

**Chapter 29B.20 RCW  
ADMINISTRATION**

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**RCW 29B.20.010 Public disclosure commission—Established—  
Commissioners—Prohibited activities—Compensation, travel expenses.**

**(Effective January 1, 2026.)** (1) The public disclosure commission is established. The commission shall be composed of five commissioners appointed by the governor, with the consent of the senate. The commission shall have the authority and duties as set forth in this title. All appointees shall be persons of the highest integrity and qualifications. No more than three commissioners shall have an identification with the same political party.

(2) The term of each commissioner shall be five years, which may continue until a successor is appointed, but may not exceed an additional 12 months. No commissioner is eligible for appointment to more than one full term. Any commissioner may be removed by the governor, but only upon grounds of neglect of duty or misconduct in office.

(3) (a) During a commissioner's tenure, the commissioner is prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities, either within or outside the state of Washington:

- (i) Holding or campaigning for elective office;
- (ii) Serving as an officer of any political party or political committee;
- (iii) Permitting the commissioner's name to be used in support of or in opposition to a candidate or proposition;
- (iv) Soliciting or making contributions to a candidate or in support of or in opposition to any candidate or proposition;
- (v) Participating in any way in any election campaign; or
- (vi) Lobbying, employing, or assisting a lobbyist, except that a commissioner or the staff of the commission may lobby to the limited extent permitted by RCW 29B.50.090 on matters directly affecting this title.

(b) This subsection is not intended to prohibit a commissioner from participating in or supporting nonprofit or other organizations, in the commissioner's private capacity, to the extent such participation is not prohibited under (a) of this subsection.

(c) The provisions of this subsection do not relieve a commissioner of any applicable disqualification and recusal requirements.

(4) A vacancy on the commission shall be filled within 30 days of the vacancy by the governor, with the consent of the senate, and the appointee shall serve for the remaining term of the appointee's predecessor. A vacancy shall not impair the powers of the remaining commissioners to exercise all of the powers of the commission.

(5) Three commissioners shall constitute a quorum. The commission shall elect its own chair and adopt its own rules of procedure in the manner provided in chapter 34.05 RCW.

(6) Commissioners shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.250 and shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while engaged in the business of the commission as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. The compensation provided pursuant to this section shall not be considered salary for purposes of the provisions of any retirement system created under the laws of this state. [2024 c 164 s 407; 2019 c 428 s 6; 2010 c 204 s 301; 1998 c 30 s 1; 1984 c 287 s 74; 1982 c 147 s 15; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 112 s 8; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34 s 93; 1975 1st ex.s. c 294 s 23; 1973 c 1 s 35 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.100, 42.17.350.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Legislative findings—Severability—Effective date—1984 c 287:** See notes following RCW 43.03.220.

**Construction—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 112:** See note following RCW 29B.60.020.

**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34:** See notes following RCW 2.08.115.

**Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:** See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.020 Commission—Duties. (Effective January 1, 2026.)**  
The commission shall:

(1) Develop and provide forms for the reports and statements required to be made under this title;

(2) Prepare and publish a manual setting forth recommended uniform methods of bookkeeping and reporting for use by persons required to make reports and statements under this title;

(3) Compile and maintain a current list of all filed reports and statements;

(4) Investigate whether properly completed statements and reports have been filed within the times required by this title;

(5) Upon complaint or upon its own motion, investigate and report apparent violations of this title to the appropriate law enforcement authorities;

(6) Conduct a sufficient number of audits and field investigations to provide a statistically valid finding regarding the degree of compliance with the provisions of this title by all required filers. Any documents, records, reports, computer files, papers, or materials provided to the commission for use in conducting audits and investigations must be returned to the candidate, campaign, or political committee from which they were received within one week of the commission's completion of an audit or field investigation;

(7) Prepare and publish an annual report to the governor as to the effectiveness of this title and its enforcement by appropriate law enforcement authorities;

(8) Enforce this title according to the powers granted it by law;

