to lack of payment to any tenant on any day for which the national weather service has issued or has announced that it intends to issue a heat-related alert, such as an excessive heat warning, a heat advisory, an excessive heat watch, or a similar alert, for the area in which the tenant's address is located.

(b)(i) A tenant at whose dwelling electric or water utility service has been disconnected for lack of payment may request that the landlord reconnect service on any day for which the national weather service has issued or has announced that it intends to issue a heat-related alert, such as an excessive heat warning, a heat advisory, an excessive heat watch, or a similar alert, for the area in which the tenant's address is located. The landlord shall inform all tenants in the notice of disconnection of the ability to seek reconnection and provide clear and specific information on how to make that request, including how to contact the landlord.

(ii) Upon receipt of a request made pursuant to (b)(i) of this subsection, the landlord shall promptly make a reasonable attempt to reconnect service to the dwelling. The landlord, in connection with a request made pursuant to (b)(i) of this subsection, may require the tenant to enter into a payment plan prior to reconnecting service to the dwelling. If the landlord requires the tenant to enter into a repayment plan, the repayment plan must comply with (c) of this subsection.

(c) A repayment plan required by a landlord pursuant to (b)(i) of this subsection will be designed both to pay the past due bill by the following May 15th, or as soon as possible after May 15th if needed to maintain monthly payments that are no greater than six percent of the tenant's monthly income, and to pay for continued utility service. The plan may not require monthly payments in excess of six percent of the tenant's monthly income. A tenant may agree to pay a higher percentage during this period, but will not be in default unless payment during this period is less than six percent of the tenant's monthly income. If assistance payments are received by the tenant subsequent to implementation of the plan, the tenant shall contact the landlord to reformulate the plan;

(12)(a) Provide a written notice to all tenants disclosing fire safety and protection information. The landlord or his or her authorized agent must provide a written notice to the tenant that the dwelling unit is equipped with a smoke detection device as required in RCW 43.44.110. The notice shall inform the tenant of the tenant's responsibility to maintain the smoke detection device in proper operating condition and of penalties for failure to comply with the provisions of RCW 43.44.110(3). The notice must be signed by the

landlord or the landlord's authorized agent and tenant with copies provided to both parties. Further, except with respect to a single-family residence, the written notice must also disclose the following:

(i) Whether the smoke detection device is hard-wired or battery operated;

(ii) Whether the building has a fire sprinkler system;

(iii) Whether the building has a fire alarm system;

(iv) Whether the building has a smoking policy, and what that policy is;

(v) Whether the building has an emergency notification plan for the occupants and, if so, provide a copy to the occupants;

(vi) Whether the building has an emergency relocation plan for the occupants and, if so, provide a copy to the occupants; and

(vii) Whether the building has an emergency evacuation plan for the occupants and, if so, provide a copy to the occupants.

(b) The information required under this subsection may be provided to a tenant in a multifamily residential building either as a written notice or as a checklist that discloses whether the building has fire safety and protection devices and systems. The checklist shall include a diagram showing the emergency evacuation routes for the occupants.

(c) The written notice or checklist must be provided to new tenants at the time the lease or rental agreement is signed;

(13)(a) Disclose to tenants the following:

(i) That the property may be located in a special flood hazard area or an area of potential flooding;

(ii) That the landlord's insurance does not cover the loss of the tenant's personal possessions, and that the tenant should consider purchasing renter's insurance and flood insurance to insure his or her possessions from loss due to fire, flood, or other risk of loss; and

(iii) That information about hazards that may affect the property, including whether the property may be at risk of flooding, is available from the county government in which the property is located.

(b) The disclosures required by this subsection (13) only apply to leases entered into after December 31, 2026;

(14) Provide tenants with information provided or approved by the department of health about the health hazards associated with exposure to indoor mold. Information may be provided in written format individually to each tenant, or may be posted in a visible, public location at the dwelling unit property. The information must detail how tenants can control mold growth in their dwelling units to minimize the health risks associated with indoor mold. Landlords may obtain the information from the department's website or, if requested by the landlord, the department must mail the information to the landlord in a printed format. When developing or changing the information, the department of health must include representatives of landlords in the development process. The information must be provided by the landlord to new tenants at the time the lease or rental agreement is signed;

(15) The landlord and his or her agents and employees are immune from civil liability for failure to comply with subsection (14) of this section except where the landlord and his or her agents and employees knowingly and intentionally do not comply with subsection (14) of this section; and

(16) Designate to the tenant the name and address of the person who is the landlord by a statement on the rental agreement or by a

notice conspicuously posted on the premises. The tenant shall be notified immediately of any changes in writing, which must be either (a) delivered personally to the tenant or (b) mailed to the tenant and conspicuously posted on the premises. If the person designated in this section does not reside in the state where the premises are located, there shall also be designated a person who resides in the county who is authorized to act as an agent for the purposes of service of notices and process, and if no designation is made of a person to act as agent, then the person to whom rental payments are to be made shall be considered such agent. Regardless of such designation, any owner who resides outside the state and who violates a provision of this chapter is deemed to have submitted himself or herself to the jurisdiction of the courts of this state and personal service of any process may be made on the owner outside the state with the same force and effect as personal service within the state. Any summons or process served out-of-state must contain the same information and be served in the same manner as personal service of summons or process served within the state, except the summons or process must require the party to appear and answer within 60 days after such personal service out of the state. In an action for a violation of this chapter that is filed under chapter 12.40 RCW, service of the notice of claim outside the state must contain the same information and be served in the same manner as required under chapter 12.40 RCW, except the date on which the party is required to appear must not be less than 60 days from the date of service of the notice of claim.

No duty shall devolve upon the landlord to repair a defective condition under this section, nor shall any defense or remedy be available to the tenant under this chapter, where the defective condition complained of was caused by the conduct of such tenant, his or her family, invitee, or other person acting under his or her control, or where a tenant unreasonably fails to allow the landlord access to the property for purposes of repair. When the duty imposed by subsection (1) of this section is incompatible with and greater than the duty imposed by any other provisions of this section, the landlord's duty shall be determined pursuant to subsection (1) of this section. [2026 c 234 s 1. Prior: 2023 c 331 s 5; 2023 c 105 s 8; 2013 c 35 s 1; 2011 c 132 s 2; 2005 c 465 s 2; 2002 c 259 s 1; 1991 c 154 s 2; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 6.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Finding—2005 c 465: "The legislature finds that residents of the state face preventable exposures to mold in their homes, apartments, and schools. Exposure to mold, and the toxins they produce, have been found to have adverse health effects, including loss of memory and impairment of the ability to think coherently and function in a job, and may cause fatigue, nausea, and headaches.

As steps can be taken by landlords and tenants to minimize exposure to indoor mold, and as the reduction of exposure to mold in buildings could reduce the rising number of mold-related claims submitted to insurance companies and increase the availability of coverage, the legislature supports providing tenants and landlords with information designed to minimize the public's exposure to mold." [2005 c 465 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.063 Landlord—Written receipts for payments made by tenant. (1) A landlord must accept a personal check, cashier's check, or money order for any payment of rent made by a tenant, except that a landlord is not required to accept a personal check from any tenant that has had a personal check written to the landlord or the landlord's agent that has been returned for nonsufficient funds or account closure within the previous nine months. A landlord must also allow for the tenant to submit a rental payment by mail unless the landlord provides an accessible, on-site location.

(2) A landlord may refuse to accept cash for any payment of rent made by a tenant, but shall provide a receipt for any payment made by a tenant in the form of cash when the landlord accepts cash.

(3) A landlord shall provide, upon the request of a tenant, a written receipt for any payments made by the tenant in a form other than cash. [2022 c 95 s 1; 2020 c 315 s 3; 2011 c 132 s 4; 1997 c 84 s 1.]

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

RCW 59.18.065 Landlord—Copy of written rental agreement to tenant. When there is a written rental agreement for the premises, the landlord shall provide an executed copy to each tenant who signs the rental agreement. The tenant may request one free replacement copy during the tenancy. [2011 c 132 s 6.]

RCW 59.18.070 Landlord—Failure to perform duties—Notice from tenant—Contents—Time limits for landlord's remedial action. If at any time during the tenancy the landlord fails to carry out the duties required by RCW 59.18.060 or by the rental agreement, the tenant may, in addition to pursuit of remedies otherwise provided him or her by law, deliver written notice to the person designated in *RCW 59.18.060(14), or to the person who collects the rent, which notice shall specify the premises involved, the name of the owner, if known, and the nature of the defective condition. The landlord shall commence remedial action after receipt of such notice by the tenant as soon as possible but not later than the following time periods, except where circumstances are beyond the landlord's control:

(1) Not more than twenty-four hours, where the defective condition deprives the tenant of hot or cold water, heat, or electricity, or is imminently hazardous to life;

(2) Not more than seventy-two hours, where the defective condition deprives the tenant of the use of a refrigerator, range and oven, or a major plumbing fixture supplied by the landlord; and

(3) Not more than ten days in all other cases.

In each instance the burden shall be on the landlord to see that remedial work under this section is completed promptly. If completion is delayed due to circumstances beyond the landlord's control, including the unavailability of financing, the landlord shall remedy the defective condition as soon as possible. [2010 c 8 s 19018; 1989 c 342 s 4; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 7.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 59.18.060 was amended by 2013 c 35 s 1, changing subsection (14) to subsection (15). RCW 59.18.060 was subsequently amended by 2026 c 234 s 1, changing subsection (15) to subsection (16).

RCW 59.18.075 Seizure of illegal drugs—Notification of landlord. (1) Any law enforcement agency which seizes a legend drug pursuant to a violation of chapter 69.41 RCW, a controlled substance pursuant to a violation of chapter 69.50 RCW, or an imitation controlled substance pursuant to a violation of chapter 69.52 RCW, shall make a reasonable attempt to discover the identity of the landlord and shall notify the landlord in writing, at the last address listed in the property tax records and at any other address known to the law enforcement agency, of the seizure and the location of the seizure of the illegal drugs or substances.

(2) Any law enforcement agency which arrests a tenant for threatening another tenant with a firearm or other deadly weapon, or for some other unlawful use of a firearm or other deadly weapon on the rental premises, or for physically assaulting another person on the rental premises, shall make a reasonable attempt to discover the identity of the landlord and notify the landlord about the arrest in writing, at the last address listed in the property tax records and at any other address known to the law enforcement agency. [1992 c 38 s 4; 1988 c 150 s 11.]

Intent—Effective date—1992 c 38: See notes following RCW 59.18.352.

Legislative findings—Severability—1988 c 150: See notes following RCW 59.18.130.

RCW 59.18.080 Payment of rent condition to exercising remedies—Exceptions. The tenant shall be current in the payment of rent including all utilities which the tenant has agreed in the rental agreement to pay before exercising any of the remedies accorded him or her under the provisions of this chapter: PROVIDED, That this section shall not be construed as limiting the tenant's civil remedies for negligent or intentional damages: PROVIDED FURTHER, That this section shall not be construed as limiting the tenant's right in an unlawful detainer proceeding to raise the defense that there is no rent due and owing. [2010 c 8 s 19019; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 8.]

RCW 59.18.085 Rental of condemned or unlawful dwelling—Tenant's remedies—Relocation assistance—Penalties. (1) If a governmental agency responsible for the enforcement of a building, housing, or other appropriate code has notified the landlord that a dwelling is condemned or unlawful to occupy due to the existence of conditions that violate applicable codes, statutes, ordinances, or regulations, a landlord shall not enter into a rental agreement for the dwelling unit until the conditions are corrected.

(2) If a landlord knowingly violates subsection (1) of this section, the tenant shall recover either three months' periodic rent or up to treble the actual damages sustained as a result of the violation, whichever is greater, costs of suit, or arbitration and reasonable attorneys' fees. If the tenant elects to terminate the tenancy as a result of the conditions leading to the posting, or if the appropriate governmental agency requires that the tenant vacate the premises, the tenant also shall recover:

(a) The entire amount of any deposit prepaid by the tenant; and

(b) All prepaid rent.

(3)(a) If a governmental agency responsible for the enforcement of a building, housing, or other appropriate code has notified the landlord that a dwelling will be condemned or will be unlawful to occupy due to the existence of conditions that violate applicable codes, statutes, ordinances, or regulations, a landlord, who knew or should have known of the existence of these conditions, shall be required to pay relocation assistance to the displaced tenants except that:

(i) A landlord shall not be required to pay relocation assistance to any displaced tenant in a case in which the condemnation or no occupancy order affects one or more dwelling units and directly results from conditions caused by a tenant's or any third party's illegal conduct without the landlord's prior knowledge;

(ii) A landlord shall not be required to pay relocation assistance to any displaced tenant in a case in which the condemnation or no occupancy order affects one or more dwelling units and results from conditions arising from a natural disaster such as, but not exclusively, an earthquake, tsunami, windstorm, or hurricane; and

(iii) A landlord shall not be required to pay relocation assistance to any displaced tenant in a case in which a condemnation affects one or more dwelling units and the tenant's displacement is a direct result of the acquisition of the property by eminent domain.

(b) Relocation assistance provided to displaced tenants under this subsection shall be the greater amount of two thousand dollars per dwelling unit or three times the monthly rent. In addition to relocation assistance, the landlord shall be required to pay to the displaced tenants the entire amount of any deposit prepaid by the tenant and all prepaid rent.

(c) The landlord shall pay relocation assistance and any prepaid deposit and prepaid rent to displaced tenants within seven days of the governmental agency sending notice of the condemnation, eviction, or displacement order to the landlord. The landlord shall pay relocation assistance and any prepaid deposit and prepaid rent either by making individual payments by certified check to displaced tenants or by providing a certified check to the governmental agency ordering condemnation, eviction, or displacement, for distribution to the displaced tenants. If the landlord fails to complete payment of relocation assistance within the period required under this subsection, the city, town, county, or municipal corporation may advance the cost of the relocation assistance payments to the displaced tenants.

(d) During the period from the date that a governmental agency responsible for the enforcement of a building, housing, or other appropriate code first notifies the landlord of conditions that violate applicable codes, statutes, ordinances, or regulations to the time that relocation assistance payments are paid to eligible tenants, or the conditions leading to the notification are corrected, the landlord may not:

(i) Evict, harass, or intimidate tenants into vacating their units for the purpose of avoiding or diminishing application of this section;

(ii) Reduce services to any tenant; or

(iii) Materially increase or change the obligations of any tenant, including but not limited to any rent increase.

(e) Displaced tenants shall be entitled to recover any relocation assistance, prepaid deposits, and prepaid rent required by (b) of this

subsection. In addition, displaced tenants shall be entitled to recover any actual damages sustained by them as a result of the condemnation, eviction, or displacement that exceed the amount of relocation assistance that is payable. In any action brought by displaced tenants to recover any payments or damages required or authorized by this subsection (3)(e) or (c) of this subsection that are not paid by the landlord or advanced by the city, town, county, or municipal corporation, the displaced tenants shall also be entitled to recover their costs of suit or arbitration and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(f) If, after sixty days from the date that the city, town, county, or municipal corporation first advanced relocation assistance funds to the displaced tenants, a landlord has failed to repay the amount of relocation assistance advanced by the city, town, county, or municipal corporation under (c) of this subsection, then the city, town, county, or municipal corporation shall assess civil penalties in the amount of fifty dollars per day for each tenant to whom the city, town, county, or municipal corporation has advanced a relocation assistance payment.

(g) In addition to the penalties set forth in (f) of this subsection, interest will accrue on the amount of relocation assistance paid by the city, town, county, or municipal corporation for which the property owner has not reimbursed the city, town, county, or municipal corporation. The rate of interest shall be the maximum legal rate of interest permitted under RCW 19.52.020, commencing thirty days after the date that the city, town, county, or municipal corporation first advanced relocation assistance funds to the displaced tenants.

(h) If the city, town, county, or municipal corporation must initiate legal action in order to recover the amount of relocation assistance payments that it has advanced to low-income tenants, including any interest and penalties under (f) and (g) of this subsection, the city, town, county, or municipal corporation shall be entitled to attorneys' fees and costs arising from its legal action.

(4) The governmental agency that has notified the landlord that a dwelling will be condemned or will be unlawful to occupy shall notify the displaced tenants that they may be entitled to relocation assistance under this section.

(5) No payment received by a displaced tenant under this section may be considered as income for the purpose of determining the eligibility or extent of eligibility of any person for assistance under any state law or for the purposes of any tax imposed under Title 82 RCW, and the payments shall not be deducted from any amount to which any recipient would otherwise be entitled under Title 74 RCW.

(6)(a) A person whose living arrangements are exempted from this chapter under *RCW 59.18.040(3) and who has resided in or occupied one or more dwelling units within a hotel, motel, or other place of transient lodging for thirty or more consecutive days with the knowledge and consent of the owner of the hotel, motel, or other place of transient lodging, or any manager, clerk, or other agent representing the owner, is deemed to be a tenant for the purposes of this section and is entitled to receive relocation assistance under the circumstances described in subsection (2) or (3) of this section except that all relocation assistance and other payments shall be made directly to the displaced tenants.

(b) An interruption in occupancy primarily intended to avoid the application of this section does not affect the application of this section.

(c) An occupancy agreement, whether oral or written, in which the provisions of this section are waived is deemed against public policy and is unenforceable. [2009 c 165 s 1; 2005 c 364 s 2; 1989 c 342 s 13.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 59.18.040 was amended by 2023 c 22 s 1, changing subsection (3) to subsection (4).

Purpose—2005 c 364: "The people of the state of Washington deserve decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Certain tenants in the state of Washington have remained in rental housing that does not meet the state's minimum standards for health and safety because they cannot afford to pay the costs of relocation in advance of occupying new, safe, and habitable housing. In egregious cases, authorities have been forced to condemn property when landlords have failed to remedy building code or health code violations after repeated notice, and, as a result, families with limited financial resources have been displaced and left with nowhere to go.

The purpose of this act is to establish a process by which displaced tenants would receive funds for relocation from landlords who fail to provide safe and sanitary housing after due notice of building code or health code violations. It is also the purpose of this act to provide enforcement mechanisms to cities, towns, counties, or municipal corporations including the ability to advance relocation funds to tenants who are displaced as a result of a landlord's failure to remedy building code or health code violations and later to collect the full amounts of these relocation funds, along with interest and penalties, from landlords." [2005 c 364 s 1.]

Construction—2005 c 364: "The powers and authority conferred by this act are in addition and supplemental to powers or authority conferred by any other law or authority, and nothing contained herein shall be construed to preempt any local ordinance requiring relocation assistance to tenants displaced by a landlord's failure to remedy building code or health code violations." [2005 c 364 s 4.]

RCW 59.18.090 Landlord's failure to remedy defective condition—Tenant's choice of actions. If, after receipt of written notice, and expiration of the applicable period of time, as provided in RCW 59.18.070, the landlord fails to remedy the defective condition within a reasonable time the tenant may:

(1) Terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises upon written notice to the landlord without further obligation under the rental agreement, in which case he or she shall be discharged from payment of rent for any period following the quitting date, and shall be entitled to a pro rata refund of any prepaid rent, and shall receive a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any of the deposit together with any refund due in accordance with RCW 59.18.280;

(2) Bring an action in an appropriate court, or at arbitration if so agreed, for any remedy provided under this chapter or otherwise provided by law; or

(3) Pursue other remedies available under this chapter. [2010 c 8 s 19020; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 9.]

RCW 59.18.100 Landlord's failure to carry out duties—Repairs effected by tenant—Procedure—Deduction of cost from rent—Limitations. (1) If, at any time during the tenancy, the landlord fails to carry out any of the duties imposed by RCW 59.18.060, and notice of the defect is given to the landlord pursuant to RCW 59.18.070, the tenant may submit to the landlord or his or her designated agent by first-class mail or in person a good faith estimate by the tenant of the cost to perform the repairs necessary to correct the defective condition if the repair is to be done by licensed or registered persons, or if no licensing or registration requirement applies to the type of work to be performed, the cost if the repair is to be done by responsible persons capable of performing such repairs. Such estimate may be submitted to the landlord at the same time as notice is given pursuant to RCW 59.18.070. The remedy provided in this section shall not be available for a landlord's failure to carry out the duties in *RCW 59.18.060 (9) and (14). If the tenant utilizes this section for repairs pursuant to RCW 59.18.060(6), the tenant shall promptly provide the landlord with a key to any new or replaced locks. The amount the tenant may deduct from the rent may vary from the estimate, but cannot exceed the two-month limit as described in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) If the landlord fails to commence remedial action of the defective condition within the applicable time period after receipt of notice and the estimate from the tenant, the tenant may contract with a licensed or registered person, or with a responsible person capable of performing the repair if no license or registration is required, to make the repair. Upon the completion of the repair and an opportunity for inspection by the landlord or his or her designated agent, the tenant may deduct the cost of repair from the rent in an amount not to exceed the sum expressed in dollars representing two month's rental of the tenant's unit per repair. When the landlord must commence to remedy the defective condition within ten days as provided in RCW 59.18.070(3), the tenant cannot contract for repairs for ten days after notice or two days after the landlord receives the estimate, whichever is later. The total costs of repairs deducted in any twelve-month period under this subsection shall not exceed the sum expressed in dollars representing two month's rental of the tenant's unit.

(3) If the landlord fails to carry out the duties imposed by RCW 59.18.060 within the applicable time period, and if the cost of repair does not exceed one month's rent, including the cost of materials and labor, which shall be computed at the prevailing rate in the community for the performance of such work, and if repair of the condition need not by law be performed only by licensed or registered persons, and if the tenant has given notice under RCW 59.18.070, although no estimate shall be necessary under this subsection, the tenant may repair the defective condition in a workmanlike manner and upon completion of the repair and an opportunity for inspection, the tenant may deduct the cost of repair from the rent. Repairs under this subsection are limited to defects within the leased premises. The cost per repair shall not exceed one month's rent of the unit and the total costs of repairs deducted in any twelve-month period under this subsection shall not exceed one month's rent of the unit.

(4) The provisions of this section shall not:

(a) Create a relationship of employer and employee between landlord and tenant; or

(b) Create liability under the workers' compensation act; or

(c) Constitute the tenant as an agent of the landlord for the purposes of **RCW 60.04.010 and 60.04.040.

(5) Any repair work performed under the provisions of this section shall comply with the requirements imposed by any applicable code, statute, ordinance, or regulation. A landlord whose property is damaged because of repairs performed in a negligent manner may recover the actual damages in an action against the tenant.

(6) Nothing in this section shall prevent the tenant from agreeing with the landlord to undertake the repairs himself or herself in return for cash payment or a reasonable reduction in rent. Any such agreement does not alter the landlord's obligations under this chapter. [2011 c 132 s 5; 2010 c 8 s 19021; 1989 c 342 s 5; 1987 c 185 s 35; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 10.]

Reviser's note: *(1) RCW 59.18.060 was amended by 2013 c 35 s 1, changing subsections (9) and (14) to subsections (10) and (15), respectively. RCW 59.18.060 was subsequently amended by 2026 c 234 s 1, changing subsection (15) to subsection (16).

**(2) RCW 60.04.010 and 60.04.040 were repealed by 1991 c 281 s 31, effective April 1, 1992.

Intent—Severability—1987 c 185: See notes following RCW 51.12.130.

RCW 59.18.110 Failure of landlord to carry out duties—Determination by court or arbitrator—Judgment against landlord for diminished rental value and repair costs—Enforcement of judgment—Reduction in rent under certain conditions. (1) If a court or an arbitrator determines that:

(a) A landlord has failed to carry out a duty or duties imposed by RCW 59.18.060; and

(b) A reasonable time has passed for the landlord to remedy the defective condition following notice to the landlord in accordance with RCW 59.18.070 or such other time as may be allotted by the court or arbitrator; the court or arbitrator may determine the diminution in rental value of the premises due to the defective condition and shall render judgment against the landlord for the rent paid in excess of such diminished rental value from the time of notice of such defect to the time of decision and any costs of repair done pursuant to RCW 59.18.100 for which no deduction has been previously made. Such decisions may be enforced as other judgments at law and shall be available to the tenant as a set-off against any existing or subsequent claims of the landlord.

The court or arbitrator may also authorize the tenant to make or contract to make further corrective repairs and the tenant may deduct from the rent the cost of such repairs, as long as the court specifies a time period in which the landlord may make such repairs before the tenant may commence or contract for such repairs.

(2) The tenant shall not be obligated to pay rent in excess of the diminished rental value of the premises until such defect or defects are corrected by the landlord or until the court or arbitrator determines otherwise. [2011 c 132 s 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 11.]

RCW 59.18.115 Substandard and dangerous conditions—Notice to landlord—Government certification—Escrow account. (1) The legislature finds that some tenants live in residences that are substandard and dangerous to their health and safety and that the repair and deduct remedies of RCW 59.18.100 may not be adequate to remedy substandard and dangerous conditions. Therefore, an extraordinary remedy is necessary if the conditions substantially endanger or impair the health and safety of the tenant.

(2)(a) If a landlord fails to fulfill any substantial obligation imposed by RCW 59.18.060 that substantially endangers or impairs the health or safety of a tenant, including (i) structural members that are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety, (ii) exposure of the occupants to the weather, (iii) plumbing and sanitation defects that directly expose the occupants to the risk of illness or injury, (iv) lack of water, including hot water, (v) heating or ventilation systems that are not functional or are hazardous, (vi) defective, hazardous, or missing electrical wiring or electrical service, (vii) defective or inadequate exits that increase the risk of injury to occupants, and (viii) conditions that increase the risk of fire, the tenant shall give notice in writing to the landlord, specifying the conditions, acts, omissions, or violations. Such notice shall be sent to the landlord or to the person or place where rent is normally paid.

(b) If after receipt of the notice described in (a) of this subsection the landlord fails to remedy the condition or conditions within a reasonable amount of time under RCW 59.18.070, the tenant may request that the local government provide for an inspection of the premises with regard to the specific condition or conditions that exist as provided in (a) of this subsection. The local government shall have the appropriate government official, or may designate a public or disinterested private person or company capable of conducting the inspection and making the certification, conduct an inspection of the specific condition or conditions listed by the tenant, and shall not inspect nor be liable for any other condition or conditions of the premises. The purpose of this inspection is to verify, to the best of the inspector's ability, whether the tenant's listed condition or conditions exist and substantially endanger the tenant's health or safety under (a) of this subsection; the inspection is for the purposes of this private civil remedy, and therefore shall not be related to any other governmental function such as enforcement of any code, ordinance, or state law.

(c) The local government or its designee, after receiving the request from the tenant to conduct an inspection under this section, shall conduct the inspection and make any certification within a reasonable amount of time not more than five days from the date of receipt of the request. The local government or its designee may enter the premises at any reasonable time to do the inspection, provided that he or she first shall display proper credentials and request entry. The local government or its designee shall whenever practicable, taking into consideration the imminence of any threat to the tenant's health or safety, give the landlord at least twenty-four hours notice of the date and time of inspection and provide the landlord with an opportunity to be present at the time of the inspection. The landlord shall have no power or authority to prohibit entry for the inspection.

(d) The local government or its designee shall certify whether the condition or the conditions specified by the tenant do exist and do make the premises substantially unfit for human habitation or can be a substantial risk to the health and safety of the tenant as described in (a) of this subsection. The certification shall be provided to the tenant, and a copy shall be included by the tenant with the notice sent to the landlord under subsection (3) of this section. The certification may be appealed to the local board of appeals, but the appeal shall not delay or preclude the tenant from proceeding with the escrow under this section.

(e) The tenant shall not be entitled to deposit rent in escrow pursuant to this section unless the tenant first makes a good faith determination that he or she is unable to repair the conditions described in the certification issued pursuant to subsection (2)(d) of this section through use of the repair remedies authorized by RCW 59.18.100.

(f) If the local government or its designee certifies that the condition or conditions specified by the tenant exist, the tenant shall then either pay the periodic rent due to the landlord or deposit all periodic rent then called for in the rental agreement and all rent thereafter called for in the rental agreement into an escrow account maintained by a person authorized by law to set up and maintain escrow accounts, including escrow companies under chapter 18.44 RCW, financial institutions, or attorneys, or with the clerk of the court of the district or superior court where the property is located. These depositories are hereinafter referred to as "escrow." The tenant shall notify the landlord in writing of the deposit by mailing the notice postage prepaid by first-class mail or by delivering the notice to the landlord promptly but not more than twenty-four hours after the deposit.

(g) This section, when elected as a remedy by the tenant by sending the notice under subsection (3) of this section, shall be the exclusive remedy available to the tenant regarding defects described in the certification under subsection (2)(d) of this section: PROVIDED, That the tenant may simultaneously commence or pursue an action in an appropriate court, or at arbitration if so agreed, to determine past, present, or future diminution in rental value of the premises due to any defective conditions.

(3) The notice to the landlord of the rent escrow under this section shall be a sworn statement by the tenant in substantially the following form:

NOTICE TO LANDLORD OF RENT ESCROW

Name of tenant:
Name of landlord:
Name and address of escrow:
Date of deposit of rent into escrow:
Amount of rent deposited into escrow:
The following condition has been certified by a local building official to substantially endanger, impair, or affect the health or safety of a tenant:
That written notice of the conditions needing repair was provided to the landlord on . . ., and . . . days have elapsed and the repairs have not been made.

. . . . . .
(Sworn Signature)

(4) The escrow shall place all rent deposited in a separate rent escrow account in the name of the escrow in a bank or savings and loan association domiciled in this state. The escrow shall keep in a separate docket an account of each deposit, with the name and address of the tenant, and the name and address of the landlord and of the agent, if any.

(5)(a) A landlord who receives notice that the rent due has been deposited with an escrow pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may:

(i) Apply to the escrow for release of the funds after the local government certifies that the repairs to the conditions listed in the notice under subsection (3) of this section have been properly repaired. The escrow shall release the funds to the landlord less any escrow costs for which the tenant is entitled to reimbursement pursuant to this section, immediately upon written receipt of the local government certification that the repairs to the conditions listed in the notice under subsection (3) of this section have been properly completed.

