

**Chapter 3.50 RCW**  
**MUNICIPAL COURTS—ALTERNATE PROVISION**

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**Rules of court:** See *Rules for Appeal of Decisions of Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (RALJ)*.

**RCW 3.50.003 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "City" means an incorporated city or town.

(2) "Contracting city" means any city that contracts with a hosting jurisdiction for the delivery of judicial services.

(3) "Hosting jurisdiction" means a county or city designated in an interlocal agreement as receiving compensation for providing judicial services to a contracting city.

(4) "Mayor" means the mayor, city manager, or other chief administrative officer of the city. [2008 c 227 s 3; 1984 c 258 s 125.]

**Effective date—2008 c 227:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2008." [2008 c 227 s 13.]

**Subheadings not law—2008 c 227:** "Subheadings used in this act are not any part of the law." [2008 c 227 s 14.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.005 Legislative finding—Alternative court structure for cities and towns of four hundred thousand or less.** The legislature finds that there is a multitude of statutes governing the municipal courts of the state. This situation is confusing and misleading to attorneys, judges, court personnel, and others who work with the municipal courts. The legislature therefore finds that a reorganization of the municipal courts of the state would allow those courts to operate in a more effective and efficient manner. This chapter provides a court structure which may be used by cities and towns with a population of four hundred thousand or less which choose to operate under this chapter. [1984 c 258 s 101.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—**  
**Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** "The enactment of sections 101 through 139 of this act shall not affect any case, proceeding, appeal, or other matter pending in any court operating under Title 35 or 35A RCW on the effective date of this act [July 1, 1984]. The enactment of sections 101 through 139 of this act shall not have the effect of terminating or in any way modifying any right or liability, civil or criminal, which may be in existence on the effective date of this act [July 1, 1984]." [1984 c 258 s 128.]

**RCW 3.50.010 Municipal court authorized in cities of four hundred thousand or less.** Any city or town with a population of four hundred thousand or less may by ordinance provide for an inferior court to be known and designated as a municipal court, which shall be entitled "The Municipal Court of . . . . . (insert name of city or town)," hereinafter designated and referred to as "municipal court," which court shall have jurisdiction and shall exercise all powers by this chapter declared to be vested in the municipal court, together with such other powers and jurisdiction as are generally conferred upon such court in this state either by common law or by express statute. However, no municipal court established under this section shall have jurisdiction over any matter until six months after a notice of intent to create a new municipal court is sent to the administrative office of the courts. [2024 c 61 s 1; 1984 c 258 s 103; 1961 c 299 s 50.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—**  
**Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.020 Jurisdiction.** The municipal court shall have exclusive original jurisdiction over traffic infractions arising under city ordinances and exclusive original criminal jurisdiction of all violations of city ordinances duly adopted by the city and shall have original jurisdiction of all other actions brought to enforce or recover license penalties or forfeitures declared or given by such ordinances or by state statutes. A hosting jurisdiction shall have exclusive original criminal and other jurisdiction as described in this section for all matters filed by a contracting city. The municipal court shall also have the jurisdiction as conferred by statute. The municipal court is empowered to forfeit cash bail or bail bonds and issue execution thereon; and in general to hear and determine all causes, civil or criminal, including traffic infractions, arising under such ordinances and to pronounce judgment in accordance therewith. A municipal court participating in the program established by the administrative office of the courts pursuant to RCW 2.56.160 shall have jurisdiction to take recognizance, approve bail, and arraign defendants held within its jurisdiction on warrants issued by any court of limited jurisdiction participating in

the program. [2008 c 227 s 5; 2005 c 282 s 14; 2000 c 111 s 6; 1985 c 303 s 14; 1984 c 258 s 104; 1979 ex.s. c 136 s 17; 1961 c 299 s 51.]

**Effective date—Subheadings not law—2008 c 227:** See notes following RCW 3.50.003.

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 136:** See notes following RCW 46.63.010.