(9) Adopt rules governing the arrangement, handling, indexing, and disclosing of those reports required by this title to be filed with a county auditor or county elections official. The rules shall:

(a) Ensure ease of access by the public to the reports; and

(b) Include, but not be limited to, requirements for indexing the reports by the names of candidates or political committees and by the ballot proposition for or against which a political committee is receiving contributions or making expenditures;

(10) Adopt rules to carry out the policies of chapter 348, Laws of 2006. The adoption of these rules is not subject to the time restrictions of RCW 29B.20.030(1);

(11) Adopt administrative rules establishing requirements for filer participation in any system designed and implemented by the commission for the electronic filing of reports; and

(12) Maintain and make available to the public and political committees of this state a toll-free telephone number. [2024 c 164 s 408; 2010 c 204 s 302; 1973 c 1 s 36 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.105, 42.17.360.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:** See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.030 Commission—Additional powers. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** In addition to the duties in RCW 29B.20.020, the commission may:

(1) Adopt, amend, and rescind suitable administrative rules to carry out the policies and purposes of this title, which rules shall be adopted under chapter 34.05 RCW. Any rule relating to campaign finance, political advertising, or related forms that would otherwise take effect after June 30th of a general election year shall take effect no earlier than the day following the general election in that year;

(2) Appoint an executive director and set, within the limits established by the office of financial management under RCW 43.03.028,

the executive director's compensation. The executive director shall perform such duties and have such powers as the commission may prescribe and delegate to implement and enforce this title efficiently and effectively. The commission shall not delegate its authority to adopt, amend, or rescind rules nor may it delegate authority to determine that a violation of this title has occurred or to assess penalties for such violations;

(3) Prepare and publish reports and technical studies as in its judgment will tend to promote the purposes of this title, including reports and statistics concerning campaign financing, lobbying, financial interests of elected officials, and enforcement of this title;

(4) Conduct, as it deems appropriate, audits and field investigations;

(5) Make public the time and date of any formal hearing set to determine whether a violation has occurred, the question or questions to be considered, and the results thereof;

(6) Administer oaths and affirmations, issue subpoenas, and compel attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any records relevant to any investigation authorized under this title, or any other proceeding under this title;

(7) Adopt a code of fair campaign practices;

(8) Adopt rules relieving candidates or political committees of obligations to comply with election campaign provisions of this title, if they have not received contributions nor made expenditures in connection with any election campaign of more than \*five thousand dollars;

(9) Develop and provide to filers a system for certification of reports required under this title which are transmitted electronically to the commission. Implementation of the program is contingent on the availability of funds; and

(10) Make available and keep current on its website a glossary of all defined terms in this title and in rules adopted by the commission. [2024 c 164 s 409; 2019 c 428 s 8; 2018 c 304 s 4; 2015 c 225 s 55. Prior: 2011 1st sp.s. c 43 s 448; 2011 c 60 s 20; prior: 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 s 4; 2010 c 204 s 303; 1995 c 397 s 17; 1994 c 40 s 3; 1986 c 155 s 11; 1985 c 367 s 11; 1984 c 34 s 7; 1977 ex.s. c 336 s 7; 1975 1st ex.s. c 294 s 25; 1973 c 1 s 37 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.110, 42.17.370.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dollar amounts in this section may have been adjusted for inflation by rule of the commission adopted under the authority of RCW 29B.20.050. For current dollar amounts, see WAC 390-05-400.

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Finding—Intent—2018 c 304:** See note following RCW 29B.25.090.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 43 s 448:** "Section 448 of this act takes effect January 1, 2012." [2011 1st sp.s. c 43 s 481.]

**Purpose—2011 1st sp.s. c 43:** See note following RCW 43.19.003.

**Effective date—2011 c 60:** "This act takes effect January 1, 2012." [2011 c 60 s 53. Formerly RCW 42.17A.919.]

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 43.03.027.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Effective date—1995 c 397:** See note following RCW 29B.40.020.