(ii) File an action with the court and apply to the court for release of the rent on the grounds that the tenant did not comply with the notice requirement of subsection (2) or (3) of this section. Proceedings under this subsection shall be governed by the time, service, and filing requirements of RCW 59.18.370 regarding show cause hearings.

(iii) File an action with the court and apply to the court for release of the rent on the grounds that there was no violation of any obligation imposed upon the landlord or that the condition has been remedied.

(iv) This action may be filed in any court having jurisdiction, including small claims court. If the tenant has vacated the premises or if the landlord has failed to commence an action with the court for release of the funds within sixty days after rent is deposited in escrow, the tenant may file an action to determine how and when any rent deposited in escrow shall be released or disbursed. The landlord shall not commence an unlawful detainer action for nonpayment of rent by serving or filing a summons and complaint if the tenant initially pays the rent called for in the rental agreement that is due into escrow as provided for under this section on or before the date rent is due or on or before the expiration of a three-day notice to pay rent or vacate and continues to pay the rent into escrow as the rent becomes due or prior to the expiration of a three-day notice to pay rent or vacate; provided that the landlord shall not be barred from commencing an unlawful detainer action for nonpayment of rent if the amount of rent that is paid into escrow is less than the amount of rent agreed upon in the rental agreement between the parties.

(b) The tenant shall be named as a party to any action filed by the landlord under this section, and shall have the right to file an answer and counterclaim, although any counterclaim shall be dismissed without prejudice if the court or arbitrator determines that the tenant failed to follow the notice requirements contained in this section. Any counterclaim can only claim diminished rental value related to conditions specified by the tenant in the notice required under subsection (3) of this section. This limitation on the tenant's right to counterclaim shall not affect the tenant's right to bring his or her own separate action. A trial shall be held within sixty days of the date of filing of the landlord's or tenant's complaint.

(c) The tenant shall be entitled to reimbursement for any escrow costs or fees incurred for setting up or maintaining an escrow account pursuant to this section, unless the tenant did not comply with the notice requirements of subsection (2) or (3) of this section. Any escrow fees that are incurred for which the tenant is entitled to reimbursement shall be deducted from the rent deposited in escrow and remitted to the tenant at such time as any rent is released to the landlord. The prevailing party in any court action or arbitration brought under this section may also be awarded its costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(d) If a court determines a diminished rental value of the premises, the tenant may pay the rent due based on the diminished value of the premises into escrow until the landlord makes the necessary repairs.

(6)(a) If a landlord brings an action for the release of rent deposited, the court may, upon application of the landlord, release part of the rent on deposit for payment of the debt service on the premises, the insurance premiums for the premises, utility services, and repairs to the rental unit.

(b) In determining whether to release rent for the payments described in (a) of this subsection, the court shall consider the amount of rent the landlord receives from other rental units in the buildings of which the residential premises are a part, the cost of operating those units, and the costs which may be required to remedy the condition contained in the notice. The court shall also consider whether the expenses are due or have already been paid, whether the landlord has other financial resources, or whether the landlord or tenant will suffer irreparable damage. The court may request the landlord to provide additional security, such as a bond, prior to authorizing release of any of the funds in escrow. [1989 c 342 s 16.]

RCW 59.18.120 Defective condition—Unfeasible to remedy defect—Termination of tenancy. If a court or arbitrator determines a defective condition as described in RCW 59.18.060 to be so substantial that it is unfeasible for the landlord to remedy the defect within the time allotted by RCW 59.18.070, and that the tenant should not remain in the dwelling unit in its defective condition, the court or arbitrator may authorize the termination of the tenancy: PROVIDED, That the court or arbitrator shall set a reasonable time for the tenant to vacate the premises. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 12.]

RCW 59.18.125 Inspections by local municipalities—Frequency—Number of rental properties inspected—Notice—Appeals—Penalties. (1) Local municipalities may require that landlords provide a certificate of inspection as a business license condition. A local municipality does not need to have a business license or registration program in order to require that landlords provide a certificate of inspection. A certificate of inspection does not preclude or limit inspections conducted pursuant to the tenant remedy as provided for in RCW 59.18.115, at the request or consent of the tenant, or pursuant to a warrant.

(2) A qualified inspector who is conducting an inspection under this section may only investigate a rental property as needed to provide a certificate of inspection.

(3) A local municipality may only require a certificate of inspection on a rental property once every three years.

(4)(a) A rental property that has received a certificate of occupancy within the last four years and has had no code violations reported on the property during that period is exempt from inspection under this section.

(b) A rental property inspected by a government agency or other qualified inspector within the previous twenty-four months may provide proof of that inspection which the local municipality may accept in lieu of a certificate of inspection. If any additional inspections of the rental property are conducted, a copy of the findings of these inspections may also be required by the local municipality.

(5) A rental property owner may choose to inspect one hundred percent of the units on the rental property and provide only the certificate of inspection for all units to the local municipality. However, if a rental property owner chooses to inspect only a sampling of the units, the owner must send written notice of the inspection to all units at the property. The notice must advise tenants that some of the units at the property will be inspected and that the tenants whose units need repairs or maintenance should send written notification to the landlord as provided in RCW 59.18.070. The notice must also advise tenants that if the landlord fails to adequately respond to the request for repairs or maintenance, the tenants may contact local municipality officials. A copy of the notice must be provided to the inspector upon request on the day of inspection.

(6)(a) If a rental property has twenty or fewer dwelling units, no more than four dwelling units at the rental property may be selected by the local municipality to provide a certificate of inspection as long as the initial inspection reveals that no conditions exist that endanger or impair the health or safety of a tenant.

(b) If a rental property has twenty-one or more units, no more than twenty percent of the units, rounded up to the next whole number, on the rental property, and up to a maximum of fifty units at any one property, may be selected by the local municipality to provide a certificate of inspection as long as the initial inspection reveals that no conditions exist that endanger or impair the health or safety of a tenant.

(c) If a rental property is asked to provide a certificate of inspection for a sample of units on the property and a selected unit fails the initial inspection, the local municipality may require up to one hundred percent of the units on the rental property to provide a certificate of inspection.

(d) If a rental property has had conditions that endanger or impair the health or safety of a tenant reported since the last required inspection, the local municipality may require one hundred percent of the units on the rental property to provide a certificate of inspection.

(e) If a rental property owner chooses to hire a qualified inspector other than a municipal housing code enforcement officer, and a selected unit of the rental property fails the initial inspection, both the results of the initial inspection and any certificate of inspection must be provided to the local municipality.

(7)(a) The landlord shall provide written notification of his or her intent to enter an individual unit for the purposes of providing a local municipality with a certificate of inspection in accordance with RCW 59.18.150(6). The written notice must indicate the date and

approximate time of the inspection and the company or person performing the inspection, and that the tenant has the right to see the inspector's identification before the inspector enters the individual unit. A copy of this notice must be provided to the inspector upon request on the day of inspection.

(b) A tenant who continues to deny access to his or her unit is subject to RCW 59.18.150(8).

(8) If a rental property owner does not agree with the findings of an inspection performed by a local municipality under this section, the local municipality shall offer an appeals process.

(9) A penalty for noncompliance under this section may be assessed by a local municipality. A local municipality may also notify the landlord that until a certificate of inspection is provided, it is unlawful to rent or to allow a tenant to continue to occupy the dwelling unit.

(10) Any person who knowingly submits or assists in the submission of a falsified certificate of inspection, or knowingly submits falsified information upon which a certificate of inspection is issued, is, in addition to the penalties provided for in subsection (9) of this section, guilty of a gross misdemeanor and must be punished by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars.

(11) As of June 10, 2010, a local municipality may not enact an ordinance requiring a certificate of inspection unless the ordinance complies with this section. This prohibition does not preclude any amendments made to ordinances adopted before June 10, 2010. [2010 c 148 s 2.]

RCW 59.18.130 Duties of tenant. Each tenant shall pay the rental amount at such times and in such amounts as provided for in the rental agreement or as otherwise provided by law and comply with all obligations imposed upon tenants by applicable provisions of all municipal, county, and state codes, statutes, ordinances, and regulations, and in addition shall:

(1) Keep that part of the premises which he or she occupies and uses as clean and sanitary as the conditions of the premises permit;

(2) Properly dispose from his or her dwelling unit all rubbish, garbage, and other organic or flammable waste, in a clean and sanitary manner at reasonable and regular intervals, and assume all costs of extermination and fumigation for infestation caused by the tenant;

(3) Properly use and operate all electrical, gas, heating, plumbing and other fixtures and appliances supplied by the landlord;

(4) Not intentionally or negligently destroy, deface, damage, impair, or remove any part of the structure or dwelling, with the appurtenances thereto, including the facilities, equipment, furniture, furnishings, and appliances, or permit any member of his or her family, invitee, licensee, or any person acting under his or her control to do so. Violations may be prosecuted under chapter 9A.48 RCW if the destruction is intentional and malicious;

(5) Not permit a nuisance or common waste;

(6) Not engage in drug-related activity at the rental premises, or allow a subtenant, sublessee, resident, or anyone else to engage in drug-related activity at the rental premises with the knowledge or consent of the tenant. "Drug-related activity" means that activity which constitutes a violation of chapter 69.41, 69.50, or 69.52 RCW;

(7) Maintain the smoke detection device in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, including the replacement of batteries

where required for the proper operation of the smoke detection device, as required in RCW 43.44.110(3);

(8) Not engage in any activity at the rental premises that is:

(a) Imminently hazardous to the physical safety of other persons on the premises; and

(b)(i) Entails physical assaults upon another person which result in an arrest; or

(ii) Entails the unlawful use of a firearm or other deadly weapon as defined in RCW 9A.04.110 which results in an arrest, including threatening another tenant or the landlord with a firearm or other deadly weapon under RCW 59.18.352. Nothing in this subsection (8) shall authorize the termination of tenancy and eviction of the victim of a physical assault or the victim of the use or threatened use of a firearm or other deadly weapon;

(9) Not engage in any gang-related activity at the premises, as defined in RCW 59.18.030, or allow another to engage in such activity at the premises, that renders people in at least two or more dwelling units or residences insecure in life or the use of property or that injures or endangers the safety or health of people in at least two or more dwelling units or residences. In determining whether a tenant is engaged in gang-related activity, a court should consider the totality of the circumstances, including factors such as whether there have been a significant number of complaints to the landlord about the tenant's activities at the property, damages done by the tenant to the property, including the property of other tenants or neighbors, harassment or threats made by the tenant to other tenants or neighbors that have been reported to law enforcement agencies, any police incident reports involving the tenant, and the tenant's criminal history; and

(10) Upon termination and vacation, restore the premises to their initial condition except for wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises or conditions caused by failure of the landlord to comply with his or her obligations under this chapter. The tenant shall not be charged for normal cleaning if he or she has paid a nonrefundable cleaning fee. [2023 c 331 s 6; 2011 c 132 s 8; 1998 c 276 s 2; 1992 c 38 s 2; 1991 c 154 s 3; 1988 c 150 s 2; 1983 c 264 s 3; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 13.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Intent—Effective date—1992 c 38: See notes following RCW 59.18.352.

Legislative findings—1988 c 150: "The legislature finds that the illegal use, sale, and manufacture of drugs and other drug-related activities is a statewide problem. Innocent persons, especially children, who come into contact with illegal drug-related activity within their own neighborhoods are seriously and adversely affected. Rental property is damaged and devalued by drug activities. The legislature further finds that a rapid and efficient response is necessary to: (1) Lessen the occurrence of drug-related enterprises; (2) reduce the drug use and trafficking problems within this state; and (3) reduce the damage caused to persons and property by drug activity. The legislature finds that it is beneficial to rental property owners and to the public to permit landlords to quickly and

efficiently evict persons who engage in drug-related activities at rented premises." [1988 c 150 s 1.]

Severability—1988 c 150: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1988 c 150 s 15.]

RCW 59.18.140 Reasonable obligations or restrictions—Tenant's duty to conform—Landlord's duty to provide written notice in increase of rent. (1) The tenant shall conform to all reasonable obligations or restrictions, whether denominated by the landlord as rules, rental agreement, rent, or otherwise, concerning the use, occupation, and maintenance of his or her dwelling unit, appurtenances thereto, and the property of which the dwelling unit is a part if such obligations and restrictions are not in violation of any of the terms of this chapter and are not otherwise contrary to law, and if such obligations and restrictions are brought to the attention of the tenant at the time of his or her initial occupancy of the dwelling unit and thus become part of the rental agreement.

(2) Except for termination of tenancy and an increase in the amount of rent, after 30 days' written notice to each affected tenant, a new rule of tenancy may become effective upon completion of the term of the rental agreement or sooner upon mutual consent.

(3)(a) Except as provided in (b) and (c) of this subsection, a landlord shall provide a minimum of 90 days' prior written notice of an increase in the amount of rent to each affected tenant, and any increase in the amount of rent may not become effective prior to the completion of the term of the rental agreement.

(b) If the rental agreement governs a subsidized tenancy where the amount of rent is based on the income of the tenant or circumstances specific to the subsidized household, a landlord shall provide a minimum of 30 days' prior written notice of an increase in the amount of rent to each affected tenant. An increase in the amount of rent may become effective upon completion of the term of the rental agreement or sooner upon mutual consent.

(c) For a tenant whose lease or rental agreement was entered into or renewed before May 7, 2025, and whose tenancy is for a specified time, if the lease or rental agreement has more than 60 days but less than 90 days left before the end of the specified time as of May 7, 2025, the landlord must provide written notice to the affected tenant a minimum of 60 days before the effective date of an increase in the amount of rent. [2025 c 209 s 104; 2019 c 105 s 1; 2010 c 8 s 19022; 1989 c 342 s 6; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 14.]

Effective date—2025 c 209: See note following RCW 59.18.700.

RCW 59.18.150 Landlord's right of entry—Purposes—Searches by fire officials—Searches by code enforcement officials for inspection purposes—Conditions. (1) The tenant shall not unreasonably withhold consent to the landlord to enter into the dwelling unit in order to inspect the premises, make necessary or agreed repairs, alterations, or improvements, supply necessary or agreed services, or exhibit the

dwelling unit to prospective or actual purchasers, mortgagees, tenants, workers, or contractors.

(2) Upon written notice of intent to seek a search warrant, when a tenant or landlord denies a fire official the right to search a dwelling unit, a fire official may immediately seek a search warrant and, upon a showing of probable cause specific to the dwelling unit sought to be searched that criminal fire code violations exist in the dwelling unit, a court of competent jurisdiction shall issue a warrant allowing a search of the dwelling unit.

Upon written notice of intent to seek a search warrant, when a landlord denies a fire official the right to search the common areas of the rental building other than the dwelling unit, a fire official may immediately seek a search warrant and, upon a showing of probable cause specific to the common area sought to be searched that a criminal fire code violation exists in those areas, a court of competent jurisdiction shall issue a warrant allowing a search of the common areas in which the violation is alleged.

The superior court and courts of limited jurisdiction organized under Titles 3, 35, and 35A RCW have jurisdiction to issue such search warrants. Evidence obtained pursuant to any such search may be used in a civil or administrative enforcement action.

(3) As used in this section:

(a) "Common areas" means a common area or those areas that contain electrical, plumbing, and mechanical equipment and facilities used for the operation of the rental building.

(b) "Fire official" means any fire official authorized to enforce the state or local fire code.

(4)(a) A search warrant may be issued by a judge of a superior court or a court of limited jurisdiction under Titles 3, 35, and 35A RCW to a code enforcement official of the state or of any county, city, or other political subdivision for the purpose of allowing the inspection of any specified dwelling unit and premises to determine the presence of an unsafe building condition or a violation of any building regulation, statute, or ordinance.

(b) A search warrant must only be issued upon application of a designated officer or employee of a county or city prosecuting or regulatory authority supported by an affidavit or declaration made under oath or upon sworn testimony before the judge, establishing probable cause that a violation of a state or local law, regulation, or ordinance regarding rental housing exists and endangers the health or safety of the tenant or adjoining neighbors. In addition, the affidavit must contain a statement that consent to inspect has been sought from the owner and the tenant but could not be obtained because the owner or the tenant either refused or failed to respond within five days, or a statement setting forth facts or circumstances reasonably justifying the failure to seek such consent. A landlord may not take or threaten to take reprisals or retaliatory action as defined in RCW 59.18.240 against a tenant who gives consent to a code enforcement official of the state or of any county, city, or other political subdivision to inspect his or her dwelling unit to determine the presence of an unsafe building condition or a violation of any building regulation, statute, or ordinance.

(c) In determining probable cause, the judge is not limited to evidence of specific knowledge, but may also consider any of the following:

(i) The age and general condition of the premises;

(ii) Previous violations or hazards found present in the premises;

(iii) The type of premises;

(iv) The purposes for which the premises are used; or

(v) The presence of hazards or violations in and the general condition of premises near the premises sought to be inspected.

(d) Before issuing an inspection warrant, the judge shall find that the applicant has: (i) Provided written notice of the date, approximate time, and court in which the applicant will be seeking the warrant to the owner and, if the applicant reasonably believes the dwelling unit or rental property to be inspected is in the lawful possession of a tenant, to the tenant; and (ii) posted a copy of the notice on the exterior of the dwelling unit or rental property to be inspected. The judge shall also allow the owner and any tenant who appears during consideration of the application for the warrant to defend against or in support of the issuance of the warrant.

(e) All warrants must include at least the following:

(i) The name of the agency and building official requesting the warrant and authorized to conduct an inspection pursuant to the warrant;

(ii) A reasonable description of the premises and items to be inspected; and

(iii) A brief description of the purposes of the inspection.

(f) An inspection warrant is effective for the time specified in the warrant, but not for a period of more than ten days unless it is extended or renewed by the judge who signed and issued the original warrant upon satisfying himself or herself that the extension or renewal is in the public interest. The inspection warrant must be executed and returned to the judge by whom it was issued within the time specified in the warrant or within the extended or renewed time. After the expiration of the time specified in the warrant, the warrant, unless executed, is void.

(g) An inspection pursuant to a warrant must not be made:

(i) Between 7:00 p.m. of any day and 8:00 a.m. of the succeeding day, on Saturday or Sunday, or on any legal holiday, unless the owner or, if occupied, the tenant specifies a preference for inspection during such hours or on such a day;

(ii) Without the presence of an owner or occupant over the age of eighteen years or a person designated by the owner or occupant unless specifically authorized by a judge upon a showing that the authority is reasonably necessary to effectuate the purpose of the search warrant; or

(iii) By means of forcible entry, except that a judge may expressly authorize a forcible entry when:

(A) Facts are shown that are sufficient to create a reasonable suspicion of a violation of a state or local law or rule relating to municipal or county building, fire, safety, environmental, animal control, land use, plumbing, electrical, health, minimum housing, or zoning standards that, if the violation existed, would be an immediate threat to the health or safety of the tenant; or

(B) Facts are shown establishing that reasonable attempts to serve a previous warrant have been unsuccessful.

(h) Immediate execution of a warrant is prohibited, except when necessary to prevent loss of life or property.

(i) Any person who willfully refuses to permit inspection, obstructs inspection, or aids in the obstruction of an inspection of property authorized by warrant issued pursuant to this section is

subject to remedial and punitive sanctions for contempt of court under chapter 7.21 RCW. Such conduct may also be subject to a civil penalty imposed by local ordinance that takes into consideration the facts and circumstances and the severity of the violation.

(5) The landlord may enter the dwelling unit without consent of the tenant in case of emergency or abandonment.

(6) The landlord shall not abuse the right of access or use it to harass the tenant, and shall provide notice before entry as provided in this subsection. Except in the case of emergency or if it is impracticable to do so, the landlord shall give the tenant at least two days' written notice of his or her intent to enter and shall enter only at reasonable times. The notice must state the exact time and date or dates of entry or specify a period of time during that date or dates in which the entry will occur, in which case the notice must specify the earliest and latest possible times of entry. The notice must also specify the telephone number to which the tenant may communicate any objection or request to reschedule the entry. The tenant shall not unreasonably withhold consent to the landlord to enter the dwelling unit at a specified time where the landlord has given at least one day's notice of intent to enter to exhibit the dwelling unit to prospective or actual purchasers or tenants. A landlord shall not unreasonably interfere with a tenant's enjoyment of the rented dwelling unit by excessively exhibiting the dwelling unit.

(7) The landlord has no other right of access except by court order, arbitrator or by consent of the tenant.

(8) A landlord or tenant who continues to violate the rights of the tenant or landlord with respect to the duties imposed on the other as set forth in this section after being served with one written notification alleging in good faith violations of this section listing the date and time of the violation shall be liable for up to one hundred dollars for each violation after receipt of the notice. The prevailing landlord or tenant may recover costs of the suit or arbitration under this section, and may also recover reasonable attorneys' fees.

(9) Nothing in this section is intended to (a) abrogate or modify in any way any common law right or privilege or (b) affect the common law as it relates to a local municipality's right of entry under emergency or exigent circumstances. [2011 c 132 s 9; 2010 c 148 s 3; 2002 c 263 s 1. Prior: 1989 c 342 s 7; 1989 c 12 s 18; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 15.]

RCW 59.18.160 Landlord's remedies if tenant fails to remedy defective condition. If, after receipt of written notice, as provided in RCW 59.18.170, the tenant fails to remedy the defective condition within a reasonable time, the landlord may:

(1) Bring an action in an appropriate court, or at arbitration if so agreed for any remedy provided under this chapter or otherwise provided by law; or

(2) Pursue other remedies available under this chapter. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 16.]

RCW 59.18.170 Landlord to give notice if tenant fails to carry out duties—Late fees. (1) If at any time during the tenancy the tenant fails to carry out the duties required by RCW 59.18.130 or

59.18.140, the landlord may, in addition to pursuit of remedies otherwise provided by law, give written notice to the tenant of said failure, which notice shall specify the nature of the failure.

(2) The landlord may not charge a late fee for rent that is paid within five days following its due date. If rent is more than five days past due, the landlord may charge late fees commencing from the first day after the due date until paid. Nothing in this subsection prohibits a landlord from serving a notice to pay or vacate at any time after the rent becomes due.

(3) When late fees may be assessed after rent becomes due, the tenant may propose that the date rent is due in the rental agreement be altered to a different due date of the month. The landlord shall agree to such a proposal if it is submitted in writing and the tenant can demonstrate that his or her primary source of income is a regular, monthly source of governmental assistance that is not received until after the date rent is due in the rental agreement. The proposed rent due date may not be more than five days after the date the rent is due in the rental agreement. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent a tenant from making a request for reasonable accommodation under federal, state, or local law. [2020 c 177 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 17.]

RCW 59.18.180 Tenant's failure to comply with statutory duties—Landlord to give tenant written notice of noncompliance—Landlord's remedies. (1) If the tenant fails to comply with any portion of RCW 59.18.130 or 59.18.140, and such noncompliance can (a) substantially affect the health and safety of the tenant or other tenants, or substantially increase the hazards of fire or accident, and (b) be remedied by repair, replacement of a damaged item, or cleaning, the tenant shall comply within thirty days after written notice by the landlord specifying the noncompliance, or, in the case of emergency as promptly as conditions require. If the tenant fails to remedy the noncompliance within that period the landlord may enter the dwelling unit and cause the work to be done and submit an itemized bill of the actual and reasonable cost of repair, to be payable on the next date when periodic rent is due, or on terms mutually agreed to by the landlord and tenant, or immediately if the rental agreement has terminated. The tenant shall have a defense to an unlawful detainer action filed solely on this ground if it is determined at the hearing authorized under the provisions of chapter 59.12 RCW that the tenant is in substantial compliance with the provisions of this section, or if the tenant remedies the noncomplying condition within the thirty day period provided for above or any shorter period determined at the hearing to have been required because of an emergency: PROVIDED, That if the defective condition is remedied after the commencement of an unlawful detainer action, the tenant may be liable to the landlord for statutory costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(2) Any other substantial noncompliance by the tenant of RCW 59.18.130 or 59.18.140 constitutes a ground for commencing an action in unlawful detainer in accordance with chapter 59.12 RCW. A landlord may commence such action at any time after written notice pursuant to chapter 59.12 RCW.

(3) If drug-related activity is alleged to be a basis for termination of tenancy under RCW 59.18.130(6), 59.12.030(5), or

59.20.140(5), the compliance provisions of this section do not apply and the landlord may proceed directly to an unlawful detainer action.

(4) If criminal activity on the premises as described in RCW 59.18.130(8) is alleged to be the basis for termination of the tenancy, and the tenant is arrested as a result of this activity, then the compliance provisions of this section do not apply and the landlord may proceed directly to an unlawful detainer action against the tenant who was arrested for this activity.

(5) If gang-related activity, as prohibited under RCW 59.18.130(9), is alleged to be the basis for termination of the tenancy, then the compliance provisions of this section do not apply and the landlord may proceed directly to an unlawful detainer action in accordance with chapter 59.12 RCW, and a landlord may commence such an action at any time after written notice under chapter 59.12 RCW.

(6) A landlord may not be held liable in any cause of action for bringing an unlawful detainer action against a tenant for drug-related activity, for creating an imminent hazard to the physical safety of others, or for engaging in gang-related activity that renders people in at least two or more dwelling units or residences insecure in life or the use of property or that injures or endangers the safety or health of people in at least two or more dwelling units or residences under this section, if the unlawful detainer action was brought in good faith. Nothing in this section shall affect a landlord's liability under RCW 59.18.380 to pay all damages sustained by the tenant should the writ of restitution be wrongfully sued out. [2011 c 132 s 10; 1998 c 276 s 3; 1992 c 38 s 3; 1988 c 150 s 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 18.]

Intent—Effective date—1992 c 38: See notes following RCW 59.18.352.

Legislative findings—Severability—1988 c 150: See notes following RCW 59.18.130.

RCW 59.18.190 Notice to tenant to remedy nonconformance. Whenever the landlord learns of a breach of RCW 59.18.130 or has accepted performance by the tenant which is at variance with the terms of the rental agreement or rules enforceable after the commencement of the tenancy, he or she may immediately give notice to the tenant to remedy the nonconformance. Said notice shall expire after sixty days unless the landlord pursues any remedy under this chapter. [2010 c 8 s 19023; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 19.]

RCW 59.18.200 Tenancy from month to month or for rental period—End of tenancy—Armed forces exception—Exclusion of children—Conversion to condominium—Demolition, substantial rehabilitation of the premises—Notice. ***(Effective until January 1, 2028.)*** (1)(a) When premises are rented for an indefinite time, with monthly or other periodic rent reserved, such tenancy shall be construed to be a tenancy from month to month, or from period to period on which rent is payable, and shall end by written notice of 20 days or more, preceding the end of any of the months or periods of tenancy, given by the tenant to the landlord.

(b) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may end a rental agreement with less than 20 days' written notice if the tenant receives permanent change of station or deployment orders that do not allow a 20-day written notice.

(2)(a) Whenever a landlord plans to change to a policy of excluding children, the landlord shall give a written notice to a tenant at least 90 days before the tenancy ends to effectuate such change in policy. Such 90-day notice shall be in lieu of the notice required by subsection (1) of this section. However, if after giving the 90-day notice the change in policy is delayed, the notice requirements of subsection (1) of this section shall apply unless waived by the tenant.

(b) Whenever a landlord plans to change any apartment or apartments to a condominium form of ownership, the landlord shall provide a written notice to a tenant at least 120 days before the tenancy ends, in compliance with RCW 64.34.440(1), to effectuate such change. The 120-day notice is in lieu of the notice required in subsection (1) of this section. However, if after providing the 120-day notice the change to a condominium form of ownership is delayed, the notice requirements in subsection (1) of this section apply unless waived by the tenant.

(c)(i) Whenever a landlord plans to demolish or substantially rehabilitate premises or plans a change of use of premises, the landlord shall provide a written notice to a tenant at least 120 days before the tenancy ends. This subsection (2)(c)(i) does not apply to jurisdictions that have created a relocation assistance program under RCW 59.18.440 and otherwise provide 120 days' notice.

(ii) For purposes of this subsection (2)(c):

(A) "Assisted housing development" means a multifamily rental housing development that either receives government assistance and is defined as federally assisted housing in RCW 59.28.020, or that receives other federal, state, or local government assistance and is subject to use restrictions.

(B) "Change of use" means: (I) Conversion of any premises from a residential use to a nonresidential use that results in the displacement of an existing tenant; (II) conversion from one type of residential use to another type of residential use that results in the displacement of an existing tenant, such as conversion to a retirement home, emergency shelter, or transient hotel; or (III) conversion following removal of use restrictions from an assisted housing development that results in the displacement of an existing tenant: PROVIDED, That displacement of an existing tenant in order that the owner or a member of the owner's immediate family may occupy the premises does not constitute a change of use.

(C) "Demolish" means the destruction of premises or the relocation of premises to another site that results in the displacement of an existing tenant.

(D) "Substantially rehabilitate" means extensive structural repair or extensive remodeling of premises that requires a permit such as a building, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical permit, and that results in the displacement of an existing tenant. [2021 c 212 s 3. Prior: 2019 c 339 s 1; 2019 c 23 s 2; 2008 c 113 s 4; 2003 c 7 s 1; 1979 ex.s. c 70 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 20.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Application—Effective date—2008 c 113: See notes following RCW 64.34.440.

Effective date—2003 c 7: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 24, 2003]." [2003 c 7 s 4.]

Unlawful detainer, notice requirement: RCW 59.12.030(2).

RCW 59.18.200 Tenancy from month to month or for rental period—End of tenancy—Armed forces exception—Exclusion of children—Conversion to condominium—Demolition, substantial rehabilitation of the premises—Notice. *(Effective January 1, 2028.)* (1)(a) When premises are rented for an indefinite time, with monthly or other periodic rent reserved, such tenancy shall be construed to be a tenancy from month to month, or from period to period on which rent is payable, and shall end by written notice of 20 days or more, preceding the end of any of the months or periods of tenancy, given by the tenant to the landlord.