**RCW 3.50.030 Violations bureau for traffic cases—Disposition of moneys collected.** Every city or town may establish and operate under the supervision of the municipal court a violations bureau to assist the court in processing traffic cases. Each municipal court shall designate the specific traffic offenses and traffic infractions under city or town ordinances which may be processed by the violations bureau.

A violations bureau may be authorized to process traffic infractions in conformity with chapter 46.63 RCW.

A violations bureau may be authorized to receive the posting of bail for specified offenses and, to the extent authorized by court order, permitted to accept forfeiture of bail and payment of penalties. Any violations bureau, upon accepting the prescribed bail, shall issue a receipt therefor to the alleged violator, acknowledging the posting thereof and informing the accused of the legal consequences of bail forfeiture. Any person charged with any criminal traffic offense within the authority of the violations bureau may, upon signing a written appearance, a written plea of guilty and a written waiver of trial, pay to the violations bureau the fine established for the offense charged and costs and this shall have the same effect as a court conviction. All penalties and forfeitures paid to a violations bureau for the violation of municipal ordinance shall be placed in the city or town general fund or such other fund as may be prescribed by ordinance of the city or town or laws of the state of Washington.

Any employees of an existing violations bureau of any city shall continue as city employees. [1984 c 258 s 105; 1979 ex.s. c 136 s 18; 1961 c 299 s 52.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 136:** See notes following RCW 46.63.010.

**RCW 3.50.040 Municipal judges—Appointed—Terms, qualifications—District judge as part-time municipal judge.** Within thirty days after the effective date of the ordinance creating the municipal court, the mayor of each city or town shall appoint a municipal judge or judges of the municipal court for a term of four years. The terms of judges serving on July 1, 1984, and municipal judges who are appointed to terms commencing before January 1, 1986, shall expire January 1, 1986. The terms of their successors shall commence on January 1, 1986, and on January 1 of each fourth year thereafter, pursuant to appointment or election as provided in this chapter. Appointments shall be made on or before December 1 of the year next preceding the year in which the terms commence.

The legislative authority of a city or town that has the general power of confirmation over mayoral appointments shall have the power to confirm the appointment of a municipal judge.

A person appointed as a full-time or part-time municipal judge shall be a citizen of the United States of America and of the state of Washington; and an attorney admitted to practice law before the courts of record of the state of Washington: PROVIDED, That in a municipality having a population less than five thousand persons, a person who has taken and passed by January 1, 2003, the qualifying examination for a lay candidate for judicial officer as provided by rule of the supreme court may be the judge. Any city or town shall have authority to appoint a district judge as its municipal judge when the municipal judge is not required to serve full time. In the event of the appointment of a district judge, the city or town shall pay a pro rata share of the salary. [2002 c 136 s 2; 1984 c 258 s 106; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 35 s 1; 1961 c 299 s 53.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.045 Judicial officers—Disqualification.** (1) A municipal court judicial officer shall not preside in any of the following cases:

(a) In an action to which the judicial officer is a party, or in which the judicial officer is directly interested, or in which the judicial officer has been an attorney for a party.

(b) When the judicial officer or one of the parties believes that the parties cannot have an impartial trial or hearing before the judicial officer. The judicial officer shall disqualify himself or herself under the provisions of this section if, before any discretionary ruling has been made, a party files an affidavit that the party cannot have a fair and impartial trial or hearing by reason of the interest or prejudice of the judicial officer. The following are not considered discretionary rulings: (i) The arrangement of the calendar; (ii) the setting of an action, motion, or proceeding for hearing or trial; (iii) the arraignment of the accused; or (iv) the fixing of bail and initially setting conditions of release. Only one change of judicial officer is allowed each party in an action or proceeding.

(2) When a judicial officer is disqualified under this section, the case shall be heard before another judicial officer of the municipality.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "judicial officer" means a judge, judge pro tempore, or court commissioner. [2008 c 227 s 9.]

