

**Chapter 9.96A RCW**  
**RESTORATION OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS**

**Sections**

- 9.96A.010 Legislative declaration.  
9.96A.020 Employment, occupational licensing by public entity—Prior felony conviction no disqualification—Exceptions.  
9.96A.030 Exclusion—Law enforcement agencies.  
9.96A.040 Violations—Adjudication pursuant to administrative procedure act.  
9.96A.050 Provisions of chapter prevailing—Exception.  
9.96A.060 Exclusion—Employees dealing with children or vulnerable persons.  
9.96A.900 Effective date—1973 c 135.

*Gambling commission—Denial, suspension, or revocation of license, permit—Other provisions not applicable: RCW 9.46.075.*

*Restoration of civil rights: Chapter 9.96 RCW.*

*State lottery commission—Denial, suspension, and revocation of licenses—Other provisions not applicable: RCW 67.70.090.*

**RCW 9.96A.010 Legislative declaration.** The legislature declares that it is the policy of the state of Washington to encourage and contribute to the rehabilitation of felons and to assist them in the assumption of the responsibilities of citizenship, and the opportunity to secure employment or to pursue, practice or engage in a meaningful and profitable trade, occupation, vocation, profession or business is an essential ingredient to rehabilitation and the assumption of the responsibilities of citizenship. [1973 c 135 s 1.]

**RCW 9.96A.020 Employment, occupational licensing by public entity—Prior felony conviction no disqualification—Exceptions.** (1) Subject to the exceptions in subsections (3) through (5) of this section, and unless there is another provision of law to the contrary, a person is not disqualified from employment by the state of Washington or any of its counties, cities, towns, municipal corporations, or quasi-municipal corporations, nor is a person disqualified to practice, pursue or engage in any occupation, trade, vocation, or business for which a license, permit, certificate or registration is required to be issued by the state of Washington or any of its counties, cities, towns, municipal corporations, or quasi-municipal corporations solely because of a prior conviction of a felony. However, this section does not preclude the fact of any prior conviction of a crime from being considered.

(2) A person may be denied employment by the state of Washington or any of its counties, cities, towns, municipal corporations, or quasi-municipal corporations, or a person may be denied a license, permit, certificate or registration to pursue, practice or engage in an occupation, trade, vocation, or business by reason of the prior conviction of a felony if the felony for which he or she was convicted directly relates to the position of employment sought or to the

specific occupation, trade, vocation, or business for which the license, permit, certificate or registration is sought, and the time elapsed since the conviction is less than ten years, except as provided in RCW 9.97.020. However, for positions in the county treasurer's office, a person may be disqualified from employment because of a prior guilty plea or conviction of a felony involving embezzlement or theft, even if the time elapsed since the guilty plea or conviction is ten years or more.

(3) A person is disqualified for any certificate required or authorized under chapters 28A.405 or 28A.410 RCW, because of a prior guilty plea or the conviction of a felony crime specified under RCW 28A.400.322, even if the time elapsed since the guilty plea or conviction is ten years or more.

(4) A person is disqualified from employment by school districts, educational service districts, and their contractors hiring employees who will have regularly scheduled unsupervised access to children, because of a prior guilty plea or conviction of a felony crime specified under RCW 28A.400.322, even if the time elapsed since the guilty plea or conviction is ten years or more, except as provided in RCW 9.97.020.

(5) The provisions of this chapter do not apply to issuance of licenses or credentials for professions regulated under chapter 18.130 RCW.

(6) Subsections (3) and (4) of this section as they pertain to felony crimes specified under RCW 28A.400.322(1) apply to a person applying for a certificate or for employment on or after July 25, 1993, and before July 26, 2009. Subsections (3) and (4) of this section as they pertain to all felony crimes specified under RCW 28A.400.322(2) apply to a person applying for a certificate or for employment on or after July 26, 2009. Subsection (5) of this section only applies to a person applying for a license or credential on or after June 12, 2008. [2016 c 81 s 6; 2009 c 396 s 7; 2008 c 134 s 26; 1999 c 16 s 1; 1993 c 71 s 1; 1973 c 135 s 2.]

**Finding—Conflict with federal requirements—2016 c 81:** See notes following RCW 9.97.010.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—2008 c 134:** See notes following RCW 18.130.020.

**Intent—1993 c 71:** "The legislature reaffirms its singular intent that this act shall not affect the duties imposed or powers conferred on the office of the superintendent of public instruction by RCW 28A.410.090." [1993 c 71 s 2.]

**RCW 9.96A.030 Exclusion—Law enforcement agencies.** This chapter shall not be applicable to any law enforcement agency; however, nothing herein shall be construed to preclude a law enforcement agency in its discretion from adopting the policy set forth in this chapter. [1973 c 135 s 3.]

**RCW 9.96A.040 Violations—Adjudication pursuant to administrative procedure act.** Any complaints or grievances concerning the violation of this chapter shall be processed and adjudicated in

accordance with the procedures set forth in chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act. [1973 c 135 s 4.]

**RCW 9.96A.050 Provisions of chapter prevailing—Exception.**

Except as provided in RCW 9.97.020, the provisions of this chapter shall prevail over any other provisions of law which purport to govern the denial of licenses, permits, certificates, registrations, or other means to engage in a business, on the grounds of a lack of good moral character, or which purport to govern the suspension or revocation of such a license, permit, certificate, or registration on the grounds of conviction of a crime. [2016 c 81 s 7; 1973 c 135 s 5.]

**Finding—Conflict with federal requirements—2016 c 81:** See notes following RCW 9.97.010.

**RCW 9.96A.060 Exclusion—Employees dealing with children or vulnerable persons.** This chapter is not applicable to the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families when employing a person, who in the course of his or her employment, has or may have unsupervised access to any person who is under the age of eighteen, who is under the age of twenty-one and has been sentenced to a term of confinement under the supervision of the department of children, youth, and families under chapter 13.40 RCW, who is a vulnerable adult under chapter 74.34 RCW, or who is a vulnerable person. For purposes of this section "vulnerable person" means an adult of any age who lacks the functional, mental, or physical ability to care for himself or herself. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 805; 2001 c 296 s 2.]

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 ss 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822:** See note following RCW 43.216.025.

**Conflict with federal requirements—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See RCW 43.216.908.

**Intent—2001 c 296:** "It is the intent of the legislature to authorize the department of social and health services to investigate the background of current and future department employees to the same extent and with the same effect as it has authorized the state to investigate the background and exclude from the provision of service current and future care providers, contractors, volunteers, and others. The department of social and health services must coordinate with the department of personnel to develop rules that address the procedures for undertaking background checks, and specifically what action would be taken against a current employee who is disqualified from his or her current position because of a background check not previously performed." [2001 c 296 s 1.]

**RCW 9.96A.900 Effective date—1973 c 135.** This act shall take effect on July 1, 1973. [1973 c 135 s 7.]