(b) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may end a rental agreement with less than 20 days' written notice if the tenant receives permanent change of station or deployment orders that do not allow a 20-day written notice.

(2)(a) Whenever a landlord plans to change to a policy of excluding children, the landlord shall give a written notice to a tenant at least 90 days before the tenancy ends to effectuate such change in policy. Such 90-day notice shall be in lieu of the notice required by subsection (1) of this section. However, if after giving the 90-day notice the change in policy is delayed, the notice requirements of subsection (1) of this section shall apply unless waived by the tenant.

(b) Whenever a landlord plans to change any apartment or apartments to a condominium form of ownership, the landlord shall provide a written notice to a tenant at least 120 days before the tenancy ends, in compliance with RCW 64.90.655, to effectuate such change. The 120-day notice is in lieu of the notice required in subsection (1) of this section. However, if after providing the 120-day notice the change to a condominium form of ownership is delayed, the notice requirements in subsection (1) of this section apply unless waived by the tenant.

(c)(i) Whenever a landlord plans to demolish or substantially rehabilitate premises or plans a change of use of premises, the landlord shall provide a written notice to a tenant at least 120 days before the tenancy ends. This subsection (2)(c)(i) does not apply to jurisdictions that have created a relocation assistance program under RCW 59.18.440 and otherwise provide 120 days' notice.

(ii) For purposes of this subsection (2)(c):

(A) "Assisted housing development" means a multifamily rental housing development that either receives government assistance and is defined as federally assisted housing in RCW 59.28.020, or that receives other federal, state, or local government assistance and is subject to use restrictions.

(B) "Change of use" means: (I) Conversion of any premises from a residential use to a nonresidential use that results in the displacement of an existing tenant; (II) conversion from one type of residential use to another type of residential use that results in the displacement of an existing tenant, such as conversion to a retirement home, emergency shelter, or transient hotel; or (III) conversion following removal of use restrictions from an assisted housing development that results in the displacement of an existing tenant: PROVIDED, That displacement of an existing tenant in order that the owner or a member of the owner's immediate family may occupy the premises does not constitute a change of use.

(C) "Demolish" means the destruction of premises or the relocation of premises to another site that results in the displacement of an existing tenant.

(D) "Substantially rehabilitate" means extensive structural repair or extensive remodeling of premises that requires a permit such as a building, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical permit, and that results in the displacement of an existing tenant. [2024 c 321 s 408; 2021 c 212 s 3. Prior: 2019 c 339 s 1; 2019 c 23 s 2; 2008 c 113 s 4; 2003 c 7 s 1; 1979 ex.s. c 70 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 20.]

Effective dates—2024 c 321 ss 319 and 401-432: See note following RCW 64.90.485.

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Application—Effective date—2008 c 113: See notes following RCW 64.34.440.

Effective date—2003 c 7: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 24, 2003]." [2003 c 7 s 4.]

Unlawful detainer, notice requirement: RCW 59.12.030(2).

RCW 59.18.210 Tenancies from year to year except under written contract. Tenancies from year to year are hereby abolished except when the same are created by express written contract. Leases may be in writing or print, or partly in writing and partly in print, and shall be legal and valid for any term or period not exceeding one year, without acknowledgment, witnesses or seals. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 21.]

RCW 59.18.220 End of tenancy for a specified time—Armed forces exception. (1) Except as limited under RCW 59.18.650, in cases where premises are rented for a specified time, by express or implied contract, the tenancy shall be deemed expired at the end of such specified time upon notice consistent with RCW 59.18.650, served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040.

(2) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may end a tenancy for a specified time if the tenant receives permanent change of station or deployment orders. Before

ending the tenancy, the tenant, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, shall provide written notice of 20 days or more to the landlord, which notice shall include a copy of the official military orders or a signed letter from the service member's commanding officer confirming any of the following criteria are met:

(a) The service member is required, pursuant to a permanent change of station orders, to move 35 miles or more from the location of the rental premises;

(b) The service member is prematurely or involuntarily discharged or released from active duty;

(c) The service member is released from active duty after having leased the rental premises while on active duty status and the rental premises is 35 miles or more from the service member's home of record prior to entering active duty;

(d) After entering into a rental agreement, the commanding officer directs the service member to move into government provided housing;

(e) The service member receives temporary duty orders, temporary change of station orders, or active duty orders to an area 35 miles or more from the location of the rental premises, provided such orders are for a period not less than 90 days; or

(f) The service member has leased the property, but prior to taking possession of the rental premises, receives change of station orders to an area that is 35 miles or more from the location of the rental premises. [2021 c 212 s 4; 2019 c 23 s 3; 2003 c 7 s 2; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 22.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Effective date—2003 c 7: See note following RCW 59.18.200.

RCW 59.18.230 Waiver of chapter provisions prohibited—Provisions prohibited from rental agreement—Distress for rent abolished—Detention of personal property for rent—Remedies. (1)(a) Except as provided in RCW 59.18.360, any provision of a lease or other agreement, whether oral or written, whereby any section or subsection of this chapter is waived shall be deemed against public policy and shall be unenforceable. Such unenforceability shall not affect other provisions of the agreement which can be given effect without them.

(b) Any agreement, whether oral or written, between a landlord and tenant, or their representatives, and entered into pursuant to an unlawful detainer action under this chapter that requires the tenant to pay any amount in violation of RCW 59.18.283 or the statutory judgment amount limits under RCW 59.18.410 (1) or (2), or waives any rights of the tenant under RCW 59.18.410 or any other rights afforded under this chapter except as provided in RCW 59.18.360 is void and unenforceable. A landlord may not threaten a tenant with eviction for failure to pay nonpossessory charges limited under RCW 59.18.283.

(2) No rental agreement may provide that the tenant:

(a) Agrees to waive or to forgo rights or remedies under this chapter; or

(b) Agrees to waive or forgo any right to bring, join, or otherwise participate in or maintain any cause of action against the tenant's landlord or the landlord's representatives or agents including, but not limited to, class actions; or

(c) Sign a nondisclosure agreement relating to the lease agreement or details of the offer, including rent amount, security deposits or fees, rent concessions, move-in gifts, or lease specials or terms; or

(d) Authorizes any person to confess judgment on a claim arising out of the rental agreement; or

(e) Agrees to pay the landlord's attorneys' fees, except as authorized in this chapter and awarded by a court pursuant to a judgment; or

(f) Agrees to the exculpation or limitation of any liability of the landlord arising under law or to indemnify the landlord for that liability or the costs connected therewith; or

(g) And landlord have agreed to a particular arbitrator at the time the rental agreement is entered into; or

(h) Agrees to arbitrate disputes, unless the landlord pays the entire cost of the arbitration and the agreement is notarized; or

(i) Agrees to pay late fees for rent that is paid within five days following its due date. If rent is more than five days past due, the landlord may charge late fees commencing from the first day after the due date until paid. Nothing in this subsection prohibits a landlord from serving a notice to pay or vacate at any time after the rent becomes due; or

(j) Agrees to make rent payments through electronic means only.

(3) A provision prohibited by subsection (2) of this section included in a rental agreement is unenforceable. If a landlord knowingly uses a rental agreement containing provisions known by him or her to be prohibited, the tenant may recover actual damages sustained by him or her, statutory damages not to exceed two times the monthly rent charged for the unit, costs of suit, and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(4) The common law right of the landlord of distress for rent is hereby abolished for property covered by this chapter. Any provision in a rental agreement creating a lien upon the personal property of the tenant or authorizing a distress for rent is null and void and of no force and effect. Any landlord who takes or detains the personal property of a tenant without the specific written consent of the tenant to such incident of taking or detention, and who, after written demand by the tenant for the return of his or her personal property, refuses to return the same promptly shall be liable to the tenant for the value of the property retained, actual damages, and if the refusal is intentional, may also be liable for damages of up to $500 per day but not to exceed $5,000, for each day or part of a day that the tenant is deprived of his or her property. The prevailing party may recover his or her costs of suit and a reasonable attorneys' fee.

In any action, including actions pursuant to chapters 7.64 or 12.28 RCW, brought by a tenant or other person to recover possession of his or her personal property taken or detained by a landlord in violation of this section, the court, upon motion and after notice to the opposing parties, may waive or reduce any bond requirements where it appears to be to the satisfaction of the court that the moving party is proceeding in good faith and has, prima facie, a meritorious claim for immediate delivery or redelivery of said property. [2025 c 206 s 1; 2022 c 95 s 2. Prior: 2021 c 212 s 5; 2021 c 115 s 15; prior: 2020 c 315 s 6; 2020 c 177 s 2; 2011 c 132 s 11; 2010 c 8 s 19024; 1989 c 342 s 8; 1983 c 264 s 4; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 23.]

Application—2025 c 206: "This act applies to leases or rental agreements entered into or renewed on or after July 27, 2025." [2025 c 206 s 2.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Effective date—2020 c 315 ss 5-8: See note following RCW 59.18.410.

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

RCW 59.18.240 Reprisals or retaliatory actions by landlord—Prohibited. So long as the tenant is in compliance with this chapter, the landlord shall not take or threaten to take reprisals or retaliatory action against the tenant because of any good faith and lawful:

(1) Complaints or reports by the tenant to a governmental authority concerning the failure of the landlord to substantially comply with any code, statute, ordinance, or regulation governing the maintenance or operation of the premises, if such condition may endanger or impair the health or safety of the tenant; or

(2) Assertions or enforcement by the tenant of his or her rights and remedies under this chapter.

"Reprisal or retaliatory action" shall mean and include but not be limited to any of the following actions by the landlord when such actions are intended primarily to retaliate against a tenant because of the tenant's good faith and lawful act:

(a) Eviction of the tenant;

(b) Increasing the rent required of the tenant;

(c) Reduction of services to the tenant; and

(d) Increasing the obligations of the tenant. [2010 c 8 s 19025; 1983 c 264 s 9; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 24.]

RCW 59.18.250 Reprisals or retaliatory actions by landlord—Presumptions—Rebuttal—Costs. Initiation by the landlord of any action listed in RCW 59.18.240 within ninety days after a good faith and lawful act by the tenant as enumerated in RCW 59.18.240, or within ninety days after any inspection or proceeding of a governmental agency resulting from such act, shall create a rebuttable presumption affecting the burden of proof, that the action is a reprisal or retaliatory action against the tenant: PROVIDED, That if at the time the landlord gives notice of termination of tenancy pursuant to chapter 59.12 RCW the tenant is in arrears in rent or in breach of any other lease or rental obligation, there is a rebuttable presumption affecting the burden of proof that the landlord's action is neither a reprisal nor retaliatory action against the tenant: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the court finds that the tenant made a complaint or report to a governmental authority within ninety days after notice of a proposed increase in rent or other action in good faith by the landlord, there is a rebuttable presumption that the complaint or report was not made in good faith: PROVIDED FURTHER, That no presumption against the

landlord shall arise under this section, with respect to an increase in rent, if the landlord, in a notice to the tenant of increase in rent, specifies reasonable grounds for said increase, which grounds may include a substantial increase in market value due to remedial action under this chapter: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the presumption of retaliation, with respect to an eviction, may be rebutted by evidence that it is not practical to make necessary repairs while the tenant remains in occupancy. In any action or eviction proceeding where the tenant prevails upon his or her claim or defense that the landlord has violated this section, the tenant shall be entitled to recover his or her costs of suit or arbitration, including a reasonable attorney's fee, and where the landlord prevails upon his or her claim he or she shall be entitled to recover his or her costs of suit or arbitration, including a reasonable attorney's fee: PROVIDED FURTHER, That neither party may recover attorney's fees to the extent that their legal services are provided at no cost to them. [2010 c 8 s 19026; 1983 c 264 s 10; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 25.]

RCW 59.18.253 Deposit to secure occupancy by tenant—Landlord's duties—Violation. (1) It shall be unlawful for a landlord to require a fee or deposit from a prospective tenant for the privilege of being placed on a waiting list to be considered as a tenant for a dwelling unit.

(2) A landlord who charges a prospective tenant a fee or deposit to hold a dwelling unit or secure that the prospective tenant will move into a dwelling unit, after the dwelling unit has been offered to the prospective tenant, must provide the prospective tenant with a receipt for the fee or deposit, together with a written statement of the conditions, if any, under which the fee or deposit may be retained, immediately upon payment of the fee or deposit.

(3) A landlord may not request a fee or deposit to hold a dwelling or secure that the prospective tenant will move into the dwelling unit in excess of twenty-five percent of the first month's rent as described in RCW 59.18.610(4).

(4)(a) If the prospective tenant does occupy the dwelling unit, then the landlord must credit the amount of the fee or deposit to the tenant's first month's rent or to the tenant's security deposit. If the prospective tenant does not occupy the dwelling unit, then the landlord may keep up to the full amount of any fee or deposit that was paid by the prospective tenant to secure the tenancy, so long as it is in accordance with the written statement of conditions furnished to the prospective tenant at the time the fee or deposit was charged.

(b) A fee or deposit to hold a dwelling unit or secure that the prospective tenant will move into a dwelling unit under this subsection does not include any cost charged by a landlord to use a tenant screening service or obtain background information on a prospective tenant.

(c) A portion of the fee or deposit may not be withheld if the dwelling unit fails a tenant-based rental assistance program inspection by a qualified inspector as defined in RCW 59.18.030. If the inspection does not occur within ten days from the date of collection of the fee or deposit or a longer period of time that the landlord and tenant may agree upon, the landlord may notify the tenant that the dwelling unit will no longer be held. The landlord shall promptly return the fee or deposit to the prospective tenant after the

landlord is notified that the dwelling unit failed the inspection or the landlord has notified the tenant that the dwelling unit will no longer be held. The landlord complies with this section by promptly depositing the fee or deposit in the United States mail properly addressed with first-class postage prepaid.

(5) In any action brought for a violation of this section, a landlord may be liable for the amount of the fee or deposit charged. In addition, any landlord who violates this section may be liable to the prospective tenant for an amount not to exceed two times the fee or deposit. The prevailing party may also recover court costs and a reasonable attorneys' fee. [2020 c 169 s 3; 2011 c 132 s 12; 1991 c 194 s 2.]

Findings—1991 c 194: "The legislature finds that tenant application fees often have the effect of excluding low-income people from applying for housing because many low-income people cannot afford these fees in addition to the rent and other deposits which may be required. The legislature further finds that application fees are frequently not returned to unsuccessful applicants for housing, which creates a hardship on low-income people. The legislature therefore finds and declares that it is the policy of the state that certain tenant application fees should be prohibited and guidelines should be established for the imposition of other tenant application fees.

The legislature also finds that it is important to both landlords and tenants that consumer information concerning prospective tenants is accurate. Many tenants are unaware of their rights under federal fair credit reporting laws to dispute information that may be inaccurate. The legislature therefore finds and declares that it is the policy of the state for prospective tenants to be informed of their rights to dispute information they feel is inaccurate in order to help prevent denials of housing based upon incorrect information." [1991 c 194 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.255 Source of income—Landlords prohibited from certain acts—Violation—Penalties. (1) A landlord may not, based on the source of income of an otherwise eligible prospective tenant or current tenant:

(a) Refuse to lease or rent any real property to a prospective tenant or current tenant, unless the: (i) Prospective tenant's or current tenant's source of income is conditioned on the real property passing inspection; (ii) written estimate of the cost of improvements necessary to pass inspection is more than one thousand five hundred dollars; and (iii) landlord has not received moneys from the landlord mitigation program account to make the improvements;

(b) Expel a prospective tenant or current tenant from any real property;

(c) Make any distinction, discrimination, or restriction against a prospective tenant or current tenant in the price, terms, conditions, fees, or privileges relating to the rental, lease, or occupancy of real property or in the furnishing of any facilities or services in connection with the rental, lease, or occupancy of real property;

(d) Attempt to discourage the rental or lease of any real property to a prospective tenant or current tenant;

(e) Assist, induce, incite, or coerce another person to commit an act or engage in a practice that violates this section;

(f) Coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with any person in the exercise or enjoyment of, or on account of the person having exercised or enjoyed or having aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of, any right granted or protected under this section;

(g) Represent to a person that a dwelling unit is not available for inspection or rental when the dwelling unit in fact is available for inspection or rental; or

(h) Otherwise make unavailable or deny a dwelling unit to a prospective tenant or current tenant that, but for his or her source of income, would be eligible to rent real property.

(2) A landlord may not publish, circulate, issue, or display, or cause to be published, circulated, issued, or displayed, any communication, notice, advertisement, or sign of any kind relating to the rental or lease of real property that indicates a preference, limitation, or requirement based on any source of income.

(3) If a landlord requires that a prospective tenant or current tenant have a certain threshold level of income, any source of income in the form of a rent voucher or subsidy must be subtracted from the total of the monthly rent prior to calculating if the income criteria have been met.

(4) A person in violation of this section shall be held liable in a civil action up to four and one-half times the monthly rent of the real property at issue, as well as court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(5) As used in this section, "source of income" includes benefits or subsidy programs including housing assistance, public assistance, emergency rental assistance, veterans benefits, social security, supplemental security income or other retirement programs, and other programs administered by any federal, state, local, or nonprofit entity. "Source of income" does not include income derived in an illegal manner. [2018 c 66 s 1.]

Effective date—2018 c 66 s 1: "Section 1 of this act takes effect September 30, 2018." [2018 c 66 s 6.]

RCW 59.18.257 Screening of prospective tenants—Notice to prospective tenant—Costs—Adverse action notice—Violation. (1)(a) Prior to obtaining any information about a prospective tenant, the prospective landlord shall first notify the prospective tenant in writing, or by posting, of the following:

(i) What types of information will be accessed to conduct the tenant screening;

(ii) What criteria may result in denial of the application;

(iii) If a consumer report is used, the name and address of the consumer reporting agency and the prospective tenant's rights to obtain a free copy of the consumer report in the event of a denial or other adverse action, and to dispute the accuracy of information appearing in the consumer report; and

(iv) Whether or not the landlord will accept a comprehensive reusable tenant screening report made available to the landlord by a consumer reporting agency. If the landlord indicates its willingness to accept a comprehensive reusable tenant screening report, the

landlord may access the landlord's own tenant screening report regarding a prospective tenant as long as the prospective tenant is not charged for the landlord's own tenant screening report.

(b)(i) The landlord may charge a prospective tenant for costs incurred in obtaining a tenant screening report only if the prospective landlord provides the information as required in (a) of this subsection.

(ii) If a prospective landlord conducts his or her own screening of tenants, the prospective landlord may charge his or her actual costs in obtaining the background information only if the prospective landlord provides the information as required in (a) of this subsection. The amount charged may not exceed the customary costs charged by a screening service in the general area. The prospective landlord's actual costs include costs incurred for long distance phone calls and for time spent calling landlords, employers, and financial institutions.

(c) If a prospective landlord takes an adverse action, the prospective landlord shall provide a written notice of the adverse action to the prospective tenant that states the reasons for the adverse action. The adverse action notice must contain the following information in a substantially similar format, including additional information as may be required under chapter 19.182 RCW:

"ADVERSE ACTION NOTICE

Name
Address
City/State/Zip Code

This notice is to inform you that your application has been:
..... Rejected
..... Approved with conditions:
..... Residency requires an increased deposit
..... Residency requires a qualified guarantor
..... Residency requires last month's rent
..... Residency requires an increased monthly rent of $.....
..... Other:

Adverse action on your application was based on the following:
..... Information contained in a consumer report (The prospective landlord must include the name, address, and phone number of the consumer reporting agency that furnished the consumer report that contributed to the adverse action.)
..... The consumer credit report did not contain sufficient information
..... Information received from previous rental history or reference
..... Information received in a criminal record
..... Information received in a civil record
..... Information received from an employment verification

Dated this ..... day of ....., ...(year)

Agent/Owner Signature"

(2) Any landlord who maintains a website advertising the rental of a dwelling unit or as a source of information for current or prospective tenants must include a statement on the property's home page stating whether or not the landlord will accept a comprehensive reusable tenant screening report made available to the landlord by a consumer reporting agency. If the landlord indicates its willingness

to accept a comprehensive reusable tenant screening report, the landlord may access the landlord's own tenant screening report regarding a prospective tenant as long as the prospective tenant is not charged for the landlord's own tenant screening report.

(3) Any landlord or prospective landlord who violates subsection (1) of this section may be liable to the prospective tenant for an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars. The prevailing party may also recover court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(4) This section does not limit a prospective tenant's rights or the duties of a screening service as otherwise provided in chapter 19.182 RCW. [2016 c 66 s 2; 2012 c 41 s 3; 1991 c 194 s 3.]

Finding—2012 c 41: "The legislature finds that residential landlords frequently use tenant screening reports in evaluating and selecting tenants for their rental properties. These tenant screening reports purchased from tenant screening companies may contain misleading, incomplete, or inaccurate information, such as information relating to eviction or other court records. It is challenging for tenants to dispute errors until after they apply for housing and are turned down, at which point lodging disputes are seldom worthwhile. The costs of tenant screening reports are paid by applicants. Therefore, applicants who apply for housing with multiple housing providers pay repeated screening fees for successive reports containing essentially the same information." [2012 c 41 s 1.]

Findings—1991 c 194: See note following RCW 59.18.253.

RCW 59.18.260 Moneys paid as deposit or security for performance by tenant—Written rental agreement to specify terms and conditions for retention by landlord—Written checklist required. (1) If any moneys are paid to the landlord by the tenant as a deposit or as security for performance of the tenant's obligations in a lease or rental agreement, the lease or rental agreement shall be in writing and shall include the terms and conditions under which the deposit or portion thereof may be withheld by the landlord upon termination of the lease or rental agreement. If all or part of the deposit may be withheld to indemnify the landlord for damages to the premises for which the tenant is responsible, the rental agreement shall be in writing and shall so specify.

(2) No deposit may be collected by a landlord unless the rental agreement is in writing and a written checklist or statement is provided by the landlord to the tenant at the commencement of the tenancy specifically describing the condition and cleanliness of or existing damages to the premises, fixtures, equipment, appliances, and furnishings including, but not limited to:

(a) Walls, including wall paint and wallpaper;

(b) Carpets and other flooring;

(c) Furniture; and

(d) Appliances.

(3) The checklist or statement shall be signed and dated by the landlord and the tenant, and the tenant shall be provided with a copy of the signed checklist or statement. The tenant has the right to request one free replacement copy of the written checklist.

(4) No such deposit shall be withheld on account of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises.

(5) If the landlord collects a deposit without providing a written checklist at the commencement of the tenancy, the landlord is liable to the tenant for the amount of the deposit, and the prevailing party may recover court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees. This section does not limit the tenant's right to recover moneys paid as damages or security under RCW 59.18.280. [2023 c 331 s 3; 2011 c 132 s 13; 1983 c 264 s 6; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 26.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.270 Moneys paid as deposit or security for performance by tenant—Deposit by landlord in trust account—Receipt—Remedies under foreclosure—Claims. All moneys paid to the landlord by the tenant as a deposit as security for performance of the tenant's obligations in a lease or rental agreement shall promptly be deposited by the landlord in a trust account, maintained by the landlord for the purpose of holding such security deposits for tenants of the landlord, in a financial institution as defined by *RCW 30.22.041 or licensed escrow agent located in Washington. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the landlord shall be entitled to receipt of interest paid on such trust account deposits. The landlord shall provide the tenant with a written receipt for the deposit and shall provide written notice of the name and address and location of the depository and any subsequent change thereof. If during a tenancy the status of landlord is transferred to another, any sums in the deposit trust account affected by such transfer shall simultaneously be transferred to an equivalent trust account of the successor landlord, and the successor landlord shall promptly notify the tenant of the transfer and of the name, address, and location of the new depository. If, during the tenancy, the tenant's dwelling unit is foreclosed upon and the tenant's deposit is not transferred to the successor after the foreclosure sale or other transfer of the property from the foreclosed-upon owner to a successor, the foreclosed-upon owner shall promptly refund the full deposit to the tenant immediately after the foreclosure sale or transfer. If the foreclosed-upon owner does not either immediately refund the full deposit to the tenant or transfer the deposit to the successor, the foreclosed-upon owner is liable to the tenant for damages up to two times the amount of the deposit. In any action brought by the tenant to recover the deposit, the prevailing party is entitled to recover the costs of suit or arbitration, including reasonable attorneys' fees. The tenant's claim to any moneys paid under this section shall be prior to that of any creditor of the landlord, including a trustee in bankruptcy or receiver, even if such moneys are commingled. [2011 c 132 s 14; 2004 c 136 s 1; 1975 1st ex.s. c 233 s 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 27.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 30.22.041 was recodified as RCW 30A.22.041 pursuant to 2014 c 37 s 4, effective January 5, 2015.

RCW 59.18.280 Moneys paid as deposit or security for performance by tenant—Statement and notice of basis for retention—Remedies for landlord's failure to make refund—Exception. (1)(a) Within 30 days after the termination of the rental agreement and vacation of the premises or, if the tenant abandons the premises as defined in RCW 59.18.310, within 30 days after the landlord learns of the

abandonment, the landlord shall give a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any of the deposit, and any documentation required by (b) of this subsection, together with the payment of any refund due the tenant under the terms and conditions of the rental agreement.

The landlord complies with this subsection if these are delivered to the tenant personally or deposited in the United States mail properly addressed to the tenant's last known address with first-class postage prepaid within the 30 days.

(b) With the statement required by (a) of this subsection, the landlord shall include copies of estimates received or invoices paid to reasonably substantiate damage charges. Where repairs are performed by the landlord or the landlord's employee, if a deduction is made for materials or supplies, the landlord shall provide a copy of the bill, invoice, or receipt. The landlord may document the cost of materials or supplies already in the landlord's possession or purchased on an ongoing basis by providing a copy of a bill, invoice, receipt, vendor price list, or other vendor document that reasonably documents the cost of the item used in the repair or cleaning of the unit. Where repairs are performed by the landlord or the landlord's employee, the landlord shall include a statement of the time spent performing repairs and the reasonable hourly rate charged.

(c) No portion of any deposit may be withheld:

(i) For wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises;

(ii) For carpet cleaning unless the landlord documents wear to the carpet that is beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises;

(iii) For the costs of repair and replacement of fixtures, equipment, appliances, and furnishings if their condition was not reasonably documented in the written checklist required under RCW 59.18.260; or

(iv) In excess of the cost of repair or replacement of the damaged portion in situations in which the premises, including fixtures, equipment, appliances, and furnishings, are damaged in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises but the damage does not encompass the item's entirety.

(2) If the landlord fails to give the statement and any documentation required by subsection (1) of this section together with any refund due the tenant within the time limits specified in subsection (1) of this section he or she shall be liable to the tenant for the full amount of the deposit. The landlord is also barred in any action brought by the tenant to recover the deposit from asserting any claim or raising any defense for retaining any of the deposit unless the landlord shows that circumstances beyond the landlord's control prevented the landlord from providing the statement and any documentation within the 30 days or that the tenant abandoned the premises as defined in RCW 59.18.310. The court may in its discretion award up to two times the amount of the deposit for the intentional refusal of the landlord to give the statement, documentation, or refund due unless the landlord shows that circumstances beyond the landlord's control prevented the landlord from providing the statement and any such documentation within 30 days or that the tenant abandoned the premises as described in RCW 59.18.310. In any action brought by the tenant to recover the deposit, the prevailing party shall additionally be entitled to the cost of suit or arbitration including a reasonable attorneys' fee.

(3)(a) Nothing in this chapter shall preclude the landlord from proceeding against, and the landlord shall have the right to proceed against a tenant to recover sums exceeding the amount of the tenant's damage or security deposit for damage to the property for which the tenant is responsible together with reasonable attorneys' fees. However, if the landlord seeks reimbursement for damages from the landlord mitigation program pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(1)(d), the landlord is prohibited from retaining any portion of the tenant's damage or security deposit or proceeding against the tenant who terminates under RCW 59.18.575 to recover sums exceeding the amount of the tenant's damage or security deposit for damage to the property.

(b) Damages for wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises or not substantiated by documentation equivalent to that required in subsection (1) of this section may not be charged to the tenant, reported to any consumer reporting agency, tenant screening service, or prospective landlord, or submitted for collection by any third-party agency.

(c) For tenancies with rental agreements initiated on or after July 23, 2023, any lawsuit filed against a tenant to recover sums exceeding the amount of the deposit shall be commenced within three years of the termination of the rental agreement or the tenant's abandonment of the premises.

(4) The requirements with respect to checklists and documentation that are set forth in RCW 59.18.260 and this section do not apply to situations in which part or all of a security deposit is withheld by the landlord for reasons unrelated to damages to the premises, fixtures, equipment, appliances, and furnishings, such as for rent or other charges owing. [2023 c 331 s 4; 2022 c 196 s 3; 2016 c 66 s 4; 2010 c 8 s 19027; 1989 c 342 s 9; 1983 c 264 s 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 28.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Finding—Intent—2022 c 196: See note following RCW 43.31.605.

RCW 59.18.283 Moneys paid by tenant—Landlord must apply toward rent—Tenant's right to possession—Installment payment plans. Under this chapter:

(1) A landlord must first apply any payment made by a tenant toward rent before applying any payment toward late payments, damages, legal costs, or other fees, including attorneys' fees.

(2) Except as provided in RCW 59.18.410, the tenant's right to possession of the premises may not be conditioned on a tenant's payment or satisfaction of any monetary amount other than rent. However, this does not foreclose a landlord from pursuing other lawful remedies to collect late payments, legal costs, or other fees, including attorneys' fees.

