

**Chapter 9.08 RCW**  
**ANIMALS, CRIMES RELATING TO**

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*immunity of handler: RCW 4.24.410.*

*Police horses, harming: RCW 9A.76.200.*

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*Transporting in unsafe manner: RCW 16.52.080.*

**RCW 9.08.030 False certificate of registration of animals—False representation as to breed.** Every person who, by color or aid of any false pretense, representation, token or writing shall obtain from any club, association, society or company for the improvement of the breed of cattle, horses, sheep, swine, fowls or other domestic animals or birds, a certificate of registration of any animal or bird in a herdbook, or other register of any such association, society or company, or a transfer of any such registration, and every person who shall knowingly represent an animal or bird for breeding purposes to be of a greater degree of any particular strain of blood than such animal actually possesses, shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [1909 c 249 s 341; RRS s 2593.]

**RCW 9.08.065 Definitions.** As used in RCW 9.08.070 through 9.08.078:

(1) "Pet animal" means a tamed or domesticated animal legally retained by a person and kept as a companion. "Pet animal" does not include livestock raised for commercial purposes.

(2) "Research institution" means a facility licensed by the United States department of agriculture to use animals in biomedical or product research.

(3) "U.S.D.A. licensed dealer" means a person who is licensed or required to be licensed by the United States department of agriculture to commercially buy, receive, sell, negotiate for sale, or transport animals. [2003 c 53 s 8; 1989 c 359 s 1.]

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

**RCW 9.08.070 Pet animals—Taking, concealing, injuring, killing, etc.—Penalty.** (1) Any person who, with intent to deprive or defraud the owner thereof, does any of the following shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW and, for adult offenders, a mandatory fine of not less than five hundred dollars per pet animal shall be imposed, except as provided by subsection (2) of this section:

(a) Takes, leads away, confines, secretes or converts any pet animal, except in cases in which the value of the pet animal exceeds seven hundred fifty dollars;

(b) Conceals the identity of any pet animal or its owner by obscuring, altering, or removing from the pet animal any collar, tag, license, tattoo, or other identifying device or mark;

(c) Willfully or recklessly kills or injures any pet animal, unless excused by law.

(2) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a person from also being convicted of separate offenses under RCW 9A.56.030, 9A.56.040, or 9A.56.050 for theft, under RCW 9A.56.150, 9A.56.160, or 9A.56.170 for possession of stolen property, or under chapter 16.52 RCW for animal cruelty. [2015 c 265 s 10; 2015 c 235 s 5; 2003 c 53 s 9; 1989 c 359 s 2; 1982 c 114 s 1.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2015 c 235 s 5 and by 2015 c 265 s 10, 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).

**Finding—Intent—2015 c 265:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

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

*Application of Consumer Protection Act: RCW 19.86.145.*

**RCW 9.08.072 Transferring stolen pet animal to a research institution—Penalty.** (1) It is unlawful for any person to receive with intent to sell to a research institution in the state of Washington, or sell or otherwise directly transfer to a research institution in the state of Washington, a pet animal that the person knows or has reason to know has been stolen or fraudulently obtained. This section does not apply to U.S.D.A. licensed dealers.

(2) The first conviction under this section is a gross misdemeanor punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW and, for adult offenders, a mandatory fine of not less than five hundred dollars per pet animal shall be imposed.

(3) A second or subsequent conviction under this section is a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW and, for adult offenders, a mandatory fine of not less than one thousand dollars per pet animal shall be imposed.

(4) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a person from also being convicted of separate offenses under RCW 9A.56.030, 9A.56.040, or 9A.56.050 for theft or under RCW 9A.56.150, 9A.56.160, or 9A.56.170 for possession of stolen property. [2015 c 265 s 11; 2003 c 53 s 10.]

**Finding—Intent—2015 c 265:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

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

**RCW 9.08.074 Transferring stolen pet animal to a person who has previously sold a stolen pet animal to a research institution—Penalty.** (1) It is unlawful for any person, who knows or has reason to know that a pet animal has been stolen or fraudulently obtained, to sell or otherwise transfer the pet animal to another who the person knows or has reason to know has previously sold a stolen or fraudulently obtained pet animal to a research institution in the state of Washington.

(2) A conviction under this section is a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW and by a mandatory fine of not less than one thousand dollars per pet animal. [2003 c 53 s 11.]

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

**RCW 9.08.076 Transferring stolen pet animal to a research institution by a U.S.D.A. licensed dealer—Penalty.** (1) It is unlawful for a U.S.D.A. licensed dealer to receive with intent to sell, or sell or transfer directly or through a third party, to a research institution in the state of Washington, a pet animal that the dealer knows or has reason to know has been stolen or fraudulently obtained.

(2) A conviction under this section is a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW and by a mandatory fine of not less than one thousand dollars per pet animal. [2003 c 53 s 12.]

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

**RCW 9.08.078 Illegal sale, receipt, or transfer of pet animals—Separate offenses.** (1) The sale, receipt, or transfer of each individual pet animal in violation of RCW 9.08.070 through 9.08.078 constitutes a separate offense.

(2) The provisions of RCW 9.08.070 through 9.08.078 shall not apply to the lawful acts of any employee, agent, or director of any humane society, animal control agency, or animal shelter operated by or on behalf of any government agency, operating under law. [2003 c 53 s 13.]

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

**RCW 9.08.080 Acts against animal facilities—Intent.** There has been an increasing number of illegal acts committed against animal production and research facilities involving injury or loss of life to animals or humans, criminal trespass, and damage to property. These actions not only abridge the property rights of the owners, operators, and employees of the facility, they may also damage the public interest by jeopardizing crucial animal production or agricultural,

scientific, or biomedical research. These actions may also threaten the public safety by exposing communities to public health concerns and creating traffic hazards. These actions substantially disrupt or damage research and result in the potential loss of physical and intellectual property. While the criminal code, particularly the malicious mischief crimes, adequately covers those who intentionally and without authority damage or destroy farm animals, the code does not adequately cover similar misconduct directed against research and educational facilities. Therefore, it is in the interest of the people of the state of Washington to protect the welfare of humans and animals, as well as the productive use of private or public funds, to promote and protect scientific and medical research, foster education, and preserve and enhance agricultural production.

It is the intent of the legislature that the courts in deciding applications for injunctive relief under RCW 4.24.580 give full consideration to the constitutional rights of persons to speak freely, to picket, and to conduct other lawful activities. [1991 c 325 s 1.]

**Severability—1991 c 325:** "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." [1991 c 325 s 6.]

*Civil liability for acts against animal facilities: RCW 4.24.570 through 4.24.580.*

**RCW 9.08.090 Acts against animal facilities.** A person is guilty of a class C felony: If he or she, without authorization, knowingly takes, releases, destroys, contaminates, or damages any animal or animals kept in a research or educational facility where the animal or animals are used or to be used for medical research purposes or other research purposes or for educational purposes; or if he or she, without authorization, knowingly destroys or damages any records, equipment, research product, or other thing pertaining to such animal or animals. [1991 c 325 s 2.]

**Severability—1991 c 325:** See note following RCW 9.08.080.

*Civil liability for acts against animal facilities: RCW 4.24.570 through 4.24.580.*