**Effective date—Subheadings not law—2008 c 227:** See notes following RCW 3.50.003.

**RCW 3.50.050 Municipal judge may be elective position—Qualifications, term.** The legislative authority of the city or town may, by ordinance, provide that the position of municipal judge within the city or town shall be an elective position. The ordinance shall provide for the qualifications of the municipal judge which shall be the same as the qualifications necessary for the appointment thereof; and further, shall provide that the municipal judge shall be elected in the same manner as other elective city officials are elected to office, and that the term of the municipal judge shall be for a term of four years commencing on January 1, 1986, and every four years thereafter. [1984 c 258 s 107; 1961 c 299 s 54.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.055 Judicial positions—Filling—Circumstances permitted.** Notwithstanding RCW 3.50.040 and 3.50.050, judicial positions may be filled only by election under the following circumstances:

(1) Each full-time equivalent judicial position shall be filled by election. This requirement applies regardless of how many judges are employed to fill the position. For purposes of this section, a full-time equivalent position is thirty-five or more hours per week of compensated time.

(2) In any city with one or more full-time equivalent judicial positions, an additional judicial position or positions that is or are in combination more than one-half of a full-time equivalent position shall also be filled by election. [1993 c 317 s 4.]

**Severability—Effective date—1993 c 317:** See notes following RCW 3.50.810.

**RCW 3.50.057 Judges—Residency requirement.** A judge of a municipal court need not be a resident of the city in which the court is created, but must be a resident of the county in which the city is located. [1993 c 317 s 6.]

**Severability—Effective date—1993 c 317:** See notes following RCW 3.50.810.

**RCW 3.50.060 Termination of municipal court—Requirements—Establishment of court.** A city or town electing to establish a municipal court pursuant to this chapter may terminate such court by adoption of an appropriate ordinance. However no municipal court may be terminated unless the municipality has complied with RCW 3.50.805, 3.50.810, 35.22.425, \*35.23.595, 35.23.555, 35.27.515, 35.30.100, and 35A.11.200.

A city or town newly establishing a municipal court pursuant to this chapter shall do so by adoption of an appropriate ordinance as provided in RCW 3.50.010. [2024 c 61 s 2; 1984 c 258 s 108; 1961 c 299 s 55.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 35.23.595 was repealed by 1994 c 81 s 89.

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.070 Additional judges—Appointment, election.** Additional full or part time judges may be appointed or elected, as provided by ordinance of the legislative body of the city or town when public interest and the administration of justice makes such additional judge or judges necessary. [1984 c 258 s 109; 1961 c 299 s 56.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.075 Court commissioners—Appointment—Qualification—Limitations—Part-time judge.** (1) One or more court commissioners may be appointed by a judge of the municipal court.

(2) Each commissioner holds office at the pleasure of the appointing judge.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, a commissioner has such power, authority, and jurisdiction in criminal and civil matters as the appointing judges possess, and must be a lawyer who is admitted to practice law in the state of Washington or a nonlawyer who has passed, by January 1, 2003, the qualifying examination for lay judges for courts of limited jurisdiction under RCW 3.34.060.

(4) On or after July 1, 2010, when serving as a commissioner, the commissioner does not have authority to preside over trials in criminal matters, or jury trials in civil matters unless agreed to on the record by all parties.

(5) A commissioner need not be a resident of the city or of the county in which the municipal court is created. When a court commissioner has not been appointed and the municipal court is presided over by a part-time appointed judge, the judge need not be a

resident of the city or of the county in which the municipal court is created.

(6) For purposes of this section, "appointing judge" includes a presiding judge pro tempore fulfilling presiding judge duties for a single judge court pursuant to RCW 3.50.090(2). [2022 c 74 s 10; 2019 c 52 s 1; 2008 c 227 s 8; 1994 c 10 s 1.]