(3) When, at the commencement of the tenancy, the landlord has provided an installment payment plan for nonrefundable fees or deposits for the security of the tenant's obligations and the tenant defaults in payment, the landlord may treat the default in payment as rent owing. Any rights the tenant and landlord have under this chapter with respect to rent owing equally apply under this subsection. [2019 c 356 s 6.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.285 Nonrefundable fees not to be designated as deposit—Written rental agreement required—Remedies. No moneys paid to the landlord which are nonrefundable may be designated as a deposit or as part of any deposit. If any moneys are paid to the landlord as a nonrefundable fee, the rental agreement shall be in writing and shall clearly specify that the fee is nonrefundable. If the landlord fails to provide a written rental agreement, the landlord is liable to the tenant for the amount of any fees collected as nonrefundable fees. If the written rental agreement fails to specify that the fee is nonrefundable, the fee must be treated as a refundable deposit under RCW 59.18.260, 59.18.270, and 59.18.280. [2011 c 132 s 15; 1983 c 264 s 5.]

RCW 59.18.290 Removal or exclusion of tenant from premises—Holding over or excluding landlord from premises after termination date—Attorneys' fees. (1) It is unlawful for the landlord to remove or exclude from the premises the tenant thereof except under a court order so authorizing. Any tenant so removed or excluded in violation of this section may recover possession of the property or terminate the rental agreement and, in either case, may recover the actual damages sustained. The prevailing party may recover the costs of suit or arbitration and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(2) It is unlawful for the tenant to hold over in the premises or exclude the landlord therefrom after the termination of the rental agreement except under a valid court order so authorizing. Any landlord so deprived of possession of premises in violation of this section may recover possession of the property and damages sustained by him or her, and the prevailing party may recover his or her costs of suit or arbitration and reasonable attorneys' fees subject to subsections (3) and (4) of this section.

(3) Where the court has entered a judgment in favor of the landlord restoring possession of the property to the landlord, the court may award reasonable attorneys' fees to the landlord; however, the court shall not award attorneys' fees in the following instances:

(a) If the judgment for possession is entered after the tenant failed to respond to a pleading or other notice requiring a response authorized under this chapter; or

(b) If the total amount of rent awarded in the judgment for rent is equal to or less than two months of the tenant's monthly contract rent or one thousand two hundred dollars, whichever is greater.

(4) If a tenant has filed a motion to stay a writ of restitution from execution, the court may only award attorneys' fees to the landlord if the tenant is permitted to be reinstated pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3). Any attorneys' fees awarded shall be subject to repayment pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3). [2020 c 315 s 7; 2019 c 356 s 10; 2010 c 8 s 19028; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 29.]

Effective date—2020 c 315 ss 5-8: See note following RCW 59.18.410.

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.300 Termination of tenant's utility services—Tenant causing loss of landlord provided utility services. It shall be unlawful for a landlord to intentionally cause termination of any of his or her tenant's utility services, including water, heat, electricity, or gas, except for an interruption of utility services for a reasonable time in order to make necessary repairs. Any landlord who violates this section may be liable to such tenant for his or her actual damages sustained by him or her, and up to one hundred dollars for each day or part thereof the tenant is thereby deprived of any utility service, and the prevailing party may recover his or her costs of suit or arbitration and a reasonable attorney's fee. It shall be unlawful for a tenant to intentionally cause the loss of utility services provided by the landlord, including water, heat, electricity, or gas, excepting as resulting from the normal occupancy of the premises. [2010 c 8 s 19029; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 30.]

RCW 59.18.310 Default in rent—Abandonment—Liability of tenant—Landlord's remedies—Sale of tenant's property by landlord, deceased tenant exception. (1) If the tenant defaults in the payment of rent and reasonably indicates by words or actions the intention not to resume tenancy, the tenant shall be liable for the following for such abandonment: PROVIDED, That upon learning of such abandonment of the premises the landlord shall make a reasonable effort to mitigate the damages resulting from such abandonment:

(a) When the tenancy is month-to-month, the tenant shall be liable for the rent for the thirty days following either the date the landlord learns of the abandonment, or the date the next regular rental payment would have become due, whichever first occurs.

(b) When the tenancy is for a term greater than month-to-month, the tenant shall be liable for the lesser of the following:

(i) The entire rent due for the remainder of the term; or

(ii) All rent accrued during the period reasonably necessary to rerent the premises at a fair rental, plus the difference between such fair rental and the rent agreed to in the prior agreement, plus actual costs incurred by the landlord in rerenting the premises together with statutory court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(2) In the event of such abandonment of tenancy and an accompanying default in the payment of rent by the tenant, the landlord may immediately enter and take possession of any property of the tenant found on the premises and may store the same in any reasonably secure place. A landlord shall make reasonable efforts to provide the tenant with a notice containing the name and address of the landlord and the place where the property is stored and informing the tenant that a sale or disposition of the property shall take place pursuant to this section, and the date of the sale or disposal, and further informing the tenant of the right under RCW 59.18.230 to have the property returned prior to its sale or disposal. The landlord's efforts at notice under this subsection shall be satisfied by the mailing by first-class mail, postage prepaid, of such notice to the tenant's last known address and to any other address provided in writing by the tenant or actually known to the landlord where the tenant might receive the notice. The landlord shall return the

property to the tenant after the tenant has paid the actual or reasonable drayage and storage costs whichever is less if the tenant makes a written request for the return of the property before the landlord has sold or disposed of the property. After forty-five days from the date the notice of such sale or disposal is mailed or personally delivered to the tenant, the landlord may sell or dispose of such property, including personal papers, family pictures, and keepsakes. The landlord may apply any income derived therefrom against moneys due the landlord, including actual or reasonable costs whichever is less of drayage and storage of the property. If the property has a cumulative value of two hundred fifty dollars or less, the landlord may sell or dispose of the property in the manner provided in this section, except for personal papers, family pictures, and keepsakes, after seven days from the date the notice of sale or disposal is mailed or personally delivered to the tenant: PROVIDED, That the landlord shall make reasonable efforts, as defined in this section, to notify the tenant. Any excess income derived from the sale of such property under this section shall be held by the landlord for the benefit of the tenant for a period of one year from the date of sale, and if no claim is made or action commenced by the tenant for the recovery thereof prior to the expiration of that period of time, the balance shall be the property of the landlord, including any interest paid on the income.

(3) This section does not apply to the disposition of property of a deceased tenant. RCW 59.18.595 governs the disposition of property on the death of a tenant when the tenant is the sole occupant of the dwelling unit. [2015 c 264 s 4; 2011 c 132 s 16; 1991 c 220 s 1; 1989 c 342 s 10; 1983 c 264 s 8; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 31.]

RCW 59.18.312 Writ of restitution—Storage and sale of tenant's property—Use of proceeds from sale—Service by sheriff, form. (1) A landlord shall, upon the execution of a writ of restitution by the sheriff, enter and take possession of any property of the tenant found on the premises. The landlord may store the property in any reasonably secure place, including the premises, and sell or dispose of the property as provided under subsection (3) of this section. The landlord must store the property if the tenant serves a written request to do so on the landlord or the landlord's representative by any of the methods described in RCW 59.18.365 no later than three days after service of the writ. A landlord may elect to store the property without such a request unless the tenant or the tenant's representative objects to the storage of the property. If the tenant or the tenant's representative objects to the storage of the property or the landlord elects not to store the property because the tenant has not served a written request on the landlord to do so, the property shall be deposited upon the nearest public property and may not be stored by the landlord. If the landlord knows that the tenant is a person with a disability as defined in RCW 49.60.040 (as amended by chapter 317, Laws of 2007) and the disability impairs or prevents the tenant or the tenant's representative from making a written request for storage, it must be presumed that the tenant has requested the storage of the property as provided in this section unless the tenant objects in writing.

(2) Property stored under this section shall be returned to the tenant after the tenant has paid the actual or reasonable drayage and

storage costs, whichever is less, or until it is sold or disposed of by the landlord in accordance with subsection (3) of this section.

(3) Prior to the sale of property stored pursuant to this section with a cumulative value of over $250, the landlord shall notify the tenant of the pending sale. After 30 days from the date the notice of the sale is mailed or personally delivered to the tenant's last known address, the landlord may sell the property, including personal papers, family pictures, and keepsakes, and dispose of any property not sold.

If the property that is being stored has a cumulative value of $250 or less, then the landlord may sell or dispose of the property in the manner provided in this section, except for personal papers, family pictures, and keepsakes. Prior to the sale or disposal of property stored pursuant to this section with a cumulative value of $250 or less, the landlord shall notify the tenant of the pending sale or disposal. The notice shall either be mailed to the tenant's last known address or personally delivered to the tenant. After seven days from the date the notice is mailed or delivered to the tenant, the landlord may sell or dispose of the property.

The landlord may apply any income derived from the sale of the tenant's property against moneys due the landlord for drayage and storage of the property. The amount of sale proceeds that the landlord may apply towards such costs may not exceed the actual or reasonable costs for drayage and storage of the property, whichever is less. Any excess income derived from the sale of such property shall be held by the landlord for the benefit of the tenant for a period of one year from the date of the sale. If no claim is made or action commenced by the tenant for the recovery of the excess income prior to the expiration of that period of time, then the balance shall be treated as abandoned property and deposited by the landlord with the department of revenue pursuant to chapter 63.30 RCW.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed as creating a right of distress for rent.

(5) When serving a tenant with a writ of restitution pursuant to RCW 59.12.100 and 59.18.410, the sheriff shall provide written notice to the tenant that: (a) Upon execution of the writ, the landlord must store the tenant's property only if the tenant serves a written request on the landlord to do so no later than three days after service of the writ; (b) the notice to the landlord requesting storage may be served by personally delivering or mailing a copy of the request to the landlord at the address identified in, or by facsimile to the facsimile number listed on, the form described under subsection (6) of this section; (c) if the tenant has not made such a written request to the landlord, the landlord may elect to either store the tenant's property or place the tenant's property on the nearest public property unless the tenant objects; (d) if the property is stored, it may not be returned to the tenant unless the tenant pays the actual or reasonable costs of drayage and storage, whichever is less, within 30 days; (e) if the tenant or the tenant's representative objects to storage of the property, it will not be stored but will be placed on the nearest public property; and (f) the landlord may sell or otherwise dispose of the property as provided in subsection (3) of this section if the landlord provides written notice to the tenant first.

(6) When serving a tenant with a writ of restitution under subsection (5) of this section, the sheriff shall also serve the tenant with a form provided by the landlord that can be used to

request the landlord to store the tenant's property, which must be substantially in the following form:

REQUEST FOR STORAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

. . . . . .
Name of Plaintiff

. . . . . .
Name(s) of Tenant(s)

I/we hereby request the landlord to store our personal property. I/we understand that I/we am/are responsible for the actual or reasonable costs of moving and storing the property, whichever is less. If I/we fail to pay these costs, the landlord may sell or dispose of the property pursuant to and within the time frame permitted under RCW 59.18.312(3).

Any notice of sale required under RCW 59.18.312(3) must be sent to the tenants at the following address:

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

IF NO ADDRESS IS PROVIDED, NOTICE OF SALE WILL BE SENT TO THE LAST KNOWN ADDRESS OF THE TENANT(S)

Dated: . . . . . .

. . . . . .
Tenant-Print Name

. . . . . .
Tenant-Print Name

This notice may be delivered or mailed to the landlord or the landlord's representative at the following address:

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

This notice may also be served by facsimile to the landlord or the landlord's representative at:

. . . . . .
Facsimile Number

IMPORTANT

IF YOU WANT YOUR LANDLORD TO STORE YOUR PROPERTY, THIS WRITTEN REQUEST MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE LANDLORD NO LATER THAN THREE (3) DAYS AFTER THE SHERIFF SERVES THE WRIT OF RESTITUTION. YOU SHOULD RETAIN PROOF OF SERVICE. [2023 c 258 s 6; 2011 c 132 s 17; 2008 c 43 s 1; 1992 c 38 s 8.]

Retroactive application—2023 c 258 ss 2-8, 10, and 11: See note following RCW 19.150.060.

Intent—Effective date—1992 c 38: See notes following RCW 59.18.352.

RCW 59.18.315 Mediation of disputes by independent third party. The landlord and tenant may agree in writing to submit any dispute arising under the provisions of this chapter or under the terms, conditions, or performance of the rental agreement, to mediation by an independent third party. The parties may agree to submit any dispute to mediation before exercising their right to arbitration under RCW 59.18.320. [1983 c 264 s 11.]

RCW 59.18.320 Arbitration—Authorized—Exceptions—Notice—Procedure. (1) The landlord and tenant may agree, in writing, except as provided in *RCW 59.18.230(2)(e), to submit to arbitration, in conformity with the provisions of this section, any controversy arising under the provisions of this chapter, except the following:

(a) Controversies regarding the existence of defects covered in subsections (1) and (2) of RCW 59.18.070: PROVIDED, That this exception shall apply only before the implementation of any remedy by the tenant;

(b) Any situation where court action has been started by either landlord or tenant to enforce rights under this chapter; when the court action substantially affects the controversy, including but not limited to:

(i) Court action pursuant to subsections (2) and (3) of RCW 59.18.090 and subsections (1) and (2) of RCW 59.18.160; and

(ii) Any unlawful detainer action filed by the landlord pursuant to chapter 59.12 RCW.

(2) The party initiating arbitration under subsection (1) of this section shall give reasonable notice to the other party or parties.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the arbitration process shall be administered by any arbitrator agreed upon by the parties at the time the dispute arises: PROVIDED, That the procedures shall comply with the requirements of chapter 7.04A RCW (relating to arbitration) and of this chapter. [2005 c 433 s 45; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 32.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 59.18.230 was amended by 2025 c 206 s 1, changing subsection (2)(e) to subsection (2)(g).

Application—Captions not law—Savings—Effective date—2005 c 433: See RCW 7.04A.290 through 7.04A.310 and 7.04A.900.

RCW 59.18.330 Arbitration—Application—Hearings—Decisions. (1) Unless otherwise mutually agreed to, in the event a controversy arises under RCW 59.18.320 the landlord or tenant, or both, shall complete an application for arbitration and deliver it to the selected arbitrator.

(2) The arbitrator so designated shall schedule a hearing to be held no later than ten days following receipt of notice of the controversy, except as provided in RCW 59.18.350.

(3) The arbitrator shall conduct public or private hearings. Reasonable notice of such hearings shall be given to the parties, who shall appear and be heard either in person or by counsel or other representative. Hearings shall be informal and the rules of evidence

prevailing in judicial proceedings shall not be binding. A recording of the proceedings may be taken. Any oral or documentary evidence and other data deemed relevant by the arbitrator may be received in evidence. The arbitrator shall have the power to administer oaths, to issue subpoenas, to require the attendance of witnesses and the production of such books, papers, contracts, agreements, and documents as may be deemed by the arbitrator material to a just determination of the issues in dispute. If any person refuses to obey such subpoena or refuses to be sworn to testify, or any witness, party, or attorney is guilty of any contempt while in attendance at any hearing held hereunder, the arbitrator may invoke the jurisdiction of any superior court, and such court shall have jurisdiction to issue an appropriate order. A failure to obey such order may be punished by the court as a contempt thereof.

(4) Within five days after conclusion of the hearing, the arbitrator shall make a written decision upon the issues presented, a copy of which shall be mailed by certified mail or otherwise delivered to the parties or their designated representatives. The determination of the dispute made by the arbitrator shall be final and binding upon both parties.

(5) If a defective condition exists which affects more than one dwelling unit in a similar manner, the arbitrator may consolidate the issues of fact common to those dwelling units in a single proceeding.

(6) Decisions of the arbitrator shall be enforced or appealed according to the provisions of chapter 7.04A RCW. [2005 c 433 s 46; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 33.]

Application—Captions not law—Savings—Effective date—2005 c 433: See RCW 7.04A.290 through 7.04A.310 and 7.04A.900.

RCW 59.18.340 Arbitration—Fee. The administrative fee for this arbitration procedure shall be established by agreement of the parties and the arbitrator and, unless otherwise allocated by the arbitrator, shall be shared equally by the parties: PROVIDED, That upon either party signing an affidavit to the effect that he or she is unable to pay his or her share of the fee, that portion of the fee may be waived or deferred. [2010 c 8 s 19030; 1983 c 264 s 12; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 34.]

RCW 59.18.350 Arbitration—Completion of arbitration after giving notice. When a party gives notice pursuant to RCW 59.18.320(2), he or she must, at the same time, arrange for arbitration of the grievance in the manner provided for in this chapter. The arbitration shall be completed before the rental due date next occurring after the giving of notice pursuant to RCW 59.18.320: PROVIDED, That in no event shall the arbitrator have less than ten days to complete the arbitration process. [2010 c 8 s 19031; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 35.]

RCW 59.18.352 Threatening behavior by tenant—Termination of agreement—Written notice—Financial obligations. If a tenant notifies the landlord that he or she, or another tenant who shares that particular dwelling unit has been threatened by another tenant, and:

(1) The threat was made with a firearm or other deadly weapon as defined in RCW 9A.04.110; and

(2) The tenant who made the threat is arrested as a result of the threatening behavior; and

(3) The landlord fails to file an unlawful detainer action against the tenant who threatened another tenant within seven calendar days after receiving notice of the arrest from a law enforcement agency;

then the tenant who was threatened may terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises upon written notice to the landlord without further obligation under the rental agreement.

A tenant who terminates a rental agreement under this section is discharged from payment of rent for any period following the quitting date, and is entitled to a pro rata refund of any prepaid rent, and shall receive a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any of the deposit together with any refund due in accordance with RCW 59.18.280.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a landlord to terminate a rental agreement or file an unlawful detainer action. [1992 c 38 s 5.]

Intent—1992 c 38: "The legislature recognizes that tenants have a number of duties under the residential landlord-tenant act. These duties include the duty to pay rent and give sufficient notice before terminating the tenancy, the duty to pay drayage and storage costs under certain circumstances, and the duty to not create a nuisance or common waste. The legislature finds that tenants are sometimes threatened by other tenants with firearms or other deadly weapons. Some landlords refuse to evict those tenants who threaten the well-being of other tenants even after an arrest has been made for the threatening behavior. The legislature also finds that some tenants who hold protective orders are still subjected to threats and acts of domestic violence. These tenants with protective orders must sometimes move quickly so that the person being restrained does not know where they reside. Tenants who move out of dwelling units because they fear for their safety often forfeit their damage deposit and last month's rent because they did not provide the requisite notice to terminate the tenancy. Some tenants remain in unsafe situations because they cannot afford to lose the money held as a deposit by the landlord. There is no current mechanism that authorizes the suspension of the tenant's duty to give the requisite notice before terminating a tenancy if they are endangered by others. There also is no current mechanism that imposes a duty on the tenant to pay drayage and storage costs when the landlord stores his or her property after an eviction. It is the intent of the legislature to provide a mechanism for tenants who are threatened to terminate their tenancies without suffering undue economic loss, to provide additional mechanisms to allow landlords to evict tenants who endanger others, and to establish a mechanism for tenants to pay drayage and storage costs under certain circumstances when the landlord stores the tenant's property after an eviction." [1992 c 38 s 1.]

Effective date—1992 c 38: "This act shall take effect June 1, 1992." [1992 c 38 s 11.]

RCW 59.18.354 Threatening behavior by landlord—Termination of agreement—Financial obligations. If a tenant is threatened by the landlord with a firearm or other deadly weapon as defined in RCW 9A.04.110, and the threat leads to an arrest of the landlord, then the tenant may terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises without further obligation under the rental agreement. The tenant is discharged from payment of rent for any period following the quitting date, and is entitled to a pro rata refund of any prepaid rent, and shall receive a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any of the deposit together with any refund due in accordance with RCW 59.18.280. [1992 c 38 s 6.]

Intent—Effective date—1992 c 38: See notes following RCW 59.18.352.

RCW 59.18.360 Exemptions. A landlord and tenant may agree, in writing, to exempt themselves from the provisions of RCW 59.18.060, 59.18.100, 59.18.110, 59.18.120, 59.18.130, and 59.18.190 if the following conditions have been met:

(1) The agreement may not appear in a standard form lease or rental agreement;

(2) There is no substantial inequality in the bargaining position of the two parties;

(3) The exemption does not violate the public policy of this state in favor of the ensuring safe, and sanitary housing; and

(4) Either the local county prosecutor's office or the consumer protection division of the attorney general's office or the attorney for the tenant has approved in writing the application for exemption as complying with subsections (1) through (3) of this section. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 36.]

RCW 59.18.363 Unlawful detainer action—Distressed home, previously. In an unlawful detainer action involving property that was a distressed home:

(1) The plaintiff shall disclose to the court whether the defendant previously held title to the property that was a distressed home, and explain how the plaintiff came to acquire title;

(2) A defendant who previously held title to the property that was a distressed home shall not be required to escrow any money pending trial when a material question of fact exists as to whether the plaintiff acquired title from the defendant directly or indirectly through a distressed home conveyance;

(3) There must be both an automatic stay of the action and a consolidation of the action with a pending or subsequent quiet title action when a defendant claims that the plaintiff acquired title to the property through a distressed home conveyance. [2008 c 278 s 13.]

RCW 59.18.365 Unlawful detainer action—Summons—Form. (1) The summons must contain the names of the parties to the proceeding, the attorney or attorneys if any, the court in which the same is brought, the nature of the action, in concise terms, and the relief sought, and also the return day; and must notify the defendant to appear and answer within the time designated or that the relief sought will be

taken against him or her. The summons must contain a street address for service of the notice of appearance or answer and, if available, a facsimile number for the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney, if represented. The summons must be served and returned in the same manner as a summons in other actions is served and returned.

(2) A defendant may serve a copy of an answer or notice of appearance by any of the following methods:

(a) By delivering a copy of the answer or notice of appearance to the person who signed the summons at the street address listed on the summons;

(b) By mailing a copy of the answer or notice of appearance addressed to the person who signed the summons to the street address listed on the summons;

(c) By facsimile to the facsimile number listed on the summons. Service by facsimile is complete upon successful transmission to the facsimile number listed upon the summons;

(d) As otherwise authorized by the superior court civil rules.

(3) The summons for unlawful detainer actions for tenancies covered by this chapter shall be substantially in the following form:

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND
FOR . . . . . COUNTY

Plaintiff/ Landlord/ Owner,	NO.
vs.	EVICTION SUMMONS
Defendant/ Tenant/ Occupant.	(Residential)

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT LEGAL DOCUMENT TO EVICT YOU.
YOUR **WRITTEN**
RESPONSE MUST BE RECEIVED BY: 5:00 p.m., on . . . . . .

TO: . . . . . (Defendant's Name)
. . . . . (Defendant's Address)

GET HELP: If you do not respond by the deadline above, you will lose your right to defend yourself or be represented by a lawyer if you cannot afford one in court and could be evicted. The court may be able to appoint a lawyer to represent you without cost to you if you are low-income and are unable to afford a lawyer. If you believe you are a qualifying low-income renter and would like an attorney appointed to represent you, please contact the Eviction Defense Screening Line at 855-657-8387 or apply online at https://nwjustice.org/apply-online. For additional resources, you may call 2-1-1 or the Northwest Justice Project CLEAR Hotline outside King County (888) 201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., or (888) 387-7111 for seniors (age 60 and over). You may find additional information to help you at http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org. Free or low-cost mediation services to assist in nonpayment of rent disputes before any judicial proceedings occur are also available at dispute resolution centers throughout the state. You can find your nearest dispute resolution center at https://www.resolutionwa.org.

HOW TO RESPOND: Phone calls to your Landlord or your Landlord's lawyer are not a response. You may respond with a "notice of appearance." This is a letter that includes the following:

(1) A statement that you are appearing in the court case

(2) Names of the landlord(s) and the tenant(s) (as listed above)

(3) Your name, your address where legal documents may be sent, your signature, phone number (if any), and case number (if the case is filed)

This case ☐ is / ☐ is not filed with the court. If this case is filed, you need to also file your response with the court by delivering a copy to the clerk of the court at: . . . . . (Clerk's Office/Address/Room number/Business hours of court clerk)

WHERE TO RESPOND: You must mail, fax, or hand deliver your response letter to your Landlord's lawyer, or if no lawyer is named in the complaint, to your Landlord. If you mail the response letter, you must do it 3 days before the deadline above. Request receipt of a proof of mailing from the post office. If you hand deliver or fax it, you must do it by the deadline above. The address is:

. . . . . (Attorney/Landlord Name)

. . . . . (Address)

. . . . . (Fax - required if available)

COURT DATE: If you respond to this Summons, you will be notified of your hearing date in a document called an "Order to Show Cause." This is usually mailed to you. If you get notice of a hearing, **you must go to the hearing**. If you do not show up, your landlord can evict you. Your landlord might also charge you more money. If you move before the court date, you must tell your landlord or the landlord's attorney. [2021 c 115 s 11; 2020 c 315 s 4; 2019 c 356 s 9; 2008 c 75 s 1; 2006 c 51 s 1; 2005 c 130 s 3; 1989 c 342 s 15.]

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.367 Unlawful detainer action—Limited dissemination authorized, when. (1) A court may order an unlawful detainer action to be of limited dissemination for one or more persons if: (a) The court finds that the plaintiff's case was sufficiently without basis in fact or law; (b) the tenancy was reinstated under RCW 59.18.410 or other law; or (c) other good cause exists for limiting dissemination of the unlawful detainer action.

(2) An order to limit dissemination of an unlawful detainer action must be in writing.

(3) When an order for limited dissemination of an unlawful detainer action has been entered with respect to a person, a tenant screening service provider must not: (a) Disclose the existence of that unlawful detainer action in a tenant screening report pertaining to the person for whom dissemination has been limited, or (b) use the unlawful detainer action as a factor in determining any score or recommendation to be included in a tenant screening report pertaining to the person for whom dissemination has been limited. [2016 c 66 s 3.]

RCW 59.18.368 Unlawful detainer action—Residential tenancies. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, in each county the superior court may appoint the following persons to assist the superior court in disposing of its business related to unlawful detainer actions for residential tenancies covered by this chapter and chapter 59.20 RCW:

(a) One or more attorneys to act as housing court commissioners; and

(b) Such investigators, stenographers, and clerks as the court finds necessary to carry on the work of the housing court commissioners.

(2) The position of a housing court commissioner may not be created without prior consent of the county legislative authority.

(3) The appointments provided for in this section are made by a majority vote of the judges of the superior court of the county and may be in addition to all other appointments of commissioners and other judicial attaches otherwise authorized by law.

(4) The appointments may be full-time or part-time positions. A person appointed as a housing court commissioner may also be appointed to any other commissioner position authorized by law.

(5) Housing court commissioners and investigators serve at the pleasure of the judges appointing them and receive such compensation as the county legislative authority shall determine.

(6) A person appointed as a housing court commissioner shall comply with the fairness and impartiality standards established in RCW 3.34.110.

(7)(a) A person appointed as a housing court commissioner will receive training as soon as reasonably practicable but no sooner than July 26, 2025, from the administrative office of the courts on the following topics:

(i) The residential landlord-tenant act, this chapter;

(ii) The manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act, chapter 59.20 RCW;

(iii) Show cause hearing processes in the context of evictions and unlawful detainer actions; and

(iv) Unlawful detainer procedures, chapter 59.16 RCW.

(b) The administrative office of the courts may coordinate with the office of civil legal aid to develop and deliver the training described in (a) of this subsection. [2025 c 268 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—2025 c 268: "The legislature finds that nearly 40 percent of Washington households are renter households. Washington is one of the most expensive rental markets in the country. Rent increases are outpacing incomes, disproportionately impacting: Seniors; Black, indigenous, and people of color households; and families with children, and are a significant cause of homelessness. As of November 2024, Washington was experiencing the highest eviction filing count on record, with 23,000 filings and with nine counties already breaking records, including Clark, Grant, Jefferson, King, Klickitat, Okanogan, Spokane, Thurston, and Whitman. Seven additional counties were also on track to break records in 2024, including Asotin, Columbia, Douglas, Kittitas, Pend Oreille, Skagit, and Walla Walla.

A significant surge in unlawful detainer filings has contributed to delays in court proceedings and case resolutions, creating additional burdens for both landlords and tenants.

The legislature further finds that the right to counsel program in eviction proceedings provides a vital safety net for low-income renters, providing access to attorneys to ensure procedural fairness in court and significantly reducing the risk of housing loss and evictions into homelessness. Since January 2022, every tenant screened and found eligible has been assigned an attorney through an eviction defense provider contracted by the office of civil legal aid. Of the clients served, 39 percent had a disability and 45 percent were Black, indigenous, and people of color.

It is the intent of the legislature to address delays in court proceedings by authorizing superior courts, with the consent of the county legislative authority, to appoint well-trained and unbiased court commissioners who can hear unlawful detainer cases.

The legislature respectfully requests that superior courts continue to closely coordinate their dockets with right to counsel assignments for eligible defendants in unlawful detainer cases, and encourages the courts to give consideration to the availability of right to counsel attorneys when expanding their dockets." [2025 c 268 s 1.]

Effective date—2025 c 268: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 13, 2025]." [2025 c 268 s 5.]

RCW 59.18.369 Unlawful detainer action—Housing court commissioner duties. (1) By majority vote, the judges of the superior court of the county may authorize housing court commissioners appointed pursuant to RCW 59.18.368 to perform any and all of the following duties in an unlawful detainer action under this chapter:

(a) Receive all applications, petitions, and proceedings filed in the superior court related to unlawful detainer actions for residential tenancies covered by this chapter;

(b) Order investigation and reporting of facts upon which to base warrants, subpoenas, orders, or directions in actions or proceedings related to unlawful detainer actions for residential tenancies covered by this chapter;

(c) For the purpose of this chapter, exercise all powers and perform all the duties of a court commissioner appointed pursuant to RCW 2.24.010(1);

(d) Hold hearings in proceedings related to unlawful detainer cases for residential tenancies covered by this chapter and make written reports of all such proceedings, which shall become a part of the record of the superior court;

(e) Provide such supervision in connection with the exercise of its jurisdiction as may be ordered by the presiding judge; and

(f) Cause the orders and findings to be entered in the same manner as orders and findings are entered in cases in the superior court.

