

Chapter 43.150 RCW
CENTER FOR VOLUNTEERISM AND CITIZEN SERVICE

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RCW 43.150.010 Legislative findings. (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Large numbers of Washington's citizens are actively engaged in carrying forward the ethic of service and voluntary activities that benefit their citizens, their communities, and the entire state;

(b) This contribution continues to provide the equivalent of hundreds of millions of dollars in services that might otherwise create a need for additional tax collections;

(c) Many Washington citizens have yet to become fully involved in the life of their communities; many societal needs exist that could and should be met by new citizen service initiatives;

(d) The state of Washington needs to continue to encourage and expand the ethic of civic responsibility among its citizenry, through individuals working on their own, and through local and statewide organizations, both governmental and private and nonprofit agencies;

(e) This ethic of citizen service benefits those who serve and those who receive services; in both cases there is the betterment of all Washington communities;

(f) Public and private agencies depend in large measure on the efforts of volunteers for the accomplishment of their missions and actively seek to increase these efforts;

(g) State agencies can and should extend their service delivery programs through the increased use of and support for volunteers;

(h) The national and community service act of 1990 provides an opportunity for Washington to support citizen service and volunteer activities in Washington;

(i) Business, industry, communities, schools, and labor in Washington state are increasingly interested in opportunities for community service and in developing the volunteer and service ethic;

(j) While providing both tangible and intangible benefits, volunteers in turn need respect and support for their efforts;

(k) The state itself, through the programs and services of its agencies as well as through the provisions of law and rule making, can and should provide a primary role and focus for encouraging the ethic of citizen service and support for volunteer efforts and programs;

(l) Planned and coordinated recognition, information, training, and technical assistance for volunteer and citizen service efforts through a statewide center for voluntary action have been proven to be effective means of multiplying the resources volunteers bring to the needs of their communities; and

(m) It is important that Washington state position itself to raise volunteerism to the highest attainable levels, and along with the private sector, become a voice in the role citizen service will take in providing solutions to societal needs.

(2) Therefore, the legislature, in recognition of these findings, enacts the center for volunteerism and citizen service act to ensure that the state of Washington actively promotes the ethic of service and makes every appropriate effort to encourage effective involvement of individuals in their communities and of volunteers who supplement the services of private, nonprofit community agencies and organizations, agencies of local government throughout the state, and the state government. [1992 c 66 § 1; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 1.]

RCW 43.150.020 Short title. This chapter may be known and cited as the center for volunteerism and citizen service act. [1992 c 66 § 2; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 2.]

RCW 43.150.030 Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Volunteer" means a person who is willing to work without expectation of salary or financial reward and who chooses where he or she provides services and the type of services he or she provides.

(2) "Center" means the state center for volunteerism and citizen service. [1995 c 269 § 2301; 1992 c 66 § 3; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 3.]

Effective date—Part headings not law—Severability—1995 c 269: See notes following RCW 18.16.050.

RCW 43.150.040 Center for volunteerism and citizen service authorized—Coordinator—Staff. The governor may establish a statewide center for volunteerism and citizen service within the department of commerce and appoint an executive administrator, who may employ such staff as necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The provisions of chapter 41.06 RCW do not apply to the executive administrator and the staff. [2023 c 470 § 2062; 1995 c 399 § 84; 1992 c 66 § 4; 1985 c 6 § 11; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 4.]

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

RCW 43.150.050 Programs and activities authorized. The center, working in cooperation with individuals, local groups, and organizations throughout the state, may undertake any program or activity for which funds are available which furthers the goals of this chapter. These programs and activities may include, but are not limited to:

(1) Providing information about programs, activities, and resources of value to volunteers and to organizations operating or planning volunteer or citizen service programs;

(2) Sponsoring recognition events for outstanding individuals and organizations;

(3) Facilitating the involvement of business, industry, government, and labor in community service and betterment;

(4) Organizing, or assisting in the organization of, training workshops and conferences;

(5) Publishing schedules of significant events, lists of published materials, accounts of successful programs and programming techniques, and other information concerning the field of volunteerism and citizen service, and distributing this information broadly;

(6) Reviewing the laws and rules of the state of Washington, and proposed changes therein, to determine their impact on the success of volunteer activities and programs, and recommending such changes as seem appropriate to ensure the achievement of the goals of this chapter;

(7) Seeking funding sources for enhancing, promoting, and supporting the ethic of service and facilitating or providing information to those organizations and agencies which may benefit;

(8) Providing information about agencies and individuals who are working to prevent the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus, as defined in chapter 70.24 RCW, and to agencies and individuals who are working to provide health and social services to persons living with the human immunodeficiency virus, as defined in chapter 70.24 RCW. [2020 c 76 § 20; 1992 c 66 § 5; 1988 c 206 § 301; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 5.]

RCW 43.150.070 Receipt and expenditure of donations—Fees—Voluntary action center fund created. (1) The center may receive such gifts, grants, and endowments from private or public sources as may be made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, for the use and benefit of the purpose of the center and expend the same or any income therefrom according to the terms of the gifts, grants, or endowments. The center may charge reasonable fees, or other appropriate charges, for attendance at workshops and conferences, for various publications and other materials which it is authorized to prepare and distribute for the purpose of defraying all or part of the costs of those activities and materials.

(2) A fund known as the voluntary action center fund is created, which consists of all gifts, grants, and endowments, fees, and other revenues received pursuant to this chapter. The state treasurer is the custodian of the fund. Disbursements from the fund shall be on authorization of the executive administrator of the center or the administrator's designee, and may be made for the following purposes to enhance the capabilities of the center's activities, such as: (a) Reimbursement of center volunteers for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060; (b) publication and distribution of materials involving volunteerism and citizen service; (c) for other purposes designated in gifts, grants, or endowments consistent with the purposes of this chapter. The fund is subject to the allotment procedure provided under chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for disbursements. [1992 c 66 § 7; 1982 1st ex.s. c 11 § 7.]

RCW 43.150.080 At-risk children—Collaborative program. A volunteer organization or individual volunteer may assist a public agency, with the agency's approval, in a collaborative program designed to serve the needs of at-risk children. The center, with the

advice and counsel of the attorney general, shall develop guidelines defining at-risk children and establish reasonable safety standards to protect the safety of program participants and volunteers, including but not limited to background checks as appropriate as provided in RCW 43.43.830 through 43.43.834. In carrying out the volunteer activity, the individual volunteer or member of the volunteer organization shall not be considered to be an employee or agent of any public agency involved in the collaborative program. The public agency shall have no liability for any acts of the individual volunteer or volunteer organization. Prior to participation, a volunteer and the public agency administering the collaborative program shall sign a written master agreement, approved in form by the attorney general, that includes provisions defining the scope of the volunteer activities and waiving any claims against each other. A volunteer organization or individual volunteer shall not be liable for civil damages resulting from any act or omission arising from volunteer activities which comply with safety standards issued by the center for volunteerism and citizen service, other than acts or omissions constituting gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct. [1993 c 365 § 1.]