**Effective date—Subheadings not law—2008 c 227:** See notes following RCW 3.50.003.

**RCW 3.50.080 Salaries of judges—Payment of court operating costs from city funds—Judges and employees as city employees.**

Salaries of municipal court judges shall be fixed by ordinance. All costs of operating the municipal court, including but not limited to salaries of judges and court employees, dockets, books of records, forms, furnishings, and supplies, shall be paid wholly out of the funds of the city or town. The city shall provide a suitable place for holding court and pay all expenses of maintaining it.

All employees of the municipal court shall, for all purposes, be deemed employees of the city or town. They shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the court. [1984 c 258 s 111; 1961 c 299 s 57.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

*Salaries of municipal judges in cities over 400,000: RCW 3.58.010 and 35.20.160.*

**RCW 3.50.090 Judges pro tem.** (1) In addition to the designation of a presiding judge pro tempore for a single judge court as provided in RCW 3.50.090(2) [subsection (2) of this section], the presiding municipal court judge may designate one or more persons as judges pro tem to serve in the absence or disability of the elected or duly appointed judges of the court, subsequent to the filing of an affidavit of prejudice, or in addition to the elected or duly appointed judges when the administration of justice and the accomplishment of the work of the court make it necessary. The qualifications of a judge pro tempore shall be the same as for judges as provided under RCW 3.50.040 except that a judge pro tempore need not be a resident of the city or county in which the municipal court is located. Judges pro tempore shall have all of the powers of the duly appointed or elected judges when serving as judges pro tempore of the court. Before entering on his or her duties, each judge pro tempore shall take, subscribe, and file an oath as is taken by a duly appointed or elected judge. Such pro tempore judges shall receive such compensation as shall be fixed by ordinance by the municipality in which the court is located and such compensation shall be paid by the municipality.

(2) If a presiding municipal court judge is the single judge of the court, then pursuant to court rule or RCW 2.56.040(2), a presiding

judge pro tempore may be predesignated or appointed to fulfill presiding judge duties in case of the illness, incapacity, resignation, death, or unavailability of the presiding judge. In such circumstances, the authority of the predesignated or appointed presiding judge pro tempore endures until the chief justice appoints someone else to fulfill the presiding judge duties pursuant to RCW 2.56.040(2)(b), or the period of such illness, incapacity, or unavailability ends, or until a vacancy in the position is filled as provided by law, whichever occurs first. [2022 c 74 s 11; 2000 c 55 s 1; 1984 c 258 s 112; 1961 c 299 s 58.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

*Judges pro tempore appointments:* RCW 3.02.060.

**RCW 3.50.092 Presiding judge pro tempore—Predesignation or appointment.** During any vacancy that occurs in a single judge court pursuant to RCW 3.50.093 or 3.50.095, a presiding judge pro tempore who has been predesignated pursuant to court rule or appointed pursuant to RCW 2.56.040(2) may fulfill presiding judge duties, and the authority of the predesignated or appointed presiding judge pro tempore endures until the chief justice appoints someone else to fulfill the presiding judge duties pursuant to RCW 2.56.040(2)(b), or until a vacancy in the position is filled as provided by law, whichever occurs first. [2022 c 74 s 9.]

**RCW 3.50.093 Municipal judge—Vacancy—Appointment.** Any vacancy in the municipal court due to a death, disability, or resignation of a municipal court judge shall be filled by the mayor, for the remainder of the unexpired term. The appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the legislative authority of the city or town if the legislative authority has the general power of confirmation over mayoral appointments. The appointed judge shall be qualified to hold the position of judge of the municipal court as provided in this chapter. [1984 c 258 s 113.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.095 Municipal judge—Removal from office.** A municipal judge shall be removed only upon conviction of misconduct or malfeasance in office, or because of physical or mental disability rendering the judge incapable of performing the duties of the office. [1984 c 258 s 124.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—  
Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.097 Judge's oath—Bonds.** Every judge of a municipal court, before entering upon the duties of the office, shall take and subscribe the following oath or affirmation: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Washington, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of judge of the municipal court of the city of . . . . . (naming such city) according to the best of my ability." The oath shall be filed in the office of the county auditor. The judge shall also give such bonds to the state and city for the faithful performance of the judge's duties as may be by law or ordinance directed. [1984 c 258 s 110.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—  
Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.100 Revenue—Disposition—Interest.** (1) Costs in civil and criminal actions may be imposed as provided in district court. All fees, costs, fines, forfeitures and other money imposed by any municipal court for the violation of any municipal or town ordinances shall be collected by the court clerk and, together with any other noninterest revenues received by the clerk, shall be deposited with the city or town treasurer as a part of the general fund of the city or town, or deposited in such other fund of the city or town, or deposited in such other funds as may be designated by the laws of the state of Washington.