**Findings—1994 c 40:** "The legislature finds that government information is a strategic resource and needs to be managed as such and that broad public access to nonrestricted public information and records must be guaranteed. The legislature further finds that reengineering government processes along with capitalizing on advancements made in digital technology can build greater efficiencies in government service delivery. The legislature further finds that providing citizen electronic access to presently available public documents will allow increased citizen involvement in state policies and empower citizens to participate in state policy decision making." [1994 c 40 s 1.]

**Effective date—1994 c 40:** "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 shall take effect immediately [March 21, 1994]." [1994 c 40 s 7.]

**Contingent effective date—Severability—1986 c 155:** See notes following RCW 43.03.300.

**Severability—1977 ex.s. c 336:** See note following RCW 29B.25.020.

**Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:** See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.040 Suspension or modification of reporting requirements. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** (1) The commission may suspend or modify any of the reporting requirements of this title if it finds that literal application of this title works a manifestly unreasonable hardship in a particular case and the suspension or modification will not frustrate the purposes of this title. The commission may suspend or modify reporting requirements only to the extent necessary to substantially relieve the hardship and only after a hearing is held and the suspension or modification receives approval. A suspension or modification of the financial affairs reporting requirements in RCW 29B.55.030 may be approved for an elected official's term of office or for up to three years for an executive state officer. If a material change in the applicant's circumstances or relevant information occurs or has occurred, the applicant must request a modification at least one month prior to the next filing deadline rather than at the conclusion of the term.

(2) A manifestly unreasonable hardship exists if reporting the name of an entity required to be reported under RCW

29B.55.030(1)(g)(ii) would be likely to adversely affect the competitive position of any entity in which the person filing the report, or any member of the person's immediate family, holds any office, directorship, general partnership interest, or an ownership interest of 10 percent or more.

(3) Requests for reporting modifications may be heard in a brief adjudicative proceeding as set forth in RCW 34.05.482 through 34.05.494 and in accordance with the standards established in this section. The commission, the commission chair acting as presiding officer, or another commissioner appointed by the chair to serve as presiding officer, may preside over a brief adjudicatory proceeding. If a modification is requested by a filer because of a concern for personal safety, the information submitted regarding that safety concern shall not be made public prior to, or at, the hearing on the request. Any information provided or prepared for the modification hearing shall remain exempt from public disclosure under this title and chapter 42.56 RCW to the extent it is determined at the hearing that disclosure of such information would present a personal safety risk to a reasonable person.

(4) If the commission, or presiding officer, grants a modification request, the commission or presiding officer may apply the modification retroactively to previously filed reports. In that event, previously reported information of the kind that is no longer being reported is confidential and exempt from public disclosure under this title and chapter 42.56 RCW.

(5) Any citizen has standing to bring an action in Thurston county superior court to contest the propriety of any order entered under this section within one year from the date of the entry of the order.

(6) The commission shall adopt rules governing the proceedings. [2024 c 164 s 410; 2019 c 428 s 10; 2010 c 204 s 304. Formerly RCW 42.17A.120.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**RCW 29B.20.050 Revising monetary contribution limits, reporting thresholds, and code values. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** At least once every five years, but no more often than every two years, the commission must consider whether to revise the monetary contribution limits and reporting thresholds and code values of this title. If the commission chooses to make revisions, the revisions shall be only for the purpose of recognizing economic changes as reflected by an inflationary index recommended by the office of financial management, and may be rounded off to amounts as determined by the commission to be most accessible for public understanding. The revisions shall be guided by the change in the index for the period commencing with the month of December preceding the last revision and concluding with the month of December preceding the month the revision is adopted. As to

each of the three general categories of this title, reports of campaign finance, reports of lobbyist activity, and reports of the financial affairs of elected and appointed officials, the revisions shall equally affect all thresholds within each category. The revisions authorized by this subsection shall reflect economic changes from the time of the last legislative enactment affecting the respective code or threshold.