(2) All acts and proceedings of a housing court commissioner are subject to revision by the superior court as provided in RCW 2.24.050. [2025 c 268 s 3.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2025 c 268: See notes following RCW 59.18.368.

RCW 59.18.370 Forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer actions—Writ of restitution—Application—Order—Hearing. The plaintiff, at the time of commencing an action of forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer, or at any time afterwards, upon filing the complaint, may apply to the superior court in which the action is pending for an order directing the defendant to appear and show cause, if any he or she has, why a writ of restitution should not issue restoring to the plaintiff possession of the property in the complaint described, and the judge shall by order fix a time and place for a hearing of the motion, which shall not be less than seven nor more than thirty days from the date of service of the order upon defendant. A copy of the order, together with a copy of the summons and complaint if not previously served upon the defendant, shall be served upon the defendant. The order shall notify the defendant that if he or she fails to appear and show cause at the time and place specified by the order the court may order the sheriff to restore possession of the property to the plaintiff and may grant such other relief as may be prayed for in the complaint and provided by this chapter. [2005 c 130 s 2; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 38.]

RCW 59.18.380 Forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer actions—Writ of restitution—Answer—Order—Stay—Bond. At the time and place fixed for the hearing of plaintiff's motion for a writ of restitution, the defendant, or any person in possession or claiming possession of the property, may answer, orally or in writing, and assert any legal or equitable defense or set-off arising out of the tenancy. If the answer is oral the substance thereof shall be endorsed on the complaint by the court. The court shall examine the parties and witnesses orally to ascertain the merits of the complaint and answer, and if it shall appear that the plaintiff has the right to be restored to possession of the property, the court shall enter an order directing the issuance of a writ of restitution, returnable ten days after its date, restoring to the plaintiff possession of the property and if it shall appear to the court that there is no substantial issue of material fact of the right of the plaintiff to be granted other relief as prayed for in the complaint and provided for in this chapter, the court may enter an order and judgment granting so much of such relief as may be sustained by the proof, and the court may grant such other relief as may be prayed for in the plaintiff's complaint and provided for in this chapter, then the court shall enter an order denying any relief sought by the plaintiff for which the court has determined that the plaintiff has no right as a matter of law: PROVIDED, That within three days after the service of the writ of restitution issued prior to final judgment, the defendant, or person in possession of the property, may, in any action for the recovery of possession of the property for failure to pay rent, stay the execution of the writ pending final judgment by paying into court or to the plaintiff, as the court directs, all rent found to be due, and in addition by paying, on a monthly basis pending final judgment, an amount equal to the monthly rent called for by the lease or rental agreement at the time the complaint was filed: PROVIDED FURTHER, That before any writ shall issue prior to final judgment the plaintiff shall execute to the defendant and file in the court a bond in such sum as the court may order, with sufficient surety to be approved by the clerk, conditioned that the plaintiff will prosecute his or her

action without delay, and will pay all costs that may be adjudged to the defendant, and all damages which he or she may sustain by reason of the writ of restitution having been issued, should the same be wrongfully sued out. The court shall also enter an order directing the parties to proceed to trial on the complaint and answer in the usual manner.

If it appears to the court that the plaintiff should not be restored to possession of the property, the court shall deny plaintiff's motion for a writ of restitution and enter an order directing the parties to proceed to trial within thirty days on the complaint and answer. If it appears to the court that there is a substantial issue of material fact as to whether or not the plaintiff is entitled to other relief as is prayed for in plaintiff's complaint and provided for in this chapter, or that there is a genuine issue of a material fact pertaining to a legal or equitable defense or set-off raised in the defendant's answer, the court shall grant or deny so much of plaintiff's other relief sought and so much of defendant's defenses or set-off claimed, as may be proper. [2011 c 132 s 18; 2010 c 8 s 19032; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 39.]

RCW 59.18.390 Forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer actions—Writ of restitution—Service—Tenant's bond—Notice. (1) The sheriff shall, upon receiving the writ of restitution, forthwith serve a copy thereof upon the tenant, his or her agent, or attorney, or a person in possession of the premises, and shall not execute the same for three days thereafter. After the issuance of a writ of restitution, acceptance of a payment by the landlord that only partially satisfies the judgment will not invalidate the writ unless pursuant to a written agreement executed by both parties. The eviction will not be postponed or stopped unless a copy of that written agreement is provided to the sheriff. It is the responsibility of the tenant to ensure a copy of the agreement is provided to the sheriff. Upon receipt of the agreement, the sheriff will cease action unless ordered to do otherwise by the court. The writ of restitution and the notice that accompanies the writ of restitution required under RCW 59.18.312 shall conspicuously state in boldface type, all capitals, not less than twelve points information about partial payments as set forth in subsection (2) of this section. If the writ of restitution has been based upon a finding by the court that the tenant, subtenant, sublessee, or a person residing at the rental premises has engaged in drug-related activity or has allowed any other person to engage in drug-related activity at those premises with his or her knowledge or approval, neither the tenant nor a person in possession of the premises shall be entitled to post a bond in order to retain possession of the premises. The writ may be served by the sheriff, in the event he or she shall be unable to find the tenant, an agent or attorney, or a person in possession of the premises, by affixing a copy of the writ in a conspicuous place upon the premises: PROVIDED, That the sheriff shall not require any bond for the service or execution of the writ. The sheriff shall be immune from all civil liability for serving and enforcing writs of restitution unless the sheriff is grossly negligent in carrying out his or her duty.

(2) The notice accompanying a writ of restitution required under RCW 59.18.312 shall be substantially similar to the following:

IMPORTANT NOTICE - PARTIAL PAYMENTS

YOUR LANDLORD'S ACCEPTANCE OF A PARTIAL PAYMENT FROM YOU AFTER SERVICE OF THIS WRIT OF RESTITUTION WILL NOT AUTOMATICALLY POSTPONE OR STOP YOUR EVICTION. IF YOU HAVE A WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH YOUR LANDLORD THAT THE EVICTION WILL BE POSTPONED OR STOPPED, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE A COPY OF THE AGREEMENT TO THE SHERIFF. THE SHERIFF WILL NOT CEASE ACTION UNLESS YOU PROVIDE A COPY OF THE AGREEMENT. AT THE DIRECTION OF THE COURT THE SHERIFF MAY TAKE FURTHER ACTION. [2019 c 356 s 8; 2011 c 132 s 19; 1997 c 255 s 1; 1989 c 342 s 11; 1988 c 150 s 3; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 40.]

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

Legislative findings—Severability—1988 c 150: See notes following RCW 59.18.130.

RCW 59.18.400 Forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer actions—Writ of restitution—Answer of defendant. On or before the day fixed for his appearance the defendant may appear and answer. The defendant in his answer may assert any legal or equitable defense or set-off arising out of the tenancy. If the complaint alleges that the tenancy should be terminated because the defendant tenant, subtenant, sublessee, or resident engaged in drug-related activity, or allowed any other person to engage in drug-related activity at the rental premises with his or her knowledge or consent, no set-off shall be allowed as a defense to the complaint. [1988 c 150 s 4; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 41.]

Legislative findings—Severability—1988 c 150: See notes following RCW 59.18.130.

RCW 59.18.410 Forcible entry or detainer or unlawful detainer actions—Notice of default—Writ of restitution—Judgment—Execution. (1) If at trial the verdict of the jury or, if the case is tried without a jury, the finding of the court is in favor of the landlord and against the tenant, judgment shall be entered for the restitution of the premises; and if the proceeding is for unlawful detainer after neglect or failure to perform any condition or covenant of a lease or agreement under which the property is held, or after default in the payment of rent, the judgment shall also declare the forfeiture of the lease, agreement, or tenancy. The jury, or the court, if the proceedings are tried without a jury, shall also assess the damages arising out of the tenancy occasioned to the landlord by any forcible entry, or by any forcible or unlawful detainer, alleged in the complaint and proved at trial, and, if the alleged unlawful detainer is based on default in the payment of rent, find the amount of any rent due, and the judgment shall be rendered against the tenant liable for the forcible entry, forcible detainer, or unlawful detainer for the amount of damages thus assessed, for the rent, if any, found due, and late fees if such fees are due under the lease and do not exceed $75 in total. The court may award statutory costs. The court may also award reasonable attorneys' fees as provided in RCW 59.18.290.

(2) When the tenant is liable for unlawful detainer after a default in the payment of rent, execution upon the judgment shall not occur until the expiration of five court days after the entry of the

judgment. Before entry of a judgment or until five court days have expired after entry of the judgment, unless the tenant provides a pledge of financial assistance letter from a government or nonprofit entity, in which case the tenant has until the date of eviction, the tenant or any subtenant, or any mortgagee of the term, or other party interested in the continuance of the tenancy, may pay into court or to the landlord the amount of the rent due, any court costs incurred at the time of payment, late fees if such fees are due under the lease and do not exceed $75 in total, and attorneys' fees if awarded, in which event any judgment entered shall be satisfied and the tenant restored to his or her tenancy. If the tenant seeks to restore his or her tenancy after entry of a judgment, the tenant may tender the amount stated within the judgment as long as that amount does not exceed the amount authorized under subsection (1) of this section. If a tenant seeks to restore his or her tenancy and pay the amount set forth in this subsection with funds acquired through an emergency rental assistance program provided by a governmental or nonprofit entity, the tenant shall provide a copy of the pledge of emergency rental assistance provided from the appropriate governmental or nonprofit entity and have an opportunity to exercise such rights under this subsection, which may include a stay of judgment and provision by the landlord of documentation necessary for processing the assistance. The landlord shall accept any pledge of emergency rental assistance funds provided to the tenant from a governmental or nonprofit entity before the expiration of any pay or vacate notice for nonpayment of rent for the full amount of the rent owing under the rental agreement. The landlord shall accept any written pledge of emergency rental assistance funds provided to the tenant from a governmental or nonprofit entity after the expiration of the pay or vacate notice if the pledge will contribute to the total payment of both the amount of rent due, including any current rent, and other amounts if required under this subsection. The landlord shall suspend any court action for 14 court days after providing necessary payment information to the nonprofit or governmental entity to allow for payment of the emergency rental assistance funds. By accepting such pledge of emergency rental assistance, the landlord is not required to enter into any additional conditions not related to the provision of necessary payment information and documentation. If a judgment has been satisfied, the landlord shall file a satisfaction of judgment with the court. A tenant seeking to exercise rights under this subsection shall pay an additional $50 for each time the tenant was reinstated after judgment pursuant to this subsection within the previous 12 months prior to payment. If payment of the amount specified in this subsection is not made within five court days after the entry of the judgment, the judgment may be enforced for its full amount and for the possession of the premises.

(3)(a) Following the entry of a judgment in favor of the landlord and against the tenant for the restitution of the premises and forfeiture of the tenancy due to nonpayment of rent, the court, at the time of the show cause hearing or trial, or upon subsequent motion of the tenant but before the execution of the writ of restitution, may stay the writ of restitution upon good cause and on such terms that the court deems fair and just for both parties. In making this decision, the court shall consider evidence of the following factors:

(i) The tenant's willful or intentional default or intentional failure to pay rent;

(ii) Whether nonpayment of the rent was caused by exigent circumstances that were beyond the tenant's control and that are not likely to recur;

(iii) The tenant's ability to timely pay the judgment;

(iv) The tenant's payment history;

(v) Whether the tenant is otherwise in substantial compliance with the rental agreement;

(vi) Hardship on the tenant if evicted; and

(vii) Conduct related to other notices served within the last six months.

(b) The burden of proof for such relief under this subsection (3) shall be on the tenant. If the tenant seeks relief pursuant to this subsection (3) at the time of the show cause hearing, the court shall hear the matter at the time of the show cause hearing or as expeditiously as possible so as to avoid unnecessary delay or hardship on the parties.

(c) In any order issued pursuant to this subsection (3):

(i) The court shall not stay the writ of restitution more than 90 days from the date of order, but may order repayment of the judgment balance within such time. If the payment plan is to exceed 30 days, the total cumulative payments for each 30-day period following the order shall be no less than one month of the tenant's share of the rent, and the total amount of the judgment and all additional rent that is due shall be paid within 90 days.

(ii) Within any payment plan ordered by the court, the court shall require the tenant to pay to the landlord or to the court one month's rent within five court days of issuance of the order. If the date of the order is on or before the 15th of the month, the tenant shall remain current with ongoing rental payments as they become due for the duration of the payment plan; if the date of the order is after the 15th of the month, the tenant shall have the option to apportion the following month's rental payment within the payment plan, but monthly rental payments thereafter shall be paid according to the rental agreement.

(iii) The sheriff may serve the writ of restitution upon the tenant before the expiration of the five court days of issuance of the order; however, the sheriff shall not execute the writ of restitution until after expiration of the five court days in order for payment to be made of one month's rent as required by (c)(ii) of this subsection. In the event payment is made as provided in (c)(ii) of this subsection for one month's rent, the court shall stay the writ of restitution ex parte without prior notice to the landlord upon the tenant filing and presenting a motion to stay with a declaration of proof of payment demonstrating full compliance with the required payment of one month's rent. Any order staying the writ of restitution under this subsection (3)(c)(iii) shall require the tenant to serve a copy of the order on the landlord by personal delivery, first-class mail, facsimile, or email if agreed to by the parties.

(A) If the tenant has satisfied (c)(ii) of this subsection by paying one month's rent within five court days, but defaults on a subsequent payment required by the court pursuant to this subsection (3)(c), the landlord may enforce the writ of restitution after serving a notice of default in accordance with RCW 59.12.040 informing the tenant that he or she has defaulted on rent due under the lease agreement or payment plan entered by the court. Upon service of the notice of default, the tenant shall have three calendar days from the

date of service to vacate the premises before the sheriff may execute the writ of restitution.

(B) If the landlord serves the notice of default described under this subsection (3)(c)(iii), an additional day is not included in calculating the time before the sheriff may execute the writ of restitution. The notice of default must be in substantially the following form:

NOTICE OF DEFAULT FOR RENT AND/OR PAYMENT PLAN ORDERED BY COURT

NAME(S)
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP

THIS IS NOTICE THAT YOU ARE IN DEFAULT OF YOUR RENT AND/OR PAYMENT PLAN ORDERED BY THE COURT. YOUR LANDLORD HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING PAYMENTS:

DATE
AMOUNT
DATE
AMOUNT
DATE
AMOUNT

THE LANDLORD MAY SCHEDULE YOUR PHYSICAL EVICTION WITHIN THREE CALENDAR DAYS OF SERVICE OF THIS NOTICE. TO STOP A PHYSICAL EVICTION, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PAY THE BALANCE OF YOUR RENT AND/OR PAYMENT PLAN IN THE AMOUNT OF $. . . . ..
PAYMENT MAY BE MADE TO THE COURT OR TO THE LANDLORD. IF YOU FAIL TO PAY THE BALANCE WITHIN THREE CALENDAR DAYS, THE LANDLORD MAY PROCEED WITH A PHYSICAL EVICTION FOR POSSESSION OF THE UNIT THAT YOU ARE RENTING.

DATE
SIGNATURE
LANDLORD/AGENT
NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE

(iv) If a tenant seeks to satisfy a condition of this subsection (3)(c) by relying on an emergency rental assistance program provided by a government or nonprofit entity and provides an offer of proof, the court shall stay the writ of restitution as necessary to afford the tenant an equal opportunity to comply.

(v) The court shall extend the writ of restitution as necessary to enforce the order issued pursuant to this subsection (3)(c) in the event of default.

(d) A tenant who has been served with three or more notices to pay or vacate for failure to pay rent as set forth in RCW 59.12.040 within twelve months prior to the notice to pay or vacate upon which the proceeding is based may not seek relief under this subsection (3), unless the court determines any of the notices served were invalid or did not otherwise comply with the requirements of this chapter.

(e)(i) In any application seeking relief pursuant to this subsection (3) by either the tenant or landlord, the court shall issue a finding as to whether the tenant is low-income, limited resourced, or experiencing hardship to determine if the parties would be eligible for disbursement through the landlord mitigation program account established within RCW 43.31.605(1)(b). In making this finding, the

court may include an inquiry regarding the tenant's income relative to area median income, household composition, any extenuating circumstances, or other factors, and may rely on written declarations or oral testimony by the parties at the hearing.

(ii) After a finding that the tenant is low-income, limited resourced, or experiencing hardship, the court may issue an order: (A) Finding that the landlord is eligible to receive on behalf of the tenant and may apply for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program; and (B) directing the clerk to remit, without further order of the court, any future payments made by the tenant in order to reimburse the department of commerce pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(1)(b)(iii). In accordance with RCW 43.31.605(1)(b), such an order must be accompanied by a copy of the order staying the writ of restitution. Nothing in this subsection (3)(e) shall be deemed to obligate the department of commerce to provide assistance in claim reimbursement through the landlord mitigation program if there are not sufficient funds.

(iii) If the department of commerce fails to disburse payment to the landlord for the judgment pursuant to this subsection (3)(e) within 30 days from submission of the application, the landlord may renew an application for a writ of restitution pursuant to RCW 59.18.370 and for other rent owed by the tenant since the time of entry of the prior judgment. In such event, the tenant may exercise rights afforded under this section.

(iv) Upon payment by the department of commerce to the landlord for the remaining or total amount of the judgment, as applicable, the judgment is satisfied and the landlord shall file a satisfaction of judgment with the court.

(v) Nothing in this subsection (3)(e) prohibits the landlord from otherwise applying for reimbursement for an unpaid judgment pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(1)(b) after the tenant defaults on a payment plan ordered pursuant to (c) of this subsection.

(vi) If a tenant demonstrates an ability to pay in order to reinstate the tenancy by means of disbursement through the landlord mitigation program account established within RCW 43.31.605(1)(b):

(A) Any restrictions imposed under (d) of this subsection do not apply in determining if a tenant is eligible for reinstatement under this subsection (3); and

(B) Reimbursement on behalf of the tenant to the landlord under RCW 43.31.605(1)(b) may include up to three months of prospective rent to stabilize the tenancy as determined by the court.

(4) If a tenant seeks to stay a writ of restitution issued pursuant to this chapter, the court may issue an ex parte stay of the writ of restitution provided the tenant or tenant's attorney submits a declaration indicating good faith efforts were made to notify the other party or, if no efforts were made, why notice could not be provided prior to the application for an ex parte stay, and describing the immediate or irreparable harm that may result if an immediate stay is not granted. The court shall require service of the order and motion to stay the writ of restitution by personal delivery, mail, facsimile, or other means most likely to afford all parties notice of the court date.

(5) In all other cases the judgment may be enforced immediately. If a writ of restitution shall have been executed prior to judgment no further writ or execution for the premises shall be required.

(6) This section also applies if the writ of restitution is issued pursuant to a final judgment entered after a show cause hearing

conducted in accordance with RCW 59.18.380. [2023 c 336 s 2; 2021 c 115 s 17; 2020 c 315 s 5; 2019 c 356 s 7; 2011 c 132 s 20; 2010 c 8 s 19033; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 42.]

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Effective date—2020 c 315 ss 5-8: "Sections 5 through 8 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and take effect immediately [April 2, 2020]." [2020 c 315 s 9.]

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 59.18.412 Forcible or unlawful detainer proceeding. In any forcible or unlawful detainer proceeding before the court:

(1) Hearings may be conducted in person or remotely in order to enhance access for all parties. At the court's discretion, parties, witnesses, and others authorized by this chapter to participate in forcible or unlawful detainer proceedings may attend a hearing pursuant to this chapter, in person or remotely, including by telephone, video, or other electronic means where possible. The court shall grant any request for a remote appearance unless the court finds good cause to require in-person attendance or attendance through a specific means. Courts shall require assurances of the identity of persons who appear by telephone, video, or other electronic means. Courts may not charge fees for remote appearances. Courts shall provide instructions for remote access either on the official court website or in writing directly to the party requesting to appear remotely, or both.

(2) Any party must be permitted to make an emergency application by phone or videoconference and file such documents by email, fax, or other means that can be performed remotely. [2023 c 336 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.415 Applicability to certain single-family dwelling leases. The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to any lease of a single-family dwelling for a period of a year or more or to any lease of a single-family dwelling containing a bona fide option to purchase by the tenant: PROVIDED, That an attorney for the tenant must approve on the face of the agreement any lease exempted from the provisions of this chapter as provided for in this section. [1989 c 342 s 12; 1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 43.]

RCW 59.18.420 RCW 59.12.090, 59.12.100, 59.12.121, and 59.12.170 inapplicable. The provisions of RCW 59.12.090, 59.12.100, 59.12.121, and 59.12.170 shall not apply to any rental agreement included under the provisions of chapter 59.18 RCW. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 44.]

RCW 59.18.430 Applicability to prior, existing or future leases. RCW 59.18.010 through 59.18.360 and 59.18.900 shall not apply to any lease entered into prior to July 16, 1973. All provisions of this chapter shall apply to any lease or periodic tenancy entered into on or subsequent to July 16, 1973. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 47.]

RCW 59.18.435 Applicability to proprietary leases. This chapter does not apply to any proprietary lease as defined in RCW 64.90.010:

(1) Created after July 1, 2018; or

(2) If the lessor has amended its governing documents to provide that chapter 64.90 RCW will apply to the common interest community pursuant to *RCW 64.90.095. [2018 c 277 s 502.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 64.90.095 was recodified as RCW 64.90.370 pursuant to 2024 c 321 s 510.

Effective date—2018 c 277: See RCW 64.90.910.

RCW 59.18.440 Relocation assistance for low-income tenants—Certain cities, towns, counties, municipal corporations authorized to require. (1) Any city, town, county, or municipal corporation that is required to develop a comprehensive plan under RCW 36.70A.040(1) is authorized to require, after reasonable notice to the public and a public hearing, property owners to provide their portion of reasonable relocation assistance to low-income tenants upon the demolition, substantial rehabilitation whether due to code enforcement or any other reason, or change of use of residential property, or upon the removal of use restrictions in an assisted-housing development. No city, town, county, or municipal corporation may require property owners to provide relocation assistance to low-income tenants, as defined in this chapter, upon the demolition, substantial rehabilitation, upon the change of use of residential property, or upon the removal of use restrictions in an assisted-housing development, except as expressly authorized herein or when authorized or required by state or federal law. As used in this section, "assisted housing development" means a multifamily rental housing development that either receives government assistance and is defined as federally assisted housing in RCW 59.28.020, or that receives other federal, state, or local government assistance and is subject to use restrictions.

(2) As used in this section, "low-income tenants" means tenants whose combined total income per dwelling unit is at or below fifty percent of the median income, adjusted for family size, in the county where the tenants reside.

The department of commerce shall adopt rules defining county median income in accordance with the definitions promulgated by the federal department of housing and urban development.

(3) A requirement that property owners provide relocation assistance shall include the amounts of such assistance to be provided to low-income tenants. In determining such amounts, the jurisdiction imposing the requirement shall evaluate, and receive public testimony on, what relocation expenses displaced tenants would reasonably incur in that jurisdiction including:

(a) Actual physical moving costs and expenses;

(b) Advance payments required for moving into a new residence such as the cost of first and last month's rent and security and damage deposits;

(c) Utility connection fees and deposits; and

(d) Anticipated additional rent and utility costs in the residence for one year after relocation.

(4)(a) Relocation assistance provided to low-income tenants under this section shall not exceed two thousand dollars for each dwelling unit displaced by actions of the property owner under subsection (1) of this section. A city, town, county, or municipal corporation may make future annual adjustments to the maximum amount of relocation assistance required under this subsection in order to reflect any changes in the housing component of the consumer price index as published by the United States department of labor, bureau of labor statistics.

(b) The property owner's portion of any relocation assistance provided to low-income tenants under this section shall not exceed one-half of the required relocation assistance under (a) of this subsection in cash or services.

(c) The portion of relocation assistance not covered by the property owner under (b) of this subsection shall be paid by the city, town, county, or municipal corporation authorized to require relocation assistance under subsection (1) of this section. The relocation assistance may be paid from proceeds collected from the excise tax imposed under RCW 82.46.010.

(5) A city, town, county, or municipal corporation requiring the provision of relocation assistance under this section shall adopt policies, procedures, or regulations to implement such requirement. Such policies, procedures, or regulations shall include provisions for administrative hearings to resolve disputes between tenants and property owners relating to relocation assistance or unlawful detainer actions during relocation, and shall require a decision within thirty days of a request for a hearing by either a tenant or property owner.

Judicial review of an administrative hearing decision relating to relocation assistance may be had by filing a petition, within ten days of the decision, in the superior court in the county where the residential property is located. Judicial review shall be confined to the record of the administrative hearing and the court may reverse the decision only if the administrative findings, inferences, conclusions, or decision is:

(a) In violation of constitutional provisions;

(b) In excess of the authority or jurisdiction of the administrative hearing officer;

(c) Made upon unlawful procedure or otherwise is contrary to law; or

(d) Arbitrary and capricious.

(6) Any city, town, county, or municipal corporation may require relocation assistance, under the terms of this section, for otherwise eligible tenants whose living arrangements are exempted from the provisions of this chapter under *RCW 59.18.040(3) and if the living arrangement is considered to be a rental or lease not defined as a retail sale under RCW 82.04.050.

(7)(a) Persons who move from a dwelling unit prior to the application by the owner of the dwelling unit for any governmental permit necessary for the demolition, substantial rehabilitation, or change of use of residential property or prior to any notification or

filing required for condominium conversion shall not be entitled to the assistance authorized by this section.

(b) Persons who move into a dwelling unit after the application for any necessary governmental permit or after any required condominium conversion notification or filing shall not be entitled to the assistance authorized by this section if such persons receive written notice from the property owner prior to taking possession of the dwelling unit that specifically describes the activity or condition that may result in their temporary or permanent displacement and advises them of their ineligibility for relocation assistance. [2023 c 470 s 2099; 1997 c 452 s 17; 1995 c 399 s 151; 1990 1st ex.s. c 17 s 49.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 59.18.040 was amended by 2023 c 22 s 1, changing subsection (3) to subsection (4).

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Intent—Severability—1997 c 452: See notes following RCW 67.28.080.

Savings—1997 c 452: See note following RCW 67.28.181.

Severability—Part, section headings not law—1990 1st ex.s. c 17: See RCW 36.70A.900 and 36.70A.901.

RCW 59.18.450 Relocation assistance for low-income tenants—Payments not considered income—Eligibility for other assistance not affected. Relocation assistance payments received by tenants under *RCW 59.18.440 shall not be considered as income or otherwise affect the eligibility for or amount of assistance paid under any government benefit program. [1990 1st ex.s. c 17 s 50.]

***Reviser's note:** The reference in 1990 1st ex.s. c 17 s 50 to "section 50 of this act" is apparently erroneous and has been translated to RCW 59.18.440, which was 1990 1st ex.s. c 17 s 49.

Severability—Part, section headings not law—1990 1st ex.s. c 17: See RCW 36.70A.900 and 36.70A.901.

RCW 59.18.500 Gang-related activity—Legislative findings, declarations, and intent. The legislature finds and declares that the ability to feel safe and secure in one's own home and in one's own community is of primary importance. The legislature recognizes that certain gang-related activity can affect the safety of a considerable number of people in the rental premises and dwelling units. Therefore, such activity, although it may be occurring within an individual's home or the surrounding areas of an individual's home, becomes the community's concern.

The legislature intends that the remedy provided in RCW 59.18.510 be used solely to protect the health and safety of the community. The remedy is not a means for private citizens to bring malicious or unfounded actions against fellow tenants or residential neighbors for personal reasons. In determining whether the tenant's activity is the

type prohibited under RCW 59.18.130(9), the court should consider the totality of the circumstances, including factors such as whether there have been numerous complaints to the landlord, damage to property, police or incident reports, reports of disturbance, and arrests. An absence of any or all of these factors does not necessarily mean gang activity is not occurring. In determining whether the tenant is engaging in gang-related activity, the court should consider the purpose and intent of RCW 59.18.510. The legislature intends to give people in the community a tool that will help them restore the health and vibrance of their community. [1998 c 276 s 4.]

RCW 59.18.510 Gang-related activity—Notice and demand the landlord commence unlawful detainer action—Petition to court—Attorneys' fees. (1)(a) Any person whose life, safety, health, or use of property is being injured or endangered by a tenant's gang-related activity, who has legal standing and resides, works in, or owns property in the same multifamily building, apartment complex, or within a one-block radius may serve the landlord with a ten-day notice and demand that the landlord commence an unlawful detainer action against the tenant. The notice and demand must set forth, in reasonable detail, facts and circumstances that lead the person to believe gang-related activity is occurring. The notice and demand shall be served by delivering a copy personally to the landlord or the landlord's agent. If the person is unable to personally serve the landlord after exercising due diligence, the person may deposit the notice and demand in the mail, postage prepaid, to the landlord's or the landlord's agent's last known address.

(b) A copy of the notice and demand must also be served upon the tenant engaging in the gang-related activity by delivering a copy personally to the tenant. However, if the person is prevented from personally serving the tenant due to threats or violence, or if personal service is not reasonable under the circumstances, the person may deposit the notice and demand in the mail, postage prepaid, to the tenant's address, or leave a copy of the notice and demand in a conspicuous location at the tenant's residence.

(2)(a) Within ten days from the time the notice and demand is served, the landlord has a duty to take reasonable steps to investigate the tenant's alleged noncompliance with RCW 59.18.130(9). The landlord must notify the person who brought the notice and demand that an investigation is occurring. The landlord has ten days from the time he or she notifies the person in which to conduct a reasonable investigation.

(b) If, after reasonable investigation, the landlord finds that the tenant is not in compliance with RCW 59.18.130(9), the landlord may proceed directly to an unlawful detainer action or take reasonable steps to ensure the tenant discontinues the prohibited activity and complies with RCW 59.18.130(9). The landlord shall notify the person who served the notice and demand of whatever action the landlord takes.