(2) Except as provided in RCW 9A.88.120 and 10.99.080, the city treasurer shall remit monthly thirty-two percent of the noninterest money received under this section, other than for parking infractions, and certain costs to the state treasurer. "Certain costs" as used in this subsection, means those costs awarded to prevailing parties in civil actions under RCW 4.84.010 or 36.18.040, or those costs awarded against convicted defendants in criminal actions under RCW 10.01.160, 10.46.190, or 36.18.040, or other similar statutes if such costs are specifically designated as costs by the court and are awarded for the specific reimbursement of costs incurred by the state, county, city, or town in the prosecution of the case, including the fees of defense counsel. Money remitted under this subsection to the state treasurer shall be deposited in the state general fund.

(3) The balance of the noninterest money received under this section shall be retained by the city and deposited as provided by law.

(4) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, penalties, fines, fees, and costs may accrue interest at the rate of twelve percent per annum, upon assignment to a collection agency. Interest may accrue only while the case is in collection status.

(b) As of June 7, 2018, penalties, fines, bail forfeitures, fees, and costs imposed against a defendant in a criminal proceeding shall not accrue interest.

(5) Interest retained by the court on penalties, fines, bail forfeitures, fees, and costs shall be split twenty-five percent to the state treasurer for deposit in the state general fund, twenty-five percent to the state treasurer for deposit in the judicial information system account as provided in RCW 2.68.020, twenty-five percent to the city general fund, and twenty-five percent to the city general fund to fund local courts. [2018 c 269 s 2; 2012 c 136 s 3; 2012 c 134 s 5; 2009 c 479 s 3; 2004 c 15 s 3; 1995 c 291 s 3; 1988 c 169 s 2; 1985 c 389 s 4; 1984 c 258 s 304; 1975 1st ex.s. c 241 s 3; 1961 c 299 s 59.]

**Construction—2018 c 269:** See note following RCW 10.82.090.

**Effective date—2009 c 479:** See note following RCW 2.56.030.

**Intent—2004 c 15:** See note following RCW 10.99.080.

**Effective date—1985 c 389:** See note following RCW 27.24.070.

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Intent—1984 c 258:** See note following RCW 3.34.130.