Revisions made in accordance with this section shall be adopted as rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. [2024 c 164 s 411; 2019 c 428 s 11; 2011 c 60 s 21; 2010 c 204 s 305; 1993 c 2 s 9 (Initiative Measure No. 134, approved November 3, 1992). Formerly RCW 42.17A.125, 42.17.690.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Effective date—2011 c 60:** See note following RCW 29B.20.030.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Short title—1993 c 2:** See note following RCW 29B.40.010.

**RCW 29B.20.060 Duties of attorney general. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** The attorney general, through his or her office, shall provide assistance as required by the commission to carry out its responsibilities under this title. The commission may employ attorneys who are neither the attorney general nor an assistant attorney general to carry out any function of the attorney general prescribed in this title. [2024 c 164 s 412. Prior: 2010 c 205 s 8; 2010 c 204 s 306; 1982 c 35 s 196; 1975 1st ex.s. c 294 s 26; 1973 c 1 s 38 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.130, 42.17.380.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Intent—Severability—Effective dates—Application—1982 c 35:** See notes following RCW 43.07.160.

**Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:** See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.070 Application of reporting requirements in small political subdivisions. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** (1) Except as provided in subsections (2), (3), and (7) of this section, the reporting provisions of this title do not apply to:

(a) Candidates, elected officials, and agencies in political subdivisions with fewer than 2,000 registered voters as of the date of the most recent general election in the jurisdiction;

(b) Political committees formed to support or oppose candidates or ballot propositions in such political subdivisions; or

(c) Persons making independent expenditures in support of or opposition to such ballot propositions.

(2) The reporting provisions of this title apply in any exempt political subdivision from which a "petition for disclosure" containing the valid signatures of 15 percent of the number of registered voters, as of the date of the most recent general election in the political subdivision, is filed with the commission. The commission shall by rule prescribe the form of the petition. After the signatures are gathered, the petition shall be presented to the auditor or elections officer of the county, or counties, in which the political subdivision is located. The auditor or elections officer shall verify the signatures and certify to the commission that the petition contains no less than the required number of valid signatures. The commission, upon receipt of a valid petition, shall order every known affected person in the political subdivision to file the initially required statement and reports within 14 days of the date of the order.

(3) The reporting provisions of this title apply in any exempt political subdivision that by ordinance, resolution, or other official action has petitioned the commission to make the provisions applicable to elected officials and candidates of the exempt political subdivision. A copy of the action shall be sent to the commission. If the commission finds the petition to be a valid action of the appropriate governing body or authority, the commission shall order every known affected person in the political subdivision to file the initially required statement and reports within 14 days of the date of the order.

(4) The commission shall void any order issued by it pursuant to subsection (2) or (3) of this section when, at least four years after issuing the order, the commission is presented a petition or official action so requesting from the affected political subdivision. Such petition or official action shall meet the respective requirements of subsection (2) or (3) of this section.

(5) Any petition for disclosure, ordinance, resolution, or official action of an agency petitioning the commission to void the exemption in RCW 29B.25.010(3) shall not be considered unless it has been filed with the commission:

(a) In the case of a ballot proposition, at least 60 days before the date of any election in which campaign finance reporting is to be required;

(b) In the case of a candidate, at least 60 days before the first day on which a person may file a declaration of candidacy for any election in which campaign finance reporting is to be required.

(6) Any person exempted from reporting under this title may at the person's option file the statement and reports.

(7) The reporting provisions of this title apply to a candidate in any political subdivision if the candidate receives or expects to receive five thousand dollars or more in contributions. [2024 c 164 s 413; 2019 c 428 s 12; 2010 c 204 s 307; 2006 c 240 s 2; 1986 c 12 s 3; 1985 c 367 s 13; 1982 c 60 s 1. Formerly RCW 42.17A.135, 42.17.405.]



**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**RCW 29B.20.080 Date of receipt—Exceptions—Electronic filings. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the date of receipt of any properly addressed application, report, statement, notice, or payment required to be made under the provisions of this title is the date shown by the post office cancellation mark on the envelope of the submitted material. The provisions of this section do not apply to reports required to be delivered under RCW 29B.25.140 and 29B.50.070.