(c) If, after reasonable investigation, the landlord finds that the tenant is in compliance with RCW 59.18.130(9), the landlord shall notify the person who served the notice and demand of the landlord's findings.

(3) The person who served the notice and demand may petition the appropriate court to have the tenancy terminated and the tenant

removed from the premises if: (a) Within ten days of service of the notice and demand, the tenant fails to discontinue the gang-related activity and the landlord fails to conduct a reasonable investigation; or (b) the landlord notifies the person that the landlord conducted a reasonable investigation and found that the tenant was not engaged in gang-related activity as prohibited under RCW 59.18.130(9); or (c) the landlord took reasonable steps to have the tenant comply with RCW 59.18.130(9), but the tenant has failed to comply within a reasonable time.

(4) If the court finds that the tenant was not in compliance with RCW 59.18.130(9), the court shall enter an order terminating the tenancy and requiring the tenant to vacate the premises. The court shall not issue the order terminating the tenancy unless it has found that the allegations of gang-related activity are corroborated by a source other than the person who has petitioned the court.

(5) The prevailing party shall recover reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. The court may impose sanctions, in addition to attorneys' fees, on a person who has brought an action under this chapter against the same tenant on more than one occasion, if the court finds the petition was brought with the intent to harass. However, the court must order the landlord to pay costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to the person petitioning for termination of the tenancy if the court finds that the landlord failed to comply with the duty to investigate, regardless of which party prevails. [1998 c 276 s 5.]

RCW 59.18.550 Drug and alcohol free housing—Program of recovery—Terms—Application of chapter. (1) For the purpose of this section, "drug and alcohol free housing" requires a rental agreement and means a dwelling in which:

(a) Each of the dwelling units on the premises is occupied or held for occupancy by at least one tenant who is a recovering alcoholic or drug addict and is participating in a program of recovery;

(b) The landlord is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under Title 24 RCW, a corporation for profit incorporated under Title 23B RCW, or a housing authority created under chapter 35.82 RCW, and is providing federally assisted housing as defined in chapter 59.28 RCW;

(c) The landlord provides:

(i) A drug and alcohol free environment, covering all tenants, employees, staff, agents of the landlord, and guests;

(ii) An employee who monitors the tenants for compliance with the requirements of (d) of this subsection;

(iii) Individual and group support for recovery; and

(iv) Access to a specified program of recovery; and

(d) The rental agreement is in writing and includes the following provisions:

(i) The tenant may not use, possess, or share alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or prescription drugs without a medical prescription, either on or off the premises;

(ii) The tenant may not allow the tenant's guests to use, possess, or share alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or prescription drugs without a medical prescription, on the premises;

(iii) The tenant must participate in a program of recovery, which specific program is described in the rental agreement;

(iv) On at least a quarterly basis the tenant must provide written verification from the tenant's program of recovery that the tenant is participating in the program of recovery and the tenant has not used alcohol or illegal drugs;

(v) The landlord has the right to require the tenant to take a urine analysis test regarding drug or alcohol usage, at the landlord's discretion and expense; and

(vi) The landlord has the right to terminate the tenant's tenancy by delivering a three-day notice to terminate with one day to comply, if a tenant living in drug and alcohol free housing uses, possesses, or shares alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or prescription drugs without a medical prescription.

(2) For the purpose of this section, "program of recovery" means a verifiable program of counseling and rehabilitation treatment services, including a written plan, to assist recovering alcoholics or drug addicts to recover from their addiction to alcohol or illegal drugs while living in drug and alcohol free housing. A "program of recovery" includes Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and similar programs.

(3) If a tenant living for less than two years in drug and alcohol free housing uses, possesses, or shares alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or prescription drugs without a medical prescription, the landlord may deliver a written notice to the tenant terminating the tenancy for cause as provided in this subsection. The notice must specify the acts constituting the drug or alcohol violation and must state that the rental agreement terminates in not less than three days after delivery of the notice, at a specified date and time. The notice must also state that the tenant can cure the drug or alcohol violation by a change in conduct or otherwise within one day after delivery of the notice. If the tenant cures the violation within the one-day period, the rental agreement does not terminate. If the tenant does not cure the violation within the one-day period, the rental agreement terminates as provided in the notice. If substantially the same act that constituted a prior drug or alcohol violation of which notice was given reoccurs within six months, the landlord may terminate the rental agreement upon at least three days' written notice specifying the violation and the date and time of termination of the rental agreement. The tenant does not have a right to cure this subsequent violation.

(4) Notwithstanding subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section, federally assisted housing that is occupied on other than a transient basis by persons who are required to abstain from possession or use of alcohol or drugs as a condition of occupancy and who pay for the use of the housing on a periodic basis, without regard to whether the payment is characterized as rent, program fees, or other fees, costs, or charges, are covered by this chapter unless the living arrangement is exempt under RCW 59.18.040. [2003 c 382 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.570 Victim protection—Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this section and RCW 59.18.575 through 59.18.585 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Credit reporting agency" has the same meaning as set forth in RCW 19.182.010(5).

(2) "Domestic violence" has the same meaning as set forth in RCW 7.105.010.

(3) "Household member" means a child or adult residing with the tenant other than the perpetrator of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault.

(4) "Landlord" has the same meaning as in RCW 59.18.030 and includes the landlord's employees.

(5) "Qualified third party" means any of the following people acting in their official capacity:

(a) Law enforcement officers;

(b) Persons subject to the provisions of chapter 18.120 RCW;

(c) Employees of a court of the state;

(d) Licensed mental health professionals or other licensed counselors;

(e) Employees of crime victim/witness programs as defined in RCW 7.69.020 who are trained advocates for the program; and

(f) Members of the clergy as defined in RCW 26.44.020.

(6) "Sexual assault" has the same meaning as set forth in RCW 70.125.030.

(7) "Stalking" has the same meaning as set forth in RCW 9A.46.110.

(8) "Tenant screening service provider" means any nongovernmental agency that provides, for a fee, background information on prospective tenants to landlords.

(9) "Unlawful harassment" has the same meaning as in RCW 7.105.010 and also includes any request for sexual favors to a tenant or household member in return for a change in or performance of any or all terms of a lease or rental agreement. [2021 c 215 s 154. Prior: 2009 c 395 s 1; 2004 c 17 s 2.]

Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215: See note following RCW 7.105.900.

Findings—Intent—2004 c 17: "The legislature finds and declares that:

(1) Domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are widespread societal problems that have devastating effects for individual victims, their children, and their communities. Victims of violence may be forced to remain in unsafe situations because they are bound by residential lease agreements. The legislature finds that the inability of victims to terminate their rental agreements hinders or prevents victims from being able to safely flee domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The legislature further finds that victims of these crimes who do not have access to safe housing are more likely to remain in or return to abusive or dangerous situations. Also, the legislature finds that victims of these crimes are further victimized when they are unable to obtain or retain rental housing due to their history as a victim of these crimes. The legislature further finds that evidence that a prospective tenant has been a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking is not relevant to the decision whether to rent to that prospective tenant.

(2) By this act, the legislature intends to increase safety for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking by removing barriers to safety and offering protection against discrimination." [2004 c 17 s 1.]

Effective date—2004 c 17: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or

support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 15, 2004]." [2004 c 17 s 7.]

RCW 59.18.575 Victim protection—Notice to landlord—Termination of rental agreement—Procedures. (1)(a) If a tenant notifies the landlord in writing that he or she or a household member was a victim of an act that constitutes a crime of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking, and either (a)(i) or (ii) of this subsection applies, then subsection (2) of this section applies:

(i) The tenant or the household member has a domestic violence protection order, sexual assault protection order, stalking protection order, or antiharassment protection order under chapter 7.105 RCW, or a valid order for protection under one or more of the following: Chapter 26.26A or 26.26B RCW, or any of the former chapters 7.90 and 26.50 RCW, or RCW 9A.46.040, 9A.46.050, 10.99.040 (2) or (3), or 26.09.050, or former RCW 10.14.080; or

(ii) The tenant or the household member has reported the domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking to a qualified third party acting in his or her official capacity and the qualified third party has provided the tenant or the household member a written record of the report signed by the qualified third party.

(b) When a copy of a valid order for protection or a written record of a report signed by a qualified third party, as required under (a) of this subsection, is made available to the landlord, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises without further obligation under the rental agreement or under this chapter. However, the request to terminate the rental agreement must occur within ninety days of the reported act, event, or circumstance that gave rise to the protective order or report to a qualified third party. A record of the report to a qualified third party that is provided to the tenant or household member shall consist of a document signed and dated by the qualified third party stating: (i) That the tenant or the household member notified him or her that he or she was a victim of an act or acts that constitute a crime of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking; (ii) the time and date the act or acts occurred; (iii) the location where the act or acts occurred; (iv) a brief description of the act or acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking; and (v) that the tenant or household member informed him or her of the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act or acts. The record of the report provided to the tenant or household member shall not include the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act or acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking. The qualified third party shall keep a copy of the record of the report and shall note on the retained copy the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act or acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking. The record of the report to a qualified third party may be accomplished by completion of a form provided by the qualified third party, in substantially the following form:

.....
[Name of organization, agency, clinic, professional service provider]

I and/or my . . . . . (household member) am/is a victim of

. . . domestic violence as defined by RCW 7.105.010.

. . . sexual assault as defined by RCW 70.125.030.

. . . stalking as defined by RCW 9A.46.110.

. . . unlawful harassment as defined by RCW 59.18.570.

Briefly describe the incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking:. . . . . .

The incident(s) that I rely on in support of this declaration occurred on the following date(s) and time(s) and at the following location(s): . . . . . .

The incident(s) that I rely on in support of this declaration were committed by the following person(s): . . . . . .

I state under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct. Dated at . . . . . (city) . ., Washington, this . . . day of . . ., ... (year)

. . . . . .
Signature of Tenant or Household Member

I verify that I have provided to the person whose signature appears above the statutes cited in RCW 59.18.575 and that the individual was a victim of an act that constitutes a crime of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking, and that the individual informed me of the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act. I further verify that I have informed the person whose signature appears above that information about the landlord mitigation program can be found on the website established pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(11), including the form developed pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(1)(d)(iv). Dated this . . . day of . . ., ... (year)

. . . . . .
Signature of authorized officer/employee of (Organization, agency, clinic, professional service provider)

(2)(a) A tenant who terminates a rental agreement under this section is discharged from the payment of rent for any period following the last day of the month of the quitting date. The tenant shall remain liable for the rent for the month in which he or she terminated the rental agreement unless the termination is in accordance with RCW 59.18.200(1).

(b)(i) Notwithstanding lease provisions that allow for forfeiture of a deposit for early termination, a tenant who terminates under this section is entitled to the return of the full deposit, subject to RCW 59.18.020 and 59.18.280.

(ii) If the landlord seeks reimbursement for damages from the landlord mitigation program pursuant to RCW 43.31.605(1)(d), the landlord is prohibited from retaining any portion of the tenant's damage or security deposit or proceeding against the tenant who terminates under this section to recover sums exceeding the amount of the tenant's damage or security deposit for damage to the property.

(c) Other tenants who are parties to the rental agreement, except household members who are the victims of sexual assault, stalking, unlawful harassment, or domestic violence, are not released from their obligations under the rental agreement or other obligations under this chapter.

(3)(a) Notwithstanding any other provision under this section, if a tenant or a household member is a victim of sexual assault, stalking, or unlawful harassment by a landlord, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises without further obligation under the rental agreement or under this chapter prior to making a copy of a valid order for protection or a written record of a report signed by a qualified third party available to the landlord, provided that:

(i) The tenant must deliver a copy of a valid order for protection or written record of a report signed by a qualified third party to the landlord by mail, fax, or personal delivery by a third party within seven days of quitting the tenant's dwelling unit; and

(ii) A written record of a report signed by the qualified third party must be substantially in the form specified under subsection (1)(b) of this section. The record of the report provided to the landlord must not include the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act. On written request by the landlord, the qualified third party shall, within seven days, provide the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act to the landlord only if the alleged perpetrator was a person meeting the definition of the term "landlord" under RCW 59.18.570.

(b) A tenant who terminates his or her rental agreement under this subsection is discharged from the payment of rent for any period following the latter of: (i) The date the tenant vacates the unit; or (ii) the date the record of the report of the qualified third party and the written notice that the tenant has vacated are delivered to the landlord by mail, fax, or personal delivery by a third party. The tenant is entitled to a pro rata refund of any prepaid rent and must receive a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any of the deposit together with any refund due in accordance with RCW 59.18.280.

(4) If a tenant or a household member is a victim of sexual assault, stalking, or unlawful harassment by a landlord, the tenant may change or add locks to the tenant's dwelling unit at the tenant's expense. If a tenant exercises his or her rights to change or add locks, the following rules apply:

(a) Within seven days of changing or adding locks, the tenant must deliver to the landlord by mail, fax, or personal delivery by a third party: (i) Written notice that the tenant has changed or added locks; and (ii) a copy of a valid order for protection or a written record of a report signed by a qualified third party. A written record of a report signed by a qualified third party must be substantially in the form specified under subsection (1)(b) of this section. The record of the report provided to the landlord must not include the name of the alleged perpetrator of the act. On written request by the landlord, the qualified third party shall, within seven days, provide the name of the alleged perpetrator to the landlord only if the alleged perpetrator was a person meeting the definition of the term "landlord" under RCW 59.18.570.

(b) After the tenant provides notice to the landlord that the tenant has changed or added locks, the tenant's rental agreement shall terminate on the ninetieth day after providing such notice, unless:

(i) Within sixty days of providing notice that the tenant has changed or added locks, the tenant notifies the landlord in writing that the tenant does not wish to terminate his or her rental agreement. If the perpetrator has been identified by the qualified third party and is no longer an employee or agent of the landlord or owner and does not reside at the property, the tenant shall provide the owner or owner's designated agent with a copy of the key to the new locks at the same time as providing notice that the tenant does not wish to terminate his or her rental agreement. A tenant who has a valid protection, antiharassment, or other protective order against the owner of the premises or against an employee or agent of the landlord or owner is not required to provide a key to the new locks until the protective order expires or the tenant vacates; or

(ii) The tenant exercises his or her rights to terminate the rental agreement under subsection (3) of this section within sixty days of providing notice that the tenant has changed or added locks.

(c) After a landlord receives notice that a tenant has changed or added locks to his or her dwelling unit under (a) of this subsection, the landlord may not enter the tenant's dwelling unit except as follows:

(i) In the case of an emergency, the landlord may enter the unit if accompanied by a law enforcement or fire official acting in his or her official capacity. If the landlord reasonably concludes that the circumstances require immediate entry into the unit, the landlord may, after notifying emergency services, use such force as necessary to enter the unit if the tenant is not present; or

(ii) The landlord complies with the requirements of RCW 59.18.150 and clearly specifies in writing the time and date that the landlord intends to enter the unit and the purpose for entering the unit. The tenant must make arrangements to permit access by the landlord.

(d) The exercise of rights to change or add locks under this subsection does not discharge the tenant from the payment of rent until the rental agreement is terminated and the tenant vacates the unit.

(e) The tenant may not change any locks to common areas and must make keys for new locks available to other household members.

(f) Upon vacating the dwelling unit, the tenant must deliver the key and all copies of the key to the landlord by mail or personal delivery by a third party.

(5) A tenant's remedies under this section do not preempt any other legal remedy available to the tenant.

(6) The provision of verification of a report under subsection (1)(b) of this section does not waive the confidential or privileged nature of the communication between a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking with a qualified third party pursuant to RCW 5.60.060, 70.123.075, or 70.125.065. No record or evidence obtained from such disclosure may be used in any civil, administrative, or criminal proceeding against the victim unless a written waiver of applicable evidentiary privilege is obtained, except that the verification itself, and no other privileged information, under subsection (1)(b) of this section may be used in civil proceedings brought under this section. [2022 c 196 s 5; (2022 c 196 s 4 expired July 1, 2022); 2021 c 215 s 155; 2019 c 46 s 5042; 2009 c 395 s 2; 2006 c 138 s 27; 2004 c 17 s 3.]

Effective date—2022 c 196 s 5: "Section 5 of this act takes effect July 1, 2022." [2022 c 196 s 8.]

Expiration date—2022 c 196 s 4: "Section 4 of this act expires July 1, 2022." [2022 c 196 s 7.]

Finding—Intent—2022 c 196: See note following RCW 43.31.605.

Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215: See note following RCW 7.105.900.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2004 c 17: See notes following RCW 59.18.570.

RCW 59.18.580 Victim protection—Limitation on tenant screening service provider disclosures and landlord's rental decisions. (1) A tenant screening service provider may not (a) disclose a tenant's, applicant's, or household member's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or (b) knowingly disclose that a tenant, applicant, or household member has previously terminated a rental agreement under RCW 59.18.575.

(2) A landlord may not terminate a tenancy, fail to renew a tenancy, or refuse to enter into a rental agreement based on the tenant's or applicant's or a household member's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or based on the tenant or applicant having terminated a rental agreement under RCW 59.18.575.

(3) A landlord who refuses to enter into a rental agreement in violation of subsection (2) of this section may be liable to the tenant or applicant in a civil action for damages sustained by the tenant or applicant. The prevailing party may also recover court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(4) It is a defense to an unlawful detainer action under chapter 59.12 RCW that the action to remove the tenant and recover possession of the premises is in violation of subsection (2) of this section.

(5) This section does not prohibit adverse housing decisions based upon other lawful factors within the landlord's knowledge or prohibit volunteer disclosure by an applicant of any victim circumstances. [2013 c 54 s 1; 2004 c 17 s 4.]

Effective date—2013 c 54: "This act takes effect January 1, 2014." [2013 c 54 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2004 c 17: See notes following RCW 59.18.570.

RCW 59.18.585 Victim protection—Possession of dwelling unit—Exclusion of others—New lock or key. (1) A tenant who has obtained a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction granting him or her possession of a dwelling unit to the exclusion of one or more cotenants may request that a lock be replaced or configured for a new key at the tenant's expense. The landlord shall, if provided a copy of the order, comply with the request and shall not provide copies of the new keys to the tenant restrained or excluded by the court's order. This section does not release a cotenant, other than a household

member who is the victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, from liability or obligations under the rental agreement.

(2) A landlord who replaces a lock or configures for a new key of a residential housing unit in accordance with subsection (1) of this section shall be held harmless from liability for any damages that result directly from the lock change. [2004 c 17 s 5.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2004 c 17: See notes following RCW 59.18.570.

RCW 59.18.590 Death of a tenant—Designated person. (1)(a) At a landlord's request, the tenant may designate a person to act for the tenant on the tenant's death when the tenant is the sole occupant of the dwelling unit.

(b) Any designation must be in writing, be separate from the rental agreement, and include:

(i) The designated person's name, mailing address, any address used for the receipt of electronic communications, and telephone number;

(ii) A signed statement authorizing the landlord in the event of the tenant's death when the tenant is the sole occupant of the dwelling unit to allow the designated person to: Access the tenant's dwelling unit, remove the tenant's property, receive refunds of amounts due to the tenant, and dispose of the tenant's property consistent with the tenant's last will and testament and any applicable intestate succession law; and

(iii) A conspicuous statement that the designation remains in effect until it is revoked in writing by the tenant or replaced with a new designation.

(2) A tenant may, without request from the landlord, designate a person to act for the tenant on the tenant's death when the tenant is the sole occupant of the dwelling unit by providing the landlord with the information and signing a statement as provided in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The tenant may change the designated person or revoke any previous designation in writing at any time prior to his or her death.

(4) Once the landlord or the designated person knows of the appointment of a personal representative for the deceased tenant's estate or of a person claiming to be a successor of the deceased tenant who has provided the landlord with proof of death and an affidavit made by the person that meets the requirements of RCW 11.62.010(2), the designated person's authority to act under this section terminates. [2015 c 264 s 2.]

RCW 59.18.595 Death of a tenant—Landlord duties—Disposition of property procedures—Liability. (1) In the event of the death of a tenant who is the sole occupant of the dwelling unit:

(a) The landlord, upon learning of the death of the tenant, shall promptly mail or personally deliver written notice to any known personal representative, known designated person, emergency contact identified by the tenant on the rental application, known person reasonably believed to be a successor of the tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005, and to the deceased tenant at the address of the dwelling unit. If the landlord knows of any address used for the receipt of

electronic communications, the landlord shall email the notice to that address as well. The notice must include:

(i) The name of the deceased tenant and address of the dwelling unit;

(ii) The approximate date of the deceased tenant's death;

(iii) The rental amount and date through which rent is paid;

(iv) A statement that the tenancy will terminate 15 days from the date the notice is mailed or personally delivered or the date through which rent is paid, whichever comes later, unless during that time period a tenant representative makes arrangements with the landlord to pay rent in advance for no more than 60 days from the date of the tenant's death to allow a tenant representative to arrange for orderly removal of the tenant's property. At the end of the period for which the rent has been paid pursuant to this subsection, the tenancy ends;

(v) A statement that failure to remove the tenant's property before the tenancy is terminated or ends as provided in (a)(iv) of this subsection will allow the landlord to enter the dwelling unit and take possession of any property found on the premises, store it in a reasonably secure place, and charge the actual or reasonable costs, whichever is less, of drayage and storage of the property, and after service of a second notice sell or dispose of the property as provided in subsection (3) of this section; and

(vi) A copy of any designation executed by the tenant pursuant to RCW 59.18.590;

(b) The landlord shall turn over possession of the tenant's property to a tenant representative if a request is made in writing within the specified time period or any subsequent date agreed to by the parties;

(c) Within the same number of days as required under RCW 59.18.280, after the removal of the property by the tenant representative, the landlord shall refund any unearned rent and shall give a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any deposit together with the payment of any refund due the deceased tenant under the terms and conditions of the rental agreement to the tenant representative; and

(d) Any tenant representative who removes property from the tenant's dwelling unit or the premises must, at the time of removal, provide to the landlord an inventory of the removed property and signed acknowledgment that he or she has only been given possession and not ownership of the property.

(2) A landlord shall send a second written notice before selling or disposing of a deceased tenant's property.

(a) If the tenant representative makes arrangements with the landlord to pay rent in advance as provided in subsection (1)(a)(iv) of this section, the landlord shall mail a second written notice to any known personal representative, known designated person, emergency contact identified by the tenant on the rental application, known person reasonably believed to be a successor of the tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005, and to the deceased tenant at the dwelling unit. The second notice must include:

(i) The name, address, and phone number or other contact information for the tenant representative, if known, who made the arrangements to pay rent in advance;

(ii) The amount of rent paid in advance and date through which rent was paid; and

(iii) A statement that the landlord may sell or dispose of the property on or after the date through which rent is paid or at least

45 days after the second notice is mailed, whichever comes later, if a tenant representative does not claim and remove the property in accordance with this subsection.

(b) If the landlord places the property in storage pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section, the landlord shall mail a second written notice, unless a written notice under (a) of this subsection has already been provided, to any known personal representative, known designated person, emergency contact identified by the tenant on the rental application, known person reasonably believed to be a successor of the tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005, and to the deceased tenant at the dwelling unit. The second notice must state that the landlord may sell or dispose of the property on or after a specified date that is at least 45 days after the second notice is mailed if a tenant representative does not claim and remove the property in accordance with this subsection.

(c) The landlord shall turn over possession of the tenant's property to a tenant representative if a written request is made within the applicable time periods after the second notice is mailed, provided the tenant representative: (i) Pays the actual or reasonable costs, whichever is less, of drayage and storage of the property, if applicable; and (ii) gives the landlord an inventory of the property and signs an acknowledgment that he or she has only been given possession and not ownership of the property.

(d) Within the same number of days as required under RCW 59.18.280, after the removal of the property by the tenant representative, the landlord shall refund any unearned rent and shall give a full and specific statement of the basis for retaining any deposit together with the payment of any refund due the deceased tenant under the terms and conditions of the rental agreement to the tenant representative.

(3)(a) If a tenant representative has not contacted the landlord or removed the deceased tenant's property within the applicable time periods under this section, the landlord may sell or dispose of the deceased tenant's property, except for personal papers and personal photographs, as provided in this subsection.

(i) If the landlord reasonably estimates the fair market value of the stored property to be more than $1,000, the landlord shall arrange to sell the property in a commercially reasonable manner and may dispose of any property that remains unsold in a reasonable manner.

(ii) If the value of the stored property does not meet the threshold provided in (a)(i) of this subsection, the landlord may dispose of the property in a reasonable manner.

(iii) The landlord may apply any income derived from the sale of the property pursuant to this section against any costs of sale and moneys due the landlord, including actual or reasonable costs, whichever is less, of drayage and storage of the deceased tenant's property. Any excess income derived from the sale of such property under this section must be held by the landlord for a period of one year from the date of sale, and if no claim is made for recovery of the excess income before the expiration of that one-year period, the balance must be treated as abandoned property and deposited by the landlord with the department of revenue pursuant to chapter 63.30 RCW.

(b) Personal papers and personal photographs that are not claimed by a tenant representative within 90 days after a sale or other disposition of the deceased tenant's other property shall be either destroyed or held for the benefit of any successor of the deceased tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005.

(c) No landlord or employee of a landlord, or his or her family members, may acquire, directly or indirectly, the property sold pursuant to (a)(i) of this subsection or disposed of pursuant to (a)(ii) of this subsection.

(4) Upon learning of the death of the tenant, the landlord may enter the deceased tenant's dwelling unit and immediately dispose of any perishable food, hazardous materials, and garbage found on the premises and turn over animals to a tenant representative or to an animal control officer, humane society, or other individual or organization willing to care for the animals.

(5) Any notices sent by the landlord under this section must include a mailing address, any address used for the receipt of electronic communications, and a telephone number of the landlord.

(6) If a landlord knowingly violates this section, the landlord is liable to the deceased tenant's estate for actual damages. The prevailing party in any action pursuant to this subsection may recover costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(7) A landlord who complies with this section is relieved from any liability relating to the deceased tenant's property. [2023 c 331 s 7; 2023 c 258 s 7; 2015 c 264 s 3.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2023 c 258 s 7 and by 2023 c 331 s 7, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Findings—Intent—2023 c 331: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

Retroactive application—2023 c 258 ss 2-8, 10, and 11: See note following RCW 19.150.060.

RCW 59.18.610 Installments—Deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent—Statutory penalty. (1)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, upon receipt of a tenant's written request, a landlord must permit the tenant to pay any deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent in installments.

(b) A landlord is not required to permit a tenant to pay in installments if the total amount of the deposits and nonrefundable fees do not exceed twenty-five percent of the first full month's rent and payment of the last month's rent is not required at the inception of the tenancy.

(2) In all cases where premises are rented for a specified time that is three months or longer, the tenant may elect to pay any deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent in three consecutive and equal monthly installments, beginning at the inception of the tenancy. In all other cases, the tenant may elect to pay any deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent in two consecutive and equal monthly installments, beginning at the inception of the tenancy.

(3) A landlord may not impose any fee, charge any interest, or otherwise impose a cost on a tenant because a tenant elects to pay in installments. Installment payments are due at the same time as rent is due. All installment schedules must be in writing and signed by the landlord and the tenant.

(4)(a) A fee or deposit to hold a dwelling unit or secure that the prospective tenant will move into a dwelling unit, as authorized

under RCW 59.18.253, shall not be considered a deposit or nonrefundable fee for purposes of this section.

(b) A landlord may not request a fee or deposit to hold a dwelling unit or secure that the prospective tenant will move into a dwelling unit in excess of twenty-five percent of the first month's rent.

(5) Beginning January 1, 2021, any landlord who refuses to permit a tenant to pay any deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent in installments upon the tenant's written request as described in subsection (1) of this section is subject to a statutory penalty of one month's rent and reasonable attorneys' fees payable to the tenant.

(6)(a) In any application seeking relief pursuant [to] RCW 59.18.283(3), the court shall issue a finding as to whether the tenant is low-income, limited resourced, or experiencing hardship to determine if the landlord would be eligible for reimbursement through the landlord mitigation program account established within *RCW 43.31.605(1)(c). In making this finding, the court may include an inquiry regarding the tenant's income relative to area median income, household composition, any extenuating circumstances, or other factors, and may rely on written declarations or oral testimony by the parties at the hearing.

(b) After a finding that the tenant is low-income, limited resourced, or experiencing hardship, the court may issue an order: (i) Finding that the landlord is eligible to receive on behalf of the tenant and may apply for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program; and (ii) directing the clerk to remit, without further order of the court, any future payments made by the tenant in order to reimburse the department of commerce pursuant to *RCW 43.31.605(1)(c)(iii). Nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to obligate the department of commerce to provide assistance in claim reimbursement through the landlord mitigation program if there are not sufficient funds.

(c) Upon payment by the department of commerce to the landlord for the remaining or total amount of the judgment, as applicable, the judgment is satisfied and the landlord shall file a satisfaction of judgment with the court. [2020 c 169 s 1.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 43.31.605 was amended by 2022 c 196 s 2, changing subsection (1)(c) to subsection (1)(b).

RCW 59.18.620 Definitions applicable to RCW 59.18.625 and 59.18.630. The definitions in this section apply to RCW 59.18.625 and 59.18.630 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Dwelling unit" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030, and includes a manufactured/mobile home or a mobile home lot as defined in RCW 59.20.030.

(2) "Eviction moratorium" refers to the governor of the state of Washington's proclamation 20-19.6, proclaiming a moratorium on certain evictions for all counties throughout Washington state on March 18, 2021.

(3) "Landlord" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030 and 59.20.030.

(4) "Prospective landlord" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030.

(5) "Public health emergency" refers to the governor of the state of Washington's proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a state of emergency

for all counties throughout Washington state on February 29, 2020, and any subsequent orders extending or amending such proclamation due to COVID-19 until the proclamation expires or is terminated by the governor of the state of Washington.

(6) "Rent" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030.