**RCW 3.50.110 Sessions.** The municipal court shall be open and shall hold such regular and special sessions as may be prescribed by the legislative body of the city or town: PROVIDED, That the municipal court shall not be open on nonjudicial days. [1984 c 258 s 114; 1961 c 299 s 60.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.115 Municipal court seal.** The municipal court shall have a seal which shall be the vignette of George Washington, with the words "Seal of The Municipal Court of . . . . . (name of city), State of Washington," surrounding the vignette. All process from the court runs throughout the state. The supreme court may determine by rule what process must be issued under seal. [1999 c 152 s 1; 1984 c 258 s 123.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.125 Transfer within municipal court.** A transfer of a case from the municipal court to either another municipal judge of the same city or to a judge pro tempore appointed in the manner prescribed by this chapter shall be allowed in accordance with RCW 3.66.090 in all civil and criminal proceedings. [1984 c 258 s 122.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.135 Request for jury trial in civil cases—Exception—Fee—Juror compensation—Jury trials in criminal cases.** In all civil cases, the plaintiff or defendant may demand a jury, which shall consist of six citizens of the state who shall be impaneled and sworn as in cases before district courts, or the trial may be by a judge of the municipal court: PROVIDED, That no jury trial may be held on a proceeding involving a traffic infraction. A party requesting a jury shall pay to the court a fee which shall be the same as that for a jury in district court. If more than one party requests a jury, only one jury fee shall be collected by the court. The fee shall be apportioned among the requesting parties. Each juror may receive up to twenty-five dollars but in no case less than ten dollars for each day in attendance upon the municipal court, and in addition thereto shall receive mileage at the rate determined under RCW 43.03.060: PROVIDED, That the compensation paid jurors shall be determined by the legislative authority of the city and shall be uniformly applied. Jury trials shall be allowed in all criminal cases unless waived by the defendant. [1984 c 258 s 126.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.300 Execution of sentence—Jail in lieu of fine and costs, computation.** In all cases of conviction, unless otherwise provided in chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW as now or hereafter amended, where a jail sentence is given to the defendant, execution shall issue accordingly and where the judgment of the court is that the defendant pay a fine and costs, the defendant may be committed to jail until the judgment is paid in full.

A defendant who has been committed shall be discharged upon the payment for such part of the fine and costs as remains unpaid after deducting from the whole amount any previous payment, and after deducting the amount allowed for each day of imprisonment, which amount shall be the same and computed in the same manner as provided for superior court cases in RCW 10.82.030 and 10.82.040, as now or hereafter amended. In addition, all other proceedings in respect of such fine and costs shall be the same as in like cases in the superior court. [1984 c 258 s 115; 1969 c 84 s 1; 1961 c 299 s 79.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—  
Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.320 Suspension or deferral of sentence—Change of plea—  
Dismissal.** After a conviction, the court may impose sentence by suspending all or a portion of the defendant's sentence or by deferring the sentence of the defendant and may place the defendant on probation for a period of no longer than two years and prescribe the conditions thereof. A defendant who has been sentenced, or whose sentence has been deferred, and who then fails to appear for any hearing to address the defendant's compliance with the terms of probation when ordered to do so by the court, shall have the term of probation tolled until such time as the defendant makes his or her presence known to the court on the record. During the time of the deferral, the court may, for good cause shown, permit a defendant to withdraw the plea of guilty, permit the defendant to enter a plea of not guilty, and dismiss the charges. A court shall not defer sentence for an offense sentenced under RCW 46.61.5055. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 35 s 5; 2001 c 94 s 4; 1984 c 258 s 116; 1983 c 156 s 5; 1961 c 299 s 81.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—  
Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.330 Suspension or deferral of sentence—Continuing  
jurisdiction of court.** (1) A court has continuing jurisdiction and authority to suspend the execution of all or any part of its sentence upon stated terms, including installment payment of fines for a period not to exceed:

(a) Five years after imposition of sentence for a defendant sentenced for a domestic violence offense or under RCW 46.61.5055; and

(b) Two years after imposition of sentence for all other offenses.

(2)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a court shall have continuing jurisdiction and authority to defer the execution of all or any part of the sentence upon stated terms, including installment payment of fines for a period not to exceed:

(i) Five years after imposition of sentence for a defendant sentenced for a domestic violence offense; and

(ii) Two years after imposition of sentence for all other offenses.

(b) A court shall not defer sentence for an offense sentenced under RCW 46.61.5055.

(3) A defendant who has been sentenced, or whose sentence has been deferred, and who then fails to appear for any hearing to address the defendant's compliance with the terms of probation when ordered to do so by the court, shall have the term of probation tolled until such time as the defendant makes his or her presence known to the court on the record.

(4) However, the court's jurisdiction period in this section does not apply to the enforcement of orders issued under RCW 46.20.720.

