

RCW 9.94A.837 Special allegation—Victim was under fifteen years of age—Procedures. (1) In a prosecution for rape in the first degree, rape in the second degree, indecent liberties by forcible compulsion, or kidnapping in the first degree with sexual motivation, the prosecuting attorney shall file a special allegation that the victim of the offense was under fifteen years of age at the time of the offense whenever sufficient admissible evidence exists, which, when considered with the most plausible, reasonably foreseeable defense that could be raised under the evidence, would justify a finding by a reasonable and objective fact finder that the victim was under fifteen years of age at the time of the offense, unless the prosecuting attorney determines, after consulting with a victim, that filing a special allegation under this section is likely to interfere with the ability to obtain a conviction.

(2) Once a special allegation has been made under this section, the state has the burden to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the victim was under fifteen years of age at the time of the offense. If a jury is had, the jury shall, if it finds the defendant guilty, also find a special verdict as to whether the victim was under the age of fifteen at the time of the offense. If no jury is had, the court shall make a finding of fact as to whether the victim was under the age of fifteen at the time of the offense.

(3) The prosecuting attorney shall not withdraw a special allegation filed under this section without the approval of the court through an order of dismissal of the allegation. The court may not dismiss the special allegation unless it finds that the order is necessary to correct an error in the initial charging decision or that there are evidentiary problems that make proving the special allegation doubtful. [2006 c 122 § 2.]

Effective date—2006 c 122 §§ 1-4 and 6: See note following RCW 9.94A.836.