(7) "Tenant" refers to any individual renting a dwelling unit or lot primarily for living purposes, including any individual with a tenancy subject to this chapter or chapter 59.20 RCW or any individual residing in transient lodging, such as a hotel or motel or camping area as their primary dwelling, for 30 days or more prior to March 1, 2020. "Tenant" does not include any individual residing in a hotel or motel or camping area as their primary dwelling for more than 30 days after March 1, 2020, if the hotel or motel or camping area has provided the individual with a seven-day eviction notice, which must include the following language: "For no-cost legal assistance, please call 2-1-1 or the Northwest Justice Project CLEAR Hotline outside King County (888) 201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., or (888) 387-7111 for seniors (age 60 and over). You may find additional resource information at http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org." "Tenant" also does not include occupants of homeless mitigation sites or a person entering onto land without permission of the landowner or lessor. For purposes of this subsection, any local government provision of solid waste or hygiene services to unsanctioned encampments does not constitute permission to occupy land. [2021 c 115 s 2.]

Conflicting laws—2021 c 115 ss 2-4: "Sections 2 through 4 of this act supersede any other provisions within chapter 59.18 or 59.12 RCW, or chapter 59.20 RCW as applicable, that conflict with sections 2 through 4 of this act." [2021 c 115 s 20.]

Finding—Intent—2021 c 115: "The legislature finds that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a sustained global economic slowdown, and an economic downturn throughout Washington state with unprecedented numbers of layoffs and reduced work hours for a significant percentage of our workforce. Many of the state's workforce has been impacted by these layoffs and substantially reduced work hours and have suffered economic hardship, disproportionately affecting low and moderate-income workers resulting in lost wages and the inability to pay for basic household expenses, including rent. Hundreds of thousands of tenants in Washington are unable to consistently pay their rent, reflecting the continued financial precariousness of many renters in the state. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, nonpayment of rent was the leading cause of evictions within the state. Because the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an inability for tenants to consistently pay rent, the likelihood of evictions has increased, as well as life, health, and safety risks to a significant percentage of the state's tenants. As a result, the governor has issued a temporary moratorium on evictions as of March 2020, with multiple extensions and other related actions, to reduce housing instability and enable tenants to stay in their homes.

Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature with this act to increase tenant protections during the public health emergency, provide legal representation for qualifying tenants in eviction cases, establish an eviction resolution pilot program to address nonpayment of rent eviction cases before any court filing, and ensure tenants and

landlords have adequate opportunities to access state and local rental assistance programs to reimburse landlords for unpaid rent and preserve tenancies." [2021 c 115 s 1.]

Application—2021 c 115: "This act does not apply to assisted living facilities licensed under chapter 18.20 RCW, to nursing homes licensed under chapter 18.51 RCW, to adult family homes licensed under chapter 70.128 RCW, or to continuing care retirement communities registered under chapter 18.390 RCW." [2021 c 115 s 18.]

Effective date—2021 c 115: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 22, 2021]." [2021 c 115 s 21.]

RCW 59.18.625 Late fees, charges for nonpayment of rent due between March 1, 2020, and six months after eviction moratorium expiration—Violations—Penalties. (1) A landlord may not charge or impose any late fees or other charges against any tenant for the nonpayment of rent that became due between March 1, 2020, and six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium.

(2) For rent that accrued between March 1, 2020, and the six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium expiration date:

(a) A landlord may not report to a prospective landlord:

(i) A tenant's nonpayment of rent that accrued between March 1, 2020, and the six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium; or

(ii) An unlawful detainer action pursuant to RCW 59.12.030(3) that resulted from a tenant's nonpayment of rent between March 1, 2020, and the six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium.

(b) A prospective landlord may not take an adverse action based on a prospective tenant's nonpayment of rent that occurred between March 1, 2020, and the six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium.

(3)(a) A landlord or prospective landlord may not deny, discourage application for, or otherwise make unavailable any rental dwelling unit based on a tenant's or prospective tenant's medical history including, but not limited to, the tenant's or prospective tenant's prior or current exposure or infection to the COVID-19 virus.

(b) A landlord or prospective landlord may not inquire about, consider, or require disclosure of a tenant's or prospective tenant's medical records or history, unless such disclosure is necessary to evaluate a reasonable accommodation request or reasonable modification request under RCW 49.60.222.

(4) A landlord or prospective landlord in violation of this section is liable in a civil action for up to two and one-half times the monthly rent of the real property at issue, as well as court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees. A court must impose this penalty in an amount necessary to deter future violations, payable to the tenant bringing the action. [2021 c 115 s 3.]

Conflicting laws—2021 c 115 ss 2-4: See note following RCW 59.18.620.

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

RCW 59.18.630 Eviction moratorium—Unpaid rent—Repayment plans—Rental assistance. (1) The eviction moratorium instituted by the governor of the state of Washington's proclamation 20-19.6 shall end on June 30, 2021.

(2) If a tenant has remaining unpaid rent that accrued between March 1, 2020, and six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium or the end of the public health emergency, whichever is greater, the landlord must offer the tenant a reasonable schedule for repayment of the unpaid rent that does not exceed monthly payments equal to one-third of the monthly rental charges during the period of accrued debt. If a tenant fails to accept the terms of a reasonable repayment plan within 14 days of the landlord's offer, the landlord may proceed with an unlawful detainer action as set forth in RCW 59.12.030(3) but subject to any requirements under the eviction resolution pilot program established under *RCW 59.18.660. If the tenant defaults on any rent owed under a repayment plan, the landlord may apply for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program as authorized under **RCW 43.31.605(1)(d) or proceed with an unlawful detainer action as set forth in RCW 59.12.030(3) but subject to any requirements under the eviction resolution pilot program established under *RCW 59.18.660. The court must consider the tenant's circumstances, including decreased income or increased expenses due to COVID-19, and the repayment plan terms offered during any unlawful detainer proceeding.

(3) Any repayment plan entered into under this section must:

(a) Not require payment until 30 days after the repayment plan is offered to the tenant;

(b) Cover rent only and not any late fees, attorneys' fees, or any other fees and charges;

(c) Allow for payments from any source of income as defined in RCW 59.18.255(5) or from pledges by nonprofit organizations, churches, religious institutions, or governmental entities; and

(d) Not include provisions or be conditioned on: The tenant's compliance with the rental agreement, payment of attorneys' fees, court costs, or other costs related to litigation if the tenant defaults on the rental agreement; a requirement that the tenant apply for governmental benefits or provide proof of receipt of governmental benefits; or the tenant's waiver of any rights to a notice under RCW 59.12.030 or related provisions before a writ of restitution is issued.

(4) It is a defense to an eviction under RCW 59.12.030(3) that a landlord did not offer a repayment plan in conformity with this section.

(5) To the extent available funds exist for rental assistance from a federal, state, local, private, or nonprofit program, the tenant or landlord may continue to seek rental assistance to reduce and/or eliminate the unpaid rent balance. [2021 c 115 s 4.]

Reviser's note: *(1) RCW 59.18.660 expired July 1, 2023.

**(2) RCW 43.31.605 was amended by 2022 c 196 s 2, changing subsection (1)(d) to subsection (1)(c).

Conflicting laws—2021 c 115 ss 2-4: See note following RCW 59.18.620.

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

RCW 59.18.640 Indigent tenants. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the court must appoint an attorney for an indigent tenant in an unlawful detainer proceeding under this chapter and chapters 59.12 and 59.20 RCW. The office of civil legal aid is responsible for implementation of this subsection as provided in RCW 2.53.050, and the state shall pay the costs of legal services provided by an attorney appointed pursuant to this subsection. In implementing this section, the office of civil legal aid shall assign priority to providing legal representation to indigent tenants in those counties in which the most evictions occur and to indigent tenants who are disproportionately at risk of eviction.

(2) For purposes of this section, "indigent" means any person who, at any stage of a court proceeding, is:

(a) Receiving one of the following types of public assistance: Temporary assistance for needy families, aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits, medical care services under RCW 74.09.035, pregnant women assistance benefits, poverty-related veterans' benefits, food stamps or food stamp benefits transferred electronically, refugee resettlement benefits, medicaid, or supplemental security income; or

(b) Receiving an annual income, after taxes, of 200 percent or less of the current federally established poverty level. [2021 c 115 s 8.]

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

RCW 59.18.650 Eviction of tenant, refusal to continue tenancy, end of periodic tenancy—Cause—Notice—Penalties. ***(Effective until January 1, 2028.)*** (1)(a) A landlord may not evict a tenant, refuse to continue a tenancy, or end a periodic tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section and as otherwise provided in this subsection.

(b) If a landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement that provides for the tenancy to continue for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis after the agreement expires, the landlord may not end the tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section; however, a landlord may end such a tenancy at the end of the initial period of the rental agreement without cause only if:

(i) At the inception of the tenancy, the landlord and tenant entered into a rental agreement between six and 12 months; and

(ii) The landlord has provided the tenant before the end of the initial lease period at least 60 days' advance written notice ending the tenancy, served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040.

(c) If a landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement for a specified period in which the tenancy by the terms of the rental

agreement does not continue for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis after the end of the specified period, the landlord may end such a tenancy without cause upon expiration of the specified period only if:

(i) At the inception of the tenancy, the landlord and tenant entered into a rental agreement of 12 months or more for a specified period, or the landlord and tenant have continuously and without interruption entered into successive rental agreements of six months or more for a specified period since the inception of the tenancy;

(ii) The landlord has provided the tenant before the end of the specified period at least 60 days' advance written notice that the tenancy will be deemed expired at the end of such specified period, served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040; and

(iii) The tenancy has not been for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis at any point since the inception of the tenancy. However, for any tenancy of an indefinite period in existence as of May 10, 2021, if the landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement between May 10, 2021, and three months following the expiration of the governor's proclamation 20-19.6 or any extensions thereof, the landlord may exercise rights under this subsection (1)(c) as if the rental agreement was entered into at the inception of the tenancy provided that the rental agreement is otherwise in accordance with this subsection (1)(c).

(d) For all other tenancies of a specified period not covered under (b) or (c) of this subsection, and for tenancies of an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis, a landlord may not end the tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section. Upon the end date of the tenancy of a specified period, the tenancy becomes a month-to-month tenancy.

(e) Nothing prohibits a landlord and tenant from entering into subsequent lease agreements that are in compliance with the requirements in subsection (2) of this section.

(f) A tenant may end a tenancy for a specified time by providing notice in writing not less than 20 days prior to the ending date of the specified time.

(2) The following reasons listed in this subsection constitute cause pursuant to subsection (1) of this section:

(a) The tenant continues in possession in person or by subtenant after a default in the payment of rent, and after written notice requiring, in the alternative, the payment of the rent or the surrender of the detained premises has remained uncomplied with for the period set forth in RCW 59.12.030(3) for tenants subject to this chapter. The written notice may be served at any time after the rent becomes due;

(b) The tenant continues in possession after substantial breach of a material program requirement of subsidized housing, material term subscribed to by the tenant within the lease or rental agreement, or a tenant obligation imposed by law, other than one for monetary damages, and after the landlord has served written notice specifying the acts or omissions constituting the breach and requiring, in the alternative, that the breach be remedied or the rental agreement will end, and the breach has not been adequately remedied by the date specified in the notice, which date must be at least 10 days after service of the notice;

(c) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least three days' advance written notice to quit after he or she commits or permits waste or nuisance upon the premises, unlawful

activity that affects the use and enjoyment of the premises, or other substantial or repeated and unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of the premises by the landlord or neighbors of the tenant;

(d) The tenant continues in possession after the landlord of a dwelling unit in good faith seeks possession so that the owner or his or her immediate family may occupy the unit as that person's principal residence and no substantially equivalent unit is vacant and available to house the owner or his or her immediate family in the same building, and the owner has provided at least 90 days' advance written notice of the date the tenant's possession is to end. There is a rebuttable presumption that the owner did not act in good faith if the owner or immediate family fails to occupy the unit as a principal residence for at least 60 consecutive days during the 90 days immediately after the tenant vacated the unit pursuant to a notice to vacate using this subsection (2)(d) as the cause for the lease ending;

(e) The tenant continues in possession after the owner elects to sell a single-family residence and the landlord has provided at least 90 days' advance written notice of the date the tenant's possession is to end. For the purposes of this subsection (2)(e), an owner "elects to sell" when the owner makes reasonable attempts to sell the dwelling within 30 days after the tenant has vacated, including, at a minimum, listing it for sale at a reasonable price with a realty agency or advertising it for sale at a reasonable price by listing it on the real estate multiple listing service. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the owner did not intend to sell the unit if:

(i) Within 30 days after the tenant has vacated, the owner does not list the single-family dwelling unit for sale at a reasonable price with a realty agency or advertise it for sale at a reasonable price by listing it on the real estate multiple listing service; or

(ii) Within 90 days after the date the tenant vacated or the date the property was listed for sale, whichever is later, the owner withdraws the rental unit from the market, the landlord rents the unit to someone other than the former tenant, or the landlord otherwise indicates that the owner does not intend to sell the unit;

(f) The tenant continues in possession of the premises after the landlord serves the tenant with advance written notice pursuant to RCW 59.18.200(2)(c);

(g) The tenant continues in possession after the owner elects to withdraw the premises to pursue a conversion pursuant to RCW 64.34.440 or 64.90.655;

(h) The tenant continues in possession, after the landlord has provided at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate that: (i) The premises has been certified or condemned as uninhabitable by a local agency charged with the authority to issue such an order; and (ii) continued habitation of the premises would subject the landlord to civil or criminal penalties. However, if the terms of the local agency's order do not allow the landlord to provide at least 30 days' advance written notice, the landlord must provide as much advance written notice as is possible and still comply with the order;

(i) The tenant continues in possession after an owner or lessor, with whom the tenant shares the dwelling unit or access to a common kitchen or bathroom area, has served at least 20 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental term or, if a periodic tenancy, the end of the rental period;

(j) The tenant continues in possession of a dwelling unit in transitional housing after having received at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate in advance of the expiration of the

transitional housing program, the tenant has aged out of the transitional housing program, or the tenant has completed an educational or training or service program and is no longer eligible to participate in the transitional housing program. Nothing in this subsection (2)(j) prohibits the ending of a tenancy in transitional housing for any of the other causes specified in this subsection;

(k) The tenant continues in possession of a dwelling unit after the expiration of a rental agreement without signing a proposed new rental agreement proffered by the landlord; provided, that the landlord proffered the proposed new rental agreement at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the current rental agreement and that any new terms and conditions of the proposed new rental agreement are reasonable. This subsection (2)(k) does not apply to tenants whose tenancies are or have become periodic;

(l) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate due to intentional, knowing, and material misrepresentations or omissions made on the tenant's application at the inception of the tenancy that, had these misrepresentations or omissions not been made, would have resulted in the landlord requesting additional information or taking an adverse action;

(m) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' advance written notice to vacate for other good cause prior to the end of the period or rental agreement and such cause constitutes a legitimate economic or business reason not covered or related to a basis for ending the lease as enumerated under this subsection (2). When the landlord relies on this basis for ending the tenancy, the court may stay any writ of restitution for up to 60 additional days for good cause shown, including difficulty procuring alternative housing. The court must condition such a stay upon the tenant's continued payment of rent during the stay period. Upon granting such a stay, the court must award court costs and fees as allowed under this chapter;

(n)(i) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' written notice to vacate prior to the end of the period or rental agreement and the tenant has committed four or more of the following violations, other than ones for monetary damages, within the preceding 12-month period, the tenant has remedied or cured the violation, and the landlord has provided the tenant a written warning notice at the time of each violation: A substantial breach of a material program requirement of subsidized housing, a substantial breach of a material term subscribed to by the tenant within the lease or rental agreement, or a substantial breach of a tenant obligation imposed by law;

(ii) Each written warning notice must:

(A) Specify the violation;

(B) Provide the tenant an opportunity to cure the violation;

(C) State that the landlord may choose to end the tenancy at the end of the rental term if there are four violations within a 12-month period preceding the end of the term; and

(D) State that correcting the fourth or subsequent violation is not a defense to the ending of the lease under this subsection;

(iii) The 60-day notice to vacate must:

(A) State that the rental agreement will end upon the specified ending date for the rental term or upon a designated date not less than 60 days after the delivery of the notice, whichever is later;

(B) Specify the reason for ending the lease and supporting facts; and

(C) Be served to the tenant concurrent with or after the fourth or subsequent written warning notice;

(iv) The notice under this subsection must include all notices supporting the basis of ending the lease;

(v) Any notices asserted under this subsection must pertain to four or more separate incidents or occurrences; and

(vi) This subsection (2)(n) does not absolve a landlord from demonstrating by admissible evidence that the four or more violations constituted breaches under (b) of this subsection at the time of the violation had the tenant not remedied or cured the violation;

(o) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental period or rental agreement if the tenant is required to register as a sex offender during the tenancy, or failed to disclose a requirement to register as a sex offender when required in the rental application or otherwise known to the property owner at the beginning of the tenancy;

(p) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 20 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental period or rental agreement if the tenant has made unwanted sexual advances or other acts of sexual harassment directed at the property owner, property manager, property employee, or another tenant based on the person's race, gender, or other protected status in violation of any covenant or term in the lease.

(3) When a tenant has permanently vacated due to voluntary or involuntary events, other than by the ending of the tenancy by the landlord, a landlord must serve a notice to any remaining occupants who had coresided with the tenant at least six months prior to and up to the time the tenant permanently vacated, requiring the occupants to either apply to become a party to the rental agreement or vacate within 30 days of service of such notice. In processing any application from a remaining occupant under this subsection, the landlord may require the occupant to meet the same screening, background, and financial criteria as would any other prospective tenant to continue the tenancy. If the occupant fails to apply within 30 days of receipt of the notice in this subsection, or the application is denied for failure to meet the criteria, the landlord may commence an unlawful detainer action under this chapter. If an occupant becomes a party to the tenancy pursuant to this subsection, a landlord may not end the tenancy except as provided under subsection (2) of this section. This subsection does not apply to tenants residing in subsidized housing.

(4) A landlord who removes a tenant or causes a tenant to be removed from a dwelling in any way in violation of this section is liable to the tenant for wrongful eviction, and the tenant prevailing in such an action is entitled to the greater of their economic and noneconomic damages or three times the monthly rent of the dwelling at issue, and reasonable attorneys' fees and court costs.

(5) Nothing in subsection (2)(d), (e), or (f) of this section permits a landlord to end a tenancy for a specified period before the completion of the term unless the landlord and the tenant mutually consent, in writing, to ending the tenancy early and the tenant is afforded at least 60 days to vacate.

(6) All written notices required under subsection (2) of this section must:

(a) Be served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040; and

(b) Identify the facts and circumstances known and available to the landlord at the time of the issuance of the notice that support the cause or causes with enough specificity so as to enable the tenant to respond and prepare a defense to any incidents alleged. The landlord may present additional facts and circumstances regarding the allegations within the notice if such evidence was unknown or unavailable at the time of the issuance of the notice. [2021 c 212 s 2.]

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.650 Eviction of tenant, refusal to continue tenancy, end of periodic tenancy—Cause—Notice—Penalties. *(Effective January 1, 2028.)* (1)(a) A landlord may not evict a tenant, refuse to continue a tenancy, or end a periodic tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section and as otherwise provided in this subsection.

(b) If a landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement that provides for the tenancy to continue for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis after the agreement expires, the landlord may not end the tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section; however, a landlord may end such a tenancy at the end of the initial period of the rental agreement without cause only if:

(i) At the inception of the tenancy, the landlord and tenant entered into a rental agreement between six and 12 months; and

(ii) The landlord has provided the tenant before the end of the initial lease period at least 60 days' advance written notice ending the tenancy, served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040.

(c) If a landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement for a specified period in which the tenancy by the terms of the rental agreement does not continue for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis after the end of the specified period, the landlord may end such a tenancy without cause upon expiration of the specified period only if:

(i) At the inception of the tenancy, the landlord and tenant entered into a rental agreement of 12 months or more for a specified period, or the landlord and tenant have continuously and without interruption entered into successive rental agreements of six months or more for a specified period since the inception of the tenancy;

(ii) The landlord has provided the tenant before the end of the specified period at least 60 days' advance written notice that the tenancy will be deemed expired at the end of such specified period, served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040; and

(iii) The tenancy has not been for an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis at any point since the inception of the tenancy. However, for any tenancy of an indefinite period in existence as of May 10, 2021, if the landlord and tenant enter into a rental agreement between May 10, 2021, and three months following the expiration of the governor's proclamation 20-19.6 or any extensions thereof, the landlord may exercise rights under this subsection (1)(c) as if the rental agreement was entered into at the inception of the tenancy provided that the rental agreement is otherwise in accordance with this subsection (1)(c).

(d) For all other tenancies of a specified period not covered under (b) or (c) of this subsection, and for tenancies of an indefinite period on a month-to-month or periodic basis, a landlord may not end the tenancy except for the causes enumerated in subsection (2) of this section. Upon the end date of the tenancy of a specified period, the tenancy becomes a month-to-month tenancy.

(e) Nothing prohibits a landlord and tenant from entering into subsequent lease agreements that are in compliance with the requirements in subsection (2) of this section.

(f) A tenant may end a tenancy for a specified time by providing notice in writing not less than 20 days prior to the ending date of the specified time.

(2) The following reasons listed in this subsection constitute cause pursuant to subsection (1) of this section:

(a) The tenant continues in possession in person or by subtenant after a default in the payment of rent, and after written notice requiring, in the alternative, the payment of the rent or the surrender of the detained premises has remained uncomplied with for the period set forth in RCW 59.12.030(3) for tenants subject to this chapter. The written notice may be served at any time after the rent becomes due;

(b) The tenant continues in possession after substantial breach of a material program requirement of subsidized housing, material term subscribed to by the tenant within the lease or rental agreement, or a tenant obligation imposed by law, other than one for monetary damages, and after the landlord has served written notice specifying the acts or omissions constituting the breach and requiring, in the alternative, that the breach be remedied or the rental agreement will end, and the breach has not been adequately remedied by the date specified in the notice, which date must be at least 10 days after service of the notice;

(c) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least three days' advance written notice to quit after he or she commits or permits waste or nuisance upon the premises, unlawful activity that affects the use and enjoyment of the premises, or other substantial or repeated and unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of the premises by the landlord or neighbors of the tenant;

(d) The tenant continues in possession after the landlord of a dwelling unit in good faith seeks possession so that the owner or his or her immediate family may occupy the unit as that person's principal residence and no substantially equivalent unit is vacant and available to house the owner or his or her immediate family in the same building, and the owner has provided at least 90 days' advance written notice of the date the tenant's possession is to end. There is a rebuttable presumption that the owner did not act in good faith if the owner or immediate family fails to occupy the unit as a principal residence for at least 60 consecutive days during the 90 days immediately after the tenant vacated the unit pursuant to a notice to vacate using this subsection (2)(d) as the cause for the lease ending;

(e) The tenant continues in possession after the owner elects to sell a single-family residence and the landlord has provided at least 90 days' advance written notice of the date the tenant's possession is to end. For the purposes of this subsection (2)(e), an owner "elects to sell" when the owner makes reasonable attempts to sell the dwelling within 30 days after the tenant has vacated, including, at a minimum, listing it for sale at a reasonable price with a realty agency or advertising it for sale at a reasonable price by listing it on the

real estate multiple listing service. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the owner did not intend to sell the unit if:

(i) Within 30 days after the tenant has vacated, the owner does not list the single-family dwelling unit for sale at a reasonable price with a realty agency or advertise it for sale at a reasonable price by listing it on the real estate multiple listing service; or

(ii) Within 90 days after the date the tenant vacated or the date the property was listed for sale, whichever is later, the owner withdraws the rental unit from the market, the landlord rents the unit to someone other than the former tenant, or the landlord otherwise indicates that the owner does not intend to sell the unit;

(f) The tenant continues in possession of the premises after the landlord serves the tenant with advance written notice pursuant to RCW 59.18.200(2)(c);

(g) The tenant continues in possession after the owner elects to withdraw the premises to pursue a conversion pursuant to RCW 64.90.655;

(h) The tenant continues in possession, after the landlord has provided at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate that: (i) The premises has been certified or condemned as uninhabitable by a local agency charged with the authority to issue such an order; and (ii) continued habitation of the premises would subject the landlord to civil or criminal penalties. However, if the terms of the local agency's order do not allow the landlord to provide at least 30 days' advance written notice, the landlord must provide as much advance written notice as is possible and still comply with the order;

(i) The tenant continues in possession after an owner or lessor, with whom the tenant shares the dwelling unit or access to a common kitchen or bathroom area, has served at least 20 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental term or, if a periodic tenancy, the end of the rental period;

(j) The tenant continues in possession of a dwelling unit in transitional housing after having received at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate in advance of the expiration of the transitional housing program, the tenant has aged out of the transitional housing program, or the tenant has completed an educational or training or service program and is no longer eligible to participate in the transitional housing program. Nothing in this subsection (2)(j) prohibits the ending of a tenancy in transitional housing for any of the other causes specified in this subsection;

(k) The tenant continues in possession of a dwelling unit after the expiration of a rental agreement without signing a proposed new rental agreement proffered by the landlord; provided, that the landlord proffered the proposed new rental agreement at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the current rental agreement and that any new terms and conditions of the proposed new rental agreement are reasonable. This subsection (2)(k) does not apply to tenants whose tenancies are or have become periodic;

(l) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 30 days' advance written notice to vacate due to intentional, knowing, and material misrepresentations or omissions made on the tenant's application at the inception of the tenancy that, had these misrepresentations or omissions not been made, would have resulted in the landlord requesting additional information or taking an adverse action;

(m) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' advance written notice to vacate for other good cause

prior to the end of the period or rental agreement and such cause constitutes a legitimate economic or business reason not covered or related to a basis for ending the lease as enumerated under this subsection (2). When the landlord relies on this basis for ending the tenancy, the court may stay any writ of restitution for up to 60 additional days for good cause shown, including difficulty procuring alternative housing. The court must condition such a stay upon the tenant's continued payment of rent during the stay period. Upon granting such a stay, the court must award court costs and fees as allowed under this chapter;

(n)(i) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' written notice to vacate prior to the end of the period or rental agreement and the tenant has committed four or more of the following violations, other than ones for monetary damages, within the preceding 12-month period, the tenant has remedied or cured the violation, and the landlord has provided the tenant a written warning notice at the time of each violation: A substantial breach of a material program requirement of subsidized housing, a substantial breach of a material term subscribed to by the tenant within the lease or rental agreement, or a substantial breach of a tenant obligation imposed by law;

(ii) Each written warning notice must:

(A) Specify the violation;

(B) Provide the tenant an opportunity to cure the violation;

(C) State that the landlord may choose to end the tenancy at the end of the rental term if there are four violations within a 12-month period preceding the end of the term; and

(D) State that correcting the fourth or subsequent violation is not a defense to the ending of the lease under this subsection;

(iii) The 60-day notice to vacate must:

(A) State that the rental agreement will end upon the specified ending date for the rental term or upon a designated date not less than 60 days after the delivery of the notice, whichever is later;

(B) Specify the reason for ending the lease and supporting facts; and

(C) Be served to the tenant concurrent with or after the fourth or subsequent written warning notice;

(iv) The notice under this subsection must include all notices supporting the basis of ending the lease;

(v) Any notices asserted under this subsection must pertain to four or more separate incidents or occurrences; and

(vi) This subsection (2)(n) does not absolve a landlord from demonstrating by admissible evidence that the four or more violations constituted breaches under (b) of this subsection at the time of the violation had the tenant not remedied or cured the violation;

(o) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 60 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental period or rental agreement if the tenant is required to register as a sex offender during the tenancy, or failed to disclose a requirement to register as a sex offender when required in the rental application or otherwise known to the property owner at the beginning of the tenancy;

(p) The tenant continues in possession after having received at least 20 days' advance written notice to vacate prior to the end of the rental period or rental agreement if the tenant has made unwanted sexual advances or other acts of sexual harassment directed at the property owner, property manager, property employee, or another tenant

based on the person's race, gender, or other protected status in violation of any covenant or term in the lease.

(3) When a tenant has permanently vacated due to voluntary or involuntary events, other than by the ending of the tenancy by the landlord, a landlord must serve a notice to any remaining occupants who had coresided with the tenant at least six months prior to and up to the time the tenant permanently vacated, requiring the occupants to either apply to become a party to the rental agreement or vacate within 30 days of service of such notice. In processing any application from a remaining occupant under this subsection, the landlord may require the occupant to meet the same screening, background, and financial criteria as would any other prospective tenant to continue the tenancy. If the occupant fails to apply within 30 days of receipt of the notice in this subsection, or the application is denied for failure to meet the criteria, the landlord may commence an unlawful detainer action under this chapter. If an occupant becomes a party to the tenancy pursuant to this subsection, a landlord may not end the tenancy except as provided under subsection (2) of this section. This subsection does not apply to tenants residing in subsidized housing.

(4) A landlord who removes a tenant or causes a tenant to be removed from a dwelling in any way in violation of this section is liable to the tenant for wrongful eviction, and the tenant prevailing in such an action is entitled to the greater of their economic and noneconomic damages or three times the monthly rent of the dwelling at issue, and reasonable attorneys' fees and court costs.

(5) Nothing in subsection (2)(d), (e), or (f) of this section permits a landlord to end a tenancy for a specified period before the completion of the term unless the landlord and the tenant mutually consent, in writing, to ending the tenancy early and the tenant is afforded at least 60 days to vacate.

(6) All written notices required under subsection (2) of this section must:

(a) Be served in a manner consistent with RCW 59.12.040; and

(b) Identify the facts and circumstances known and available to the landlord at the time of the issuance of the notice that support the cause or causes with enough specificity so as to enable the tenant to respond and prepare a defense to any incidents alleged. The landlord may present additional facts and circumstances regarding the allegations within the notice if such evidence was unknown or unavailable at the time of the issuance of the notice. [2024 c 321 s 409; 2021 c 212 s 2.]

