

**Chapter 9A.32 RCW  
HOMICIDE**

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*Aggravated first degree murder: Chapter 10.95 RCW.*

*Controlled substances homicide: RCW 69.50.415.*

**RCW 9A.32.010 Homicide defined.** Homicide is the killing of a human being by the act, procurement, or omission of another, death occurring at any time, and is either (1) murder, (2) homicide by abuse, (3) manslaughter, (4) excusable homicide, or (5) justifiable homicide. [1997 c 196 § 3; 1987 c 187 § 2; 1983 c 10 § 1; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.010.]

*Excusable homicide: RCW 9A.16.030.*

*Justifiable homicide: RCW 9A.16.040 and 9A.16.050.*

**RCW 9A.32.020 Premeditation—Limitations.** (1) As used in this chapter, the premeditation required in order to support a conviction of the crime of murder in the first degree must involve more than a moment in point of time.

(2) Nothing contained in this chapter shall affect RCW 46.61.520. [1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.020.]

**RCW 9A.32.030 Murder in the first degree.** (1) A person is guilty of murder in the first degree when:

(a) With a premeditated intent to cause the death of another person, he or she causes the death of such person or of a third person; or

(b) Under circumstances manifesting an extreme indifference to human life, he or she engages in conduct which creates a grave risk of death to any person, and thereby causes the death of a person; or

(c) He or she commits or attempts to commit the crime of either (1) robbery in the first or second degree, (2) rape in the first or second degree, (3) burglary in the first degree, (4) arson in the first or second degree, or (5) kidnapping in the first or second degree, and in the course of or in furtherance of such crime or in immediate flight therefrom, he or she, or another participant, causes the death of a person other than one of the participants: Except that in any prosecution under this subdivision (1)(c) in which the defendant was not the only participant in the underlying crime, if

established by the defendant by a preponderance of the evidence, it is a defense that the defendant:

(i) Did not commit the homicidal act or in any way solicit, request, command, importune, cause, or aid the commission thereof; and

(ii) Was not armed with a deadly weapon, or any instrument, article, or substance readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury; and

(iii) Had no reasonable grounds to believe that any other participant was armed with such a weapon, instrument, article, or substance; and

(iv) Had no reasonable grounds to believe that any other participant intended to engage in conduct likely to result in death or serious physical injury.

(2) Murder in the first degree is a class A felony. [1990 c 200 § 1; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38 § 3; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.030.]

**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38:** See notes following RCW 9A.08.020.

**RCW 9A.32.040 Murder in the first degree—Sentence.**

Notwithstanding RCW 9A.32.030(2), any person convicted of the crime of murder in the first degree shall be sentenced to life imprisonment. [1982 c 10 § 2. Prior: (1) 1981 c 138 § 21; 1977 ex.s. c 206 § 3; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.040. (2) 1981 c 136 § 55 repealed by 1982 c 10 § 18.]

**Severability—1982 c 10:** See note following RCW 6.13.080.

**Effective date—1981 c 136:** See RCW 72.09.900.

*Aggravated first degree murder: Chapter 10.95 RCW.*

**RCW 9A.32.050 Murder in the second degree.** (1) A person is guilty of murder in the second degree when:

(a) With intent to cause the death of another person but without premeditation, he or she causes the death of such person or of a third person; or

(b) He or she commits or attempts to commit any felony, including assault, other than those enumerated in RCW 9A.32.030(1)(c), and, in the course of and in furtherance of such crime or in immediate flight therefrom, he or she, or another participant, causes the death of a person other than one of the participants; except that in any prosecution under this subdivision (1)(b) in which the defendant was not the only participant in the underlying crime, if established by the defendant by a preponderance of the evidence, it is a defense that the defendant:

(i) Did not commit the homicidal act or in any way solicit, request, command, importune, cause, or aid the commission thereof; and

(ii) Was not armed with a deadly weapon, or any instrument, article, or substance readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury; and

(iii) Had no reasonable grounds to believe that any other participant was armed with such a weapon, instrument, article, or substance; and

(iv) Had no reasonable grounds to believe that any other participant intended to engage in conduct likely to result in death or serious physical injury.

(2) Murder in the second degree is a class A felony. [2003 c 3 § 2; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38 § 4; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.050.]

**Findings—Intent—2003 c 3:** "The legislature finds that the 1975 legislature clearly and unambiguously stated that any felony, including assault, can be a predicate offense for felony murder. The intent was evident: Punish, under the applicable murder statutes, those who commit a homicide in the course and in furtherance of a felony. This legislature reaffirms that original intent and further intends to honor and reinforce the court's decisions over the past twenty-eight years interpreting "in furtherance of" as requiring the death to be sufficiently close in time and proximity to the predicate felony. The legislature does not agree with or accept the court's findings of legislative intent in *State v. Andress*, Docket No. 71170-4 (October 24, 2002), and reasserts that assault has always been and still remains a predicate offense for felony murder in the second degree.

To prevent a miscarriage of the legislature's original intent, the legislature finds in light of *State v. Andress*, Docket No. 71170-4 (October 24, 2002), that it is necessary to amend RCW 9A.32.050. This amendment is intended to be curative in nature. The legislature urges the supreme court to apply this interpretation retroactively to July 1, 1976." [2003 c 3 § 1.]

**Effective date—2003 c 3:** "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 [February 12, 2003]." [2003 c 3 § 3.]

**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38:** See notes following RCW 9A.08.020.

**RCW 9A.32.055 Homicide by abuse.** (1) A person is guilty of homicide by abuse if, under circumstances manifesting an extreme indifference to human life, the person causes the death of a child or person under sixteen years of age, a developmentally disabled person, or a dependent adult, and the person has previously engaged in a pattern or practice of assault or torture of said child, person under sixteen years of age, developmentally disabled person, or dependent person.

(2) As used in this section, "dependent adult" means a person who, because of physical or mental disability, or because of extreme advanced age, is dependent upon another person to provide the basic necessities of life.

(3) Homicide by abuse is a class A felony. [1987 c 187 § 1.]

**RCW 9A.32.060 Manslaughter in the first degree.** (1) A person is guilty of manslaughter in the first degree when:

(a) He or she recklessly causes the death of another person; or

(b) He or she intentionally and unlawfully kills an unborn quick child by inflicting any injury upon the mother of such child.

(2) Manslaughter in the first degree is a class A felony. [2011 c 336 § 357; 1997 c 365 § 5; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.060.]

**RCW 9A.32.070 Manslaughter in the second degree.** (1) A person is guilty of manslaughter in the second degree when, with criminal negligence, he or she causes the death of another person.

(2) Manslaughter in the second degree is a class B felony. [2011 c 336 § 358; 1997 c 365 § 6; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.32.070.]