(5) Any time before entering an order terminating probation, the court may modify or revoke its order suspending or deferring the imposition or execution of the sentence.

(6) For the purposes of this section, "domestic violence offense" means a crime listed in RCW 10.99.020 that is not a felony offense. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 35 s 6; 2010 c 274 s 406; 2001 c 94 s 5; 1999 c 56 s 1; 1984 c 258 s 117; 1983 c 156 s 6; 1961 c 299 s 82.]

**Intent—2010 c 274:** See note following RCW 10.31.100.

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.340 Revocation of deferred or suspended sentence—Limitations—Termination of probation.** Deferral of sentence and suspension of execution of sentence may be revoked if the defendant violates or fails to carry out any of the conditions of the deferral or suspension. Upon the revocation of the deferral or suspension, the court shall impose the sentence previously suspended or any unexecuted portion thereof. In no case shall the court impose a sentence greater than the original sentence, with credit given for time served and money paid on fine and costs.

Any time before entering an order terminating probation, the court may revoke or modify its order suspending the imposition or execution of the sentence. If the ends of justice will be served and when warranted by the reformation of the probationer, the court may terminate the period of probation and discharge the person so held. [1984 c 258 s 118; 1983 c 156 s 7; 1961 c 299 s 83.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.345 Sentencing—Crimes against property—Criminal history check.** Before a sentence is imposed upon a defendant convicted of a crime against property, the court or the prosecuting authority shall check existing judicial information systems to determine the criminal history of the defendant. [2009 c 431 s 16.]

**Applicability—2009 c 431:** See note following RCW 4.24.230.

**RCW 3.50.355 Offender supervision by another state.** (1) If a person placed on probation for one year or more for a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor by a municipal court requests permission to travel or transfer to another state, the assigned probation officer shall determine whether such request is subject to RCW 9.94A.745, the

interstate compact for adult offender supervision. If such request is subject to the compact, the probation officer shall:

(a) Notify the department of corrections of the probationer's request;

(b) Provide the department of corrections with the supporting documentation it requests for processing an application for transfer;

(c) Notify the probationer of the fee due to the department of corrections for processing an application under the compact;

(d) Cease supervision of the probationer while another state supervises the probationer pursuant to the compact;

(e) Resume supervision if the probationer returns to this state before the term of probation expires.

(2) The probationer shall receive credit for time served while being supervised by another state.

(3) If the probationer is returned to the state at the request of the receiving state under rules of the interstate compact for adult offender supervision, the department of corrections is responsible for the cost of returning the probationer.

(4) The state of Washington, the department of corrections and its employees, and any city and its employees are not liable for civil damages resulting from any act or omission authorized or required under this section unless the act or omission constitutes gross negligence. [2005 c 400 s 6.]

**Application—Effective date—2005 c 400:** See notes following RCW 9.94A.74504.

**RCW 3.50.425 Issuance of criminal process.** All criminal process issued by the municipal court shall be in the name of the state of Washington and run throughout the state, and be directed to and served by the chief of police, marshal, or other police officer of any city or to any sheriff in the state. [1984 c 258 s 127.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.430 Criminal prosecution in city's name for violation of ordinances.** All criminal prosecutions for the violation of a city ordinance shall be conducted in the name of the city and may be upon the complaint of any person. [1984 c 258 s 119; 1961 c 299 s 92.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.440 Penalty if no other punishment prescribed.** Every person convicted by the municipal court of a violation of the criminal provisions of an ordinance for which no punishment is specifically

prescribed in the ordinance is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or imprisonment in the city jail for up to three hundred sixty-four days, or both such fine and imprisonment. [2011 c 96 s 2; 2003 c 53 s 3; 1984 c 258 s 120; 1961 c 299 s 93.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 c 96:** See note following RCW 9A.20.021.