Effective dates—2024 c 321 ss 319 and 401-432: See note following RCW 64.90.485.

Effective date—2021 c 212: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.670 Security deposit—Landlord waiver, disclosure form—Fee in lieu—Claims for losses—Judicial action, collection activity—Violation. (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a landlord chooses to waive a security deposit requirement, and a tenant agrees to instead pay a fee in lieu of a security deposit, the landlord shall:

(a) Ensure that the fee in lieu of a security deposit is strictly optional for the tenant, and the tenant may choose to pay a full security deposit rather than a fee in lieu of a security deposit;

(b) Not use a prospective tenant's choice to pay a fee in lieu of a security deposit or a traditional security deposit as a criterion in the determination of whether to approve an application for occupancy;

(c) If choosing to offer the fee in lieu of a security deposit option, offer it to every prospective tenant whose application for occupancy has been approved, without further regard to income, race, gender, disability, source of income, sexual orientation, immigration status, size of household, or credit score;

(d) Allow any tenant that agrees to pay a fee in lieu of a security deposit to opt out of the continuing fee in lieu of a security deposit obligation upon full payment of the security deposit that is listed in the disclosure form pursuant to (f)(ii) of this subsection, and in the event the tenant seeks to pay a security deposit, RCW 59.18.610 shall apply;

(e) Provide a written checklist to the tenant pursuant to RCW 59.18.260; and

(f)(i) Disclose to the tenant in writing:

(A) The terms of any insurance coverage purchased by the landlord for landlord's losses associated with any unpaid amounts due from the tenant to the landlord pursuant to the lease, including but not limited to rent, fees, or unit damage in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, and including the amount of exclusions or caps, if any, on coverage of any amounts due from the tenant to the landlord pursuant to the lease; and

(B) If the insurance provider requires the landlord to first attempt reimbursement from the tenant before filing a claim, that payment of the fee in lieu of a security deposit does not preclude the insurer or the landlord from proceeding against the tenant to recover any unpaid amounts due to the landlord pursuant to the lease and unpaid costs to repair damage to the property for which the tenant is responsible pursuant to the lease but never to include any sums for wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, together with reasonable attorneys' fees.

(ii) Such disclosures to the tenant must be in substantially the following form:

YOU MAY PAY A MONTHLY FEE INSTEAD OF A SECURITY DEPOSIT. This fee is not a security deposit and will not be refunded when you move. By paying this fee the landlord is permitting you to move into the housing unit without paying a security deposit. If you do not make all payments or you damage the premises beyond wear resulting from its ordinary use, you may be required by the landlord, an insurance company, or a debt collector to pay the unpaid amounts, including costs of repairing the damages in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises.

Washington state law may allow you three different options:

(1) Paying the full security deposit upon signing the lease.

(2) If applicable, paying the full security deposit and other move-in fees in up to three installments (see below for more detail).

*****some local laws provide for a longer period of time.***

(3) If offered by your landlord, paying a monthly deposit waiver fee instead of a security deposit. If you choose this option, you will not pay a security deposit or last month's rent in advance. Your

recurring monthly charge will be $____ IN ADDITION to your monthly rent payment, instead of a security deposit and/or last month's rent in the amount of $____.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO PAY A MONTHLY DEPOSIT WAIVER FEE INSTEAD OF A SECURITY DEPOSIT, HERE IS THE AMOUNT YOU WILL PAY OVER THE LEASE TERM COMPARED TO THE ONE-TIME DEPOSIT PAYMENT:

Monthly Nonrefundable Deposit Waiver Fee:	**One-time Refundable Security**
Total cost of monthly fees over lease term:	**Deposit: _____**

In the event your tenancy terminates and you have not paid rent or other amounts due pursuant to the lease, and you have not paid to repair damages beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, insurance coverage will pay your landlord up to:

$_____ for any unpaid rent and fees, and

$_____ for any damages.

Total coverage: $_____

IMPORTANT: IF YOU CHOOSE TO PAY A RECURRING MONTHLY FEE INSTEAD OF A SECURITY DEPOSIT:

(1) YOU ARE NOT AN INSURED PARTY UNDER THE INSURANCE POLICY PURCHASED BY THE LANDLORD USING YOUR FEES;

(2) YOU ARE NOT A BENEFICIARY TO ANY INSURANCE COVERAGE OR ANY INSURANCE BENEFITS UNDER THE INSURANCE POLICY THAT THE LANDLORD PURCHASES USING YOUR FEES; AND

(3) YOU ARE STILL OBLIGATED TO PAY RENT AND ALL PAYMENTS REQUIRED BY THE LEASE, INCLUDING COSTS TO REPAIR DAMAGES BEYOND WEAR RESULTING FROM ORDINARY USE OF THE PREMISES.

The landlord may seek payment from you before filing any claims with the insurance provider. If you fail to pay the landlord for unpaid rent or other unpaid payments or the costs to repair damages beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, and an insurer pays the landlord instead, then the insurer may seek reimbursement from you of its payments to the landlord.

If you choose to pay a recurring monthly fee instead of a security deposit, then you are permitted at any time to pay the landlord a security deposit in the amount of $_____ and stop paying the recurring fee beginning in the month following payment of the security deposit.

(iii) The landlord shall provide the disclosure form to the tenant with any lease and renewal that includes the option to pay a fee instead of a security deposit.

(iv) The office of the attorney general shall make this form available in the 12 most commonly spoken languages in Washington.

(2) Any fee in lieu of a security deposit:

(a) May be entirely or partially nonrefundable, so long as this is disclosed in the lease and separately acknowledged by the tenant;

(b) Does not constitute rent as defined in RCW 59.18.030 and failure to pay may not constitute a cause for eviction under any grounds set forth in RCW 59.18.650, provided that nothing in this section shall preclude the landlord from proceeding in a civil action

against, and the landlord shall have the right to proceed against, a tenant to recover unpaid fees;

(c) Must be utilized by the landlord to purchase, from a lawful insurer, coverage for landlord's losses associated with any unpaid amounts due from the tenant to the landlord pursuant to the lease, including but not limited to rent, fees, or unit damage in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, provided that a landlord may not charge a fee that is more than the cost of obtaining and administering such insurance;

(i) In the event the landlord fails to purchase or maintain the insurance provided for in this subsection (2)(c), and if the tenant pays the monthly fee as agreed, the landlord shall credit the total insurance coverage stated in the disclosure to any indebtedness owed by the tenant upon the tenant vacating the unit. However, if through no fault of the landlord, the insurer is suddenly unable to do business in Washington state or is otherwise incapable of fulfilling its obligation, the landlord is not required to credit the insurance coverage stated in the disclosure to any indebtedness owed by the tenant upon the tenant vacating the unit.

(ii) The landlord may not discontinue or alter the terms of insurance during the term of the rental agreement. However, if the landlord decides to discontinue providing the option of paying a fee in lieu of a security deposit, the landlord shall:

(A) Provide 60 days' notice to the tenant prior to end of term or period;

(B) Reduce the deposit by the amount of a tenant's previous fee payments in lieu of the deposit; and

(C) Offer the tenant an installment plan to pay any remaining balance for the security deposit over three months;

(d) May be a recurring monthly fee, or payable upon any schedule and in any amount that the landlord and tenant choose, provided that the first month's fee is a nonrefundable fee as contemplated under RCW 59.18.610; and

(e) Shall not be considered by a court, arbitrator, mediator, or any other dispute resolution adjudicator to be a security deposit or governed by state or local codes governing security deposits.

(3)(a) If an insurer compensates a landlord for a valid claim associated with the landlord's losses pursuant to the lease, including but not limited to rent, fees, or unit damage in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises:

(i) The landlord may not seek reimbursement of the amounts from the tenant that the insurer paid to the landlord;

(ii) In the event the insurer has subrogation rights, the insurer may seek reimbursement from the tenant but only for the amounts paid to the landlord that were owed by the tenant to the landlord pursuant to the lease, and in no circumstances for amounts, if any, paid to the landlord for repair of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises; and

(iii) The tenant is entitled to any defenses to payment against the insurer as against the landlord, including any defenses under RCW 59.18.280 or other relevant laws.

(b) If the insurer or any other collector seeks reimbursement from the tenant pursuant to any subrogation rights available to the insurer, with any request for reimbursement, the party must provide the tenant by first-class mail, and email if available, at the last known address as provided by the landlord:

(i) All documentation or other evidence submitted by the landlord for reimbursement by the insurer;

(ii) All documentation or evidence of repair costs that the landlord submitted to the insurer;

(iii) A copy of the settled claim that documents payments made by the insurer to the landlord; and

(iv) Information about how to contact the insurer or collector seeking reimbursement to dispute any claim.

(c) If the tenant fails to pay a request by an insurer or collector for reimbursement under this subsection, the party seeking reimbursement may not commence collection activities against the tenant less than 60 days after sending a request for reimbursement and providing documentation as required under (b) of this subsection. However, if the tenant has disputed the claim, the party seeking reimbursement shall defer any collection activities for an additional 60 days to resolve the dispute.

(d) Except as provided in (e) of this subsection, the landlord may not send an invoice to a tenant or undertake collection activity against the tenant for any amounts after submitting a claim to the insurer if:

(i) The insurer approved the claim;

(ii) The insurer denied the claim because it is not a loss pursuant to the lease; or

(iii) The insurer denied the claim because the landlord submitted insufficient documentation or proof to substantiate the claim.

(e) Notwithstanding (d) of this subsection, the landlord may invoice the tenant and undertake collection activity against a tenant for landlord's losses if the insurer denies the claim because the loss is not covered pursuant to the insurance agreement, including if the value of the loss exceeded the insurance coverage loss limit.

(4) Any judicial action or other collection activity by a landlord to recover losses from a tenant who has paid a fee in lieu of a security deposit and has vacated the dwelling unit, including for unpaid rent, unpaid fees, or the costs of repairing damages in excess of wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, shall be commenced within one year of the termination of the rental agreement or the tenant's abandonment of the premises and shall otherwise comply with the requirements in RCW 59.18.280 insofar as they relate to documentation of damages, standards for damages beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises, or other standards of proof required to make a claim against a deposit in RCW 59.18.280.

(a) Prior to undertaking collection activity for damages arising out of the tenancy after a tenant who has paid a fee in lieu of a security deposit vacates, the landlord must:

(i) Notify the tenant of the damages or any unpaid rent or fees in a manner consistent with RCW 59.18.280 or other relevant law;

(ii) Forward to the tenant documentation substantiating the damages; and

(iii) For the purposes of allowing ample time for the insurance company to consider the landlord's insurance policy, including coverage and sufficiency of the claims and documentation submitted, including appeals, if any, of the insurer's claims decision, not undertake any collection activity for any debt against the tenant until 60 days after notifying the tenant and providing the documentation pursuant to (a)(i) and (ii) of this subsection, whichever is later.

(b) Where the tenant has opted into paying a fee in lieu of a security deposit in subsection (1) of this section, the landlord shall not undertake collection activities against the tenant unless 60 days have passed after the landlord has submitted a claim to the insurer. However, nothing in this subsection (4)(b) shall be construed to prohibit the landlord from sending an invoice to the tenant before submitting a claim to the insurer.

(c) This subsection (4) shall not apply where the tenant opts out of, or the landlord discontinues providing the option of, paying a continuing fee in lieu of a security deposit during the tenancy and the tenant provides full payment of a security deposit prior to the termination of the rental agreement or the tenant's abandonment of the premises.

(5) A landlord found in material violation of chapter 81, Laws of 2022 shall be held liable to the tenant in a civil action up to two times the monthly rent of the real property unit at issue, as well as court or arbitration costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(6) As used in this section, "collection activity" means attempts to collect any monetary obligation or damages from the tenant, including threats or notice to collect any such amounts through a collection agency or filing of a judicial action, provided that it shall not mean the transmission of an invoice and supporting detail of unpaid rent, unpaid fees[,] or the cost of repairing damages beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises. [2022 c 81 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.700 Landlord—Prohibition on certain rent increases—Notice—Enforcement—Penalties. *(Expires July 1, 2040.)* (1)(a) Except as authorized by an exemption under RCW 59.18.710, a landlord may not increase the rent for any type of tenancy, regardless of whether the tenancy is month-to-month or for a term greater or lesser than month-to-month:

(i) During the first 12 months after the tenancy begins; and

(ii) During any 12-month period of the tenancy, in an amount greater than seven percent plus the consumer price index, or 10 percent, whichever is less.

(b) This subsection (1) does not prohibit a landlord from adjusting the rent by any amount after a tenant vacates the dwelling unit and the tenancy ends.

(c) Beginning June 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the department of commerce shall calculate the maximum annual rent increase percentage allowed under (a) of this subsection for the following calendar year and publish the information on their website and in a press release. For the purposes of this subsection, "consumer price index" means the June 12-month percent change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers, all items, for the Seattle area as published by the United States bureau of labor statistics.

(2) If a landlord increases the rent above the amount allowed in subsection (1) of this section as authorized by an exemption under RCW 59.18.710, the landlord must include facts supporting any claimed exemptions in the written notice of the rent increase. Notice must comply with this section, RCW 59.18.720, 59.18.140, and be served in accordance with RCW 59.12.040.

(3) If a landlord increases rent above the amount allowed in subsection (1) of this section and the increase is not authorized by an exemption under RCW 59.18.710, the tenant must offer the landlord

an opportunity to cure the unauthorized increase by providing the landlord with a written demand to reduce the increase to an amount that complies with the limit created in this section. In addition to any other remedies or relief available under this chapter or other law, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement at any time prior to the effective date of the increase by providing the landlord with written notice at least 20 days before terminating the rental agreement. If a tenant terminates a rental agreement under this subsection, the tenant owes rent for the full month in which the tenant vacates the dwelling unit. A landlord may not charge a tenant any fines or fees for terminating a rental agreement under this subsection.

(4)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a landlord may not include terms of payment or other material conditions in a rental agreement that are more burdensome to a tenant for a month-to-month rental agreement than for a rental agreement where the term is greater or lesser than month-to-month, or vice versa.

(b) A landlord must provide parity between lease types with respect to the amount of rent charged for a specific dwelling unit. For the purposes of this subsection, "parity between lease types" means that, for leases or rental agreements that a landlord offers for a specific dwelling unit, the landlord may not charge a tenant more than a five percent difference in rent depending on the type of lease or rental agreement offered, regardless of whether the type of lease or rental agreement offered is on a month-to-month or other periodic basis or for a specified period. This five percent difference may not cause the rent charged for a specific dwelling unit to exceed the rent increase limit in subsection (1) of this section.

(5)(a) A tenant or the attorney general may bring an action in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce compliance with this section or RCW 59.18.710, 59.18.720, or 59.18.140. If the court finds that a landlord violated any of the laws listed in this subsection, the court shall award the following damages to the tenant and attorneys' fees and costs to the tenant who brings the action or the attorney general:

(i) Damages in the amount of any excess rent, fees, or other costs paid by the tenant;

(ii) Damages in an amount of up to three months of any unlawful rent, fees, or other costs charged by the landlord; and

(iii) Reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in bringing the action.

(b) The attorney general may bring an action under this subsection notwithstanding whether the tenant has offered the landlord an opportunity to cure, and may recover civil penalties of not more than $7,500 for each violation in addition to other remedies provided by this subsection. The attorney general may issue written civil investigative demands for pertinent documents, answers to written interrogatories, or oral testimony as required to investigate or bring an action under this subsection.

(6) The remedies provided by this section are in addition to any other remedies provided by law.

(7) A landlord may not report the tenant to a tenant screening service provider for failure to pay the portion of the tenant's rent that was unlawfully increased in violation of this section.

(8) This section expires July 1, 2040. [2025 c 209 s 101.]

Effective date—2025 c 209: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 7, 2025]." [2025 c 209 s 301.]

RCW 59.18.710 Landlord—Prohibition on certain rent increases—Exemptions. ***(Expires July 1, 2040.)*** (1) A landlord may increase rent in an amount greater than allowed under RCW 59.18.700 only as authorized by the exemptions described in this section. Rent increases are not limited by RCW 59.18.700 for any of the following types of tenancies:

(a) A tenancy in a dwelling unit for which the first certificate of occupancy was issued 12 or less years before the date of the notice of the rent increase.

(b) A tenancy in a dwelling unit owned by a:

(i) Public housing authority;

(ii) Public development authority;

(iii) Nonprofit organization, where maximum rents are regulated by other laws or local, state, or federal affordable housing program requirements; or

(iv) Nonprofit entity, as defined in RCW 84.36.560, where a nonprofit organization, housing authority, or public development authority has the majority decision-making power on behalf of the general partner, and where maximum rents are regulated by other laws or local, state, or federal affordable housing program requirements.

(c) A tenancy in a qualified low-income housing development as defined in RCW 82.45.010, where the property is owned by any of the organizations described in (b)(i) through (iv) of this subsection.

(d) A tenancy in a qualified low-income housing development which was allocated federal low-income housing tax credits authorized under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 42 or successor statute, by the Washington state housing finance commission or successor state-authorized tax credit allocating agency, so long as there is an enforceable regulatory agreement with the Washington state housing finance commission under the low-income housing tax credit program.

(e) A tenancy in a dwelling unit in which the tenant shares a bathroom or kitchen facility with the owner who maintains a principal residence at the residential real property.

(f) A tenancy in a single-family owner-occupied residence, including a residence in which the owner-occupant rents or leases no more than two units or bedrooms including, but not limited to, an attached or detached accessory dwelling unit.

(g) A tenancy in a duplex, triplex, or fourplex in which the owner occupied one of the units as the owner's principal place of residence at the beginning of the tenancy, so long as the owner continues the occupancy.

(2) Subsection (1)(e) through (g) of this section only apply where the owner is not any of the following:

(a) A real estate investment trust, as defined in section 856 of the internal revenue code;

(b) A corporation; or

(c) A limited liability company in which at least one member is a corporation.

(3) This section expires July 1, 2040. [2025 c 209 s 102.]

Effective date—2025 c 209: See note following RCW 59.18.700.

RCW 59.18.720 Landlord—Notice of rent increases—Form. ***(Expires July 1, 2040.)*** (1)(a) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, a landlord must provide a tenant with notice of rent increases in a form that is substantially the same as the form provided in subsection (3) of this section.

(b) Notice under this section must also:

(i) Comply with the requirements in RCW 59.18.140 related to the number of days of prior written notice required for a rent increase; and

(ii) Be served in accordance with RCW 59.12.040.

(2) The notice of rent increase requirement in this section does not apply if the rental agreement governs a subsidized tenancy where the amount of rent is based on, in whole or in part, a percentage of the income of the tenant or other circumstances specific to the subsidized household. However, for purposes of this section, a subsidized tenancy does not include tenancies where some or all of the rent paid to the landlord comes from a portable tenant-based voucher or similar portable assistance administered through a housing authority or other state or local agency, or tenancies in other types of affordable housing where maximum unit rents are limited by area median income levels and a tenant's base rent does not change as the tenant's income does.

(3) "TO TENANT(S): (tenant name(s))

AT ADDRESS: (tenant address)

RENT AND FEE INCREASE NOTICE TO TENANTS

This notice is required by Washington state law to inform you of your rights regarding rent and fee increases. Your rent or rental amount includes all recurring and periodic charges, sometimes referred to as rent and fees, identified in your rental agreement for the use and occupancy of your rental unit. Washington state limits how much your landlord can raise your rent and any other recurring or periodic charges for the use and occupancy of your rental unit.

(1) Your landlord can raise your rent and any other recurring or periodic charges identified in the rental agreement for use and occupancy of your rental unit once every 12 months by up to seven percent plus consumer price index, or 10 percent, whichever is less, as allowed by RCW 59.18.700. Your landlord is not required to raise the rent or other recurring or periodic charges by any amount.

(2) Your landlord may be exempt from the limit on increases for rent and other recurring or periodic charges for the reasons described in RCW 59.18.710. If your landlord claims an exemption, your landlord is required to include supporting facts with this notice.

(3) Your landlord must properly and fully complete the form below to notify you of any increases in rent and other recurring or periodic charges and any exemptions claimed.

Your landlord (name) intends to (check one of the following):

__ Raise your rent and/or other recurring or periodic charges: Your total increase for rent and other recurring or periodic charges effective (date) will be (percent), which totals an additional $ (dollar amount) per month, for a new total amount of $(dollar amount) per month for rent and other recurring or periodic charges.

This increase for rent and/or other recurring or periodic charges is allowed by state law and is (check one of the following):

__ A lower increase than the maximum allowed by state law.
__ The maximum increase allowed by state law.
__ Authorized by an exemption under RCW 59.18.710. If the increase is authorized by an exemption, your landlord must fill out the section of the form below.

EXEMPTIONS CLAIMED BY LANDLORD

I (landlord name) certify that I am allowed under Washington state law to raise your rent and other recurring or periodic charges by (percent), which is more than the maximum increase otherwise allowed by state law, because I am claiming the following exemption under RCW 59.18.710 (check one of the following):

__ The first certificate of occupancy for your dwelling unit was issued on (insert date), which is 12 or less years before the date of this increase notice for rent and other recurring or periodic charges. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)

__ You live in a dwelling unit owned by a public housing authority, public development authority, or nonprofit organization where maximum rents are regulated by other laws or local, state, or federal affordable housing program requirements, or a qualified low-income housing development as defined in RCW 82.45.010, where the property is owned by a public housing authority, public development authority, or nonprofit organization. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)

__ You live in a qualified low-income housing development which was allocated federal low-income housing tax credits by the Washington state housing finance commission and there is an enforceable regulatory agreement under the low-income housing tax credit program. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)

__ You live in a dwelling unit in which you share a bathroom or kitchen facility with the owner, and the owner maintains a principal residence at the residential real property. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)

__ You live in a single-family owner-occupied residence in which the owner-occupant rents or leases no more than two units or bedrooms including, but not limited to, an attached or detached accessory dwelling unit. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)

__ You live in a duplex, triplex, or fourplex in which the owner occupied one of the units as the owner's principal place of residence at the beginning of the tenancy, and the owner continues in occupancy. (The landlord must include facts or attach documents supporting the exemption.)"

(4) This section expires July 1, 2040. [2025 c 209 s 103.]

Effective date—2025 c 209: See note following RCW 59.18.700.

RCW 59.18.730 Online landlord resource center. The department of commerce shall create an online landlord resource center to distribute information to landlords about available programs, associated services, and resources including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The landlord mitigation program created in RCW 43.31.605;

(2) The low-income residential weatherization programs created in chapter 70A.35 RCW; and

(3) Any other programs and resources that the department of commerce determines are relevant. [2025 c 209 s 105.]

Effective date—2025 c 209: See note following RCW 59.18.700.

RCW 59.18.740 Portable cooling device installation. (1) Except as provided under subsections (3) through (5) of this section, a landlord may not prohibit or restrict a tenant from installing a portable cooling device of the tenant's choosing.

(2) A landlord may not require a fee for the use, inspection, or installation of a portable cooling device. Nothing in this section shall preclude a landlord from charging for the rental of a portable cooling device rented by a tenant from the landlord, nor for any damages arising out of a tenant's use of a portable cooling device.

(3) A landlord may prohibit or restrict a tenant from installing a portable cooling device of any type if the dwelling already has a permanently installed and fully operational heat pump, or if installation of the device would:

(a) Violate state or local building codes, state law, or federal law;

(b) Violate the device manufacturer's written safety guidelines for the device;

(c) Cause unreasonable damage to the premises or render the premises uninhabitable; or

(d) Require an electrical supply to power the device that cannot be accommodated by the existing power service to the building, dwelling unit, or circuit.

(4)(a) A landlord may prohibit or restrict a tenant from installing a window-mounted portable cooling device if:

(i) The window is a necessary egress from the dwelling unit and the device would interfere with its use as egress;

(ii) The device would interfere with the tenant's ability to lock a window that is accessible from outside;

(iii) The device requires the excessive use of brackets or other hardware that would damage or void the warranty of the window or frame, puncture the exterior wall of the building, or otherwise cause significant damage;

(iv) The device cannot be secured in a way that prevents it from falling out of the window; or

(v) The landlord's insurance policy for the dwelling occupied by the tenant expressly restricts or prohibits the use of window-mounted portable cooling devices, and the landlord has provided written evidence of insurance policy restrictions or prohibitions to the tenant.

(b) As a condition of installing a portable cooling device, a landlord may require that the device be adequately drained to prevent damage to the dwelling unit or building.

(5) To verify compliance with the installation limitations allowed under this section, a landlord may also require that a window-mounted portable cooling device be subject to one or more of the following:

(a) Inspection after installation; or

(b) Servicing after installation.

(6) A tenant must provide at least two days' notice to a landlord prior to the installation of a window-mounted portable cooling device.

(7) A landlord is immune from liability for any claim for damages, injury, or death caused by a portable cooling device installed by the tenant.

(8) If a landlord restricts or prohibits installation of window-mounted portable cooling devices, the landlord must notify tenants in their leases of their rights, responsibilities, and any restrictions or prohibitions related to installation of window-mounted portable cooling devices as specified in subsection (4)(a)(i) through (v) of this section.

(9) Nothing under this section shall be construed to limit the responsibilities of landlords to provide reasonable accommodations under existing state and federal law.

(10) A landlord is not responsible for any interruption in electrical service resulting from the installation of a portable cooling device that is not caused by the landlord, including interruptions caused by an electrical supply's inability to accommodate use of a portable cooling device.

(11) Nothing in this section shall preclude a landlord from retaining a portion of a security deposit for a lawful purpose under RCW 59.18.280.

(12) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Portable cooling device" means an air conditioner or portable heat pump, including a device mounted in a window or designed to sit on the floor, but does not include devices whose installation or use require excessive alteration to the dwelling unit including, but not limited to, the excessive use of brackets or other hardware under subsection (4)(a)(iii) of this section.

(b) "Saddle-mounted portable cooling device" means a portable cooling device that hangs over the windowsill with interior and exterior components rather than sitting on top of it, such that the window view is not fully obstructed and the device will not fall when the window is opened, and includes u-shaped portable cooling devices.

(c) "Window-mounted portable cooling device" means a portable cooling device that is installed to sit in the window but does not include a saddle-mounted portable cooling device, a u-shaped portable cooling device, or a floor-mounted device that is connected to a window for air exchange or ventilation. [2026 c 184 s 1.]

RCW 59.18.750 Smart access systems—Alternative keys. ***(Effective January 1, 2027.)*** If requested by a tenant, a landlord must offer the tenant an alternative key that does not use biometric identifier information or a software application operated on a tenant's mobile phone or other similar electronic device. Examples of alternative keys include, but are not limited to:

(1) A key fob;

(2) A key card;

(3) A physical key;

(4) A method of entry that solely relies upon a keypad or similar device that utilizes the manual entering of a coded sequence of numbers, letters, or both; or

(5) Other form of physical access. [2026 c 55 s 2.]

Effective date—2026 c 55: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.755 Smart access systems—Privacy policy. *(Effective January 1, 2027.)* (1) The landlord of a smart access building shall make available to tenants any written privacy policy of the entity that developed the smart access system utilized in such building, or any written privacy policy of the entity that currently operates the smart access system utilized in the building.

(2) The landlord of a smart access building, or an agent thereof, must provide to tenants, either upon the initial signing of a lease agreement or within five days of the installation of the smart access system, a written policy in plain language that describes, at a minimum, the following information if it is not included in the privacy policy described in subsection (1) of this section:

(a) The data elements to be collected by the smart access system, including the extent to which data elements are collected that contain information of, or relating to, the guests of a tenant;

(b) The protocols and safeguards the landlord will provide for protecting such data elements;

(c) The retention schedule of such data;

(d) The protocols the landlord will follow to address any suspected or actual unauthorized access to or disclosure of such data elements, including notification of users;

(e) Guidelines for permanently destroying or anonymizing such data or removing such data from the smart access system; and

(f) The process used to add a tenant who has provided written consent on a temporary basis to the smart access system.

(3) If the information required to be provided under subsection (2) of this section is provided by the smart access system developer and the landlord does not retain or sell any information from the smart access system, a landlord is compliant with the requirements of this section by providing the privacy policy of the developer or by providing a link to the developer's website which contains the privacy policy of the smart access system. [2026 c 55 s 3.]

Effective date—2026 c 55: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.760 Smart access systems—User data collection. *(Effective January 1, 2027.)* (1) A landlord of a smart access building or third party may collect only the minimum amount of authentication data and reference data necessary to enable the use of a smart access system for the purpose of granting a user access to a building, its elevators, its common areas, or to a user's dwelling.

(2) A smart access system may only collect, generate, or utilize the following information:

(a) A user's name;

(b) The dwelling unit number and other doors or common areas to which the user has access using a smart access system in a building;

(c) A user's preferred method of contact;

(d) A user's biometric identifier information if a smart access system utilizes biometric identifier information;

(e) The identification card number or any identifier associated with the physical hardware used to facilitate building entry, including radio frequency identification card, bluetooth, or other similar technical protocols;

(f) Passwords, passcodes, user names, and contact information used singly or in conjunction with other reference data to grant a

user entry to a smart access building, dwelling unit of a building, or common area of a building through the building's smart access system, or to access any online tools used to manage user accounts related to a building;

(g) Lease information, including move-in and, if available, move-out dates; and

(h) The time and method of access, solely for security and operational purposes. [2026 c 55 s 4.]

Effective date—2026 c 55: See note following RCW 59.18.030.

RCW 59.18.900 Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 207. If any provision of this chapter, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or its application to other persons or circumstances, is not affected. [1973 1st ex.s. c 207 s 37.]

RCW 59.18.911 Effective date—1989 c 342. This act shall take effect on August 1, 1989, and shall apply to landlord-tenant relationships existing on or entered into after the effective date of this act. [1989 c 342 s 19.]

RCW 59.18.912 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521. For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 s 139.]