(2) When a report is filed electronically with the commission, it is deemed to have been received on the file transfer date. The commission shall notify the filer of receipt of the electronically filed report. Such notification may be sent by mail or electronically. If the notification of receipt of the electronically filed report is not received by the filer, the filer may offer proof of sending the report, and such proof shall be treated as if it were a receipt sent by the commission. Electronic filing may be used for purposes of filing the special reports required to be delivered under RCW 29B.25.140 and 29B.50.070. [2024 c 164 s 414; 2019 c 428 s 13; 2010 c 204 s 308; 1999 c 401 s 10; 1995 c 397 s 18; 1983 c 176 s 2; 1973 c 1 s 42 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.140, 42.17.420.]

**Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:** See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—Effective date—2019 c 428:** See notes following RCW 29B.20.110.

**Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 101-504, 506-601, 603-702, and 801-1103:** See note following RCW 29B.15.010.

**Effective date—1995 c 397:** See note following RCW 29B.40.020.

**Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:** See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.090 Certification of reports. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** Every report and statement required to be filed under this title shall identify the person preparing it, and shall be certified as complete and correct, both by the person preparing it and by the person on whose behalf it is filed. [2024 c 164 s 415; 1973 c 1 s 43 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.145, 42.17.430.]

~~Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:~~ See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

~~Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:~~ See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.100 Duty to preserve statements and reports. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** The commission must preserve statements or reports required to be filed under this title for not less than 10 years. [2024 c 164 s 416; 2010 c 205 s 9; 1973 c 1 s 45 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17A.150, 42.17.450.]

~~Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:~~ See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

~~Effective date—Construction—1973 c 1:~~ See notes following RCW 29B.05.010.

**RCW 29B.20.110 Subpoenas. (Effective January 1, 2026.)** (1) The commission may apply for and obtain a superior court order approving and authorizing a subpoena in advance of its issuance. The application may be made in Thurston county, the county where the subpoenaed person resides or is found, or the county where the subpoenaed documents, records, or evidence are located. The application must:

(a) State that an order is sought under this section;  
(b) Adequately specify the documents, records, evidence, or testimony; and

(c) Include a declaration made under oath that an investigation is being conducted for a lawfully authorized purpose related to an investigation within the commission's authority and that the subpoenaed documents, records, evidence, or testimony are reasonably related to an investigation within the commission's authority.

(2) When an application under this section is made to the satisfaction of the court, the court must issue an order approving the subpoena. An order under this subsection constitutes authority of law for the agency to subpoena the documents, records, evidence, or testimony.

(3) The commission may seek approval and a court may issue an order under this section without prior notice to any person, including the person to whom the subpoena is directed and the person who is the subject of an investigation. An application for court approval is subject to the fee and process set forth in RCW 36.18.012(3). [2024 c 164 s 417; 2019 c 428 s 9. Formerly RCW 42.17A.160.]

~~Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164:~~ See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

**Finding—2019 c 428:** "The legislature finds that passage of chapter 304, Laws of 2018 (Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2938) and chapter 111, Laws of 2018 (Substitute Senate Bill No. 5991) was an important step in achieving the goals of reforming campaign finance reporting and oversight, including simplifying the reporting and enforcement processes to promote administrative efficiencies. Much has

been accomplished in the short time the public disclosure commission has implemented these new laws. However, some additional improvements were identified by the legislature, stakeholders, and the public disclosure commission, that are necessary to further implement these goals and the purpose of the state campaign finance law. Additional refinements to the law will help to ensure the public disclosure commission may continue to provide transparency of election campaign funding activities, meaningful guidance to participants in the political process, and enforcement that is timely, fair, and focused on improving compliance." [2019 c 428 s 1.]

**Effective date—2019 c 428:** "Except for sections 35 and 36 of this act, 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 21, 2019]." [2019 c 428 s 44.]