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

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.450 Pleadings, practice and procedure not provided for governed by district court law.** Pleadings, practice and procedure in cases not governed by statutes or rules specifically applicable to municipal courts shall, insofar as applicable, be governed by the statutes and rules now existing or hereafter adopted governing pleadings, practice and procedure applicable to district courts. [1984 c 258 s 121; 1961 c 299 s 94.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Application—1984 c 258 ss 101-139:** See note following RCW 3.50.005.

**RCW 3.50.480 City or town trial court improvement account—Contributions to account by city or town—Use of funds.** Any city or town operating a municipal court under this chapter for which the state contributes to municipal court judges' salaries under RCW 2.56.030 shall create a city or town trial court improvement account. An amount equal to one hundred percent of the state's contribution for the payment of the city's or town's municipal court judges' salaries shall be deposited into the account. Money in the account shall be used to fund improvements to the municipal court's staffing, programs, facilities, or services, as appropriated by the city or town legislative authority. [2005 c 457 s 3.]

**Intent—2005 c 457:** See note following RCW 43.08.250.

**RCW 3.50.800 Repeal of municipal criminal code—Agreement covering costs of handling resulting criminal cases—Arbitration—Renewal.** (1) If a municipality has, prior to July 1, 1984, repealed in its entirety that portion of its municipal code defining crimes but continues to hear and determine traffic infraction cases under chapter 46.63 RCW in a municipal court, the municipality and the appropriate county shall, prior to January 1, 1985, enter into an agreement under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable

amount for costs incurred after January 1, 1985, associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. If the municipality and the county cannot come to an agreement within the time prescribed by this section, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration pursuant to chapter 7.04A RCW. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW.

(2) The agreement between the municipality and the county shall include provisions for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. [2005 c 433 s 34; 1984 c 258 s 202.]

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

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**RCW 3.50.805 Termination of municipal court—Agreement covering costs of handling resulting criminal cases—Arbitration—Repeal of municipal criminal code—Agreement—Arbitration—Repeal of a municipal crime equivalent to offense in RCW 46.63.020—Agreement—Arbitration.**

(1) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter shall not terminate that court unless a notice of intent to terminate is sent to the administrative office of the courts six months in advance of the termination and the municipality has reached an agreement with the appropriate county or another municipality under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county or municipality is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district or municipal court as a result of the termination. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county or municipality are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county or municipality have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. A municipality that has entered into agreements with other municipalities that have terminated their municipal courts may not thereafter terminate its court unless each municipality has reached an agreement with the appropriate county in accordance with this section.

(2) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter may not repeal in its entirety that portion of its municipal code defining crimes while retaining the court's authority to hear and

determine traffic infractions under chapter 46.63 RCW unless the municipality has reached an agreement with the county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW.

(3) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter may not repeal a provision of its municipal code which defines a crime equivalent to an offense listed in RCW 46.63.020 unless the municipality has reached an agreement with the county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. [2024 c 61 s 3; 2005 c 433 s 35; 1984 c 258 s 203.]

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

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**RCW 3.50.810 Termination of municipal court—Notice.** (1) Any city having entered into an agreement for court services with the county must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the county legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to February 1st of the year in which all district court judges are subject to election.

(2) Any city that terminates an agreement for court services to be provided by a district court may terminate the agreement only at the end of a four-year district court judicial term.

(3) A county that wishes to terminate an agreement with a city for the provision of court services must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the city legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to the expiration of the agreement. [2024 c 61 s 4; 2001 c 68 s 1; 1993 c 317 s 2.]

**Severability—1993 c 317:** "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." [1993 c 317 s 11.]

**Effective date—1993 c 317:** "This act shall take effect January 1, 1995." [1993 c 317 s 12.]

**RCW 3.50.815 Criminal justice responsibilities—Interlocal agreements.** A city may meet the requirements of RCW 39.34.180 by entering into an interlocal agreement with the county in which the city is located or with one or more cities. [2008 c 227 s 4.]

**Effective date—Subheadings not law—2008 c 227:** See notes following RCW 3.50.003.