

**RCW 29A.92.010 Definitions. (Effective until January 1, 2024.)**

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise. In applying these definitions and other terms in this chapter, courts may rely on relevant federal case law for guidance.

(1) "At large election" means any of the following methods of electing members of the governing body of a political subdivision:

(a) One in which the voters of the entire jurisdiction elect the members to the governing body;

(b) One in which the candidates are required to reside within given areas of the jurisdiction and the voters of the entire jurisdiction elect the members to the governing body; or

(c) One that combines the criteria in (a) and (b) of this subsection or one that combines at large with district-based elections.

(2) "District-based elections" means a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision in which the candidate must reside within an election district that is a divisible part of the political subdivision and is elected only by voters residing within that election district.

(3) "Polarized voting" means voting in which there is a difference, as defined in case law regarding enforcement of the federal voting rights act, 52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq., in the choice of candidates or other electoral choices that are preferred by voters in a protected class, and in the choice of candidates and electoral choices that are preferred by voters in the rest of the electorate.

(4) "Political subdivision" means any county, city, town, school district, fire protection district, port district, or public utility district, but does not include the state.

(5) "Protected class" means a class of voters who are members of a race, color, or language minority group, as this class is referenced and defined in the federal voting rights act, 52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq. [2018 c 113 § 103.]

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(a) One in which the voters of the entire jurisdiction elect the members to the governing body;

(b) One in which the candidates are required to reside within given areas of the jurisdiction and the voters of the entire jurisdiction elect the members to the governing body; or

(c) One that combines the criteria in (a) and (b) of this subsection or one that combines at large with district-based elections.

(2) "Cohesive" means that members of a group tend to prefer the same candidates or other electoral choices.

(3) "District-based elections" means a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision in which the candidate must reside within an election district that is a divisible part of the political subdivision and is elected only by voters residing within that election district.

(4) "Polarized voting" means voting in which there is a difference in the choice of candidates or other electoral choices that are preferred by voters in a protected class or a coalition of protected classes, and in the choice of candidates and electoral choices that are preferred by voters in the rest of the electorate.

(5) "Political subdivision" means any county, city, town, school district, fire protection district, port district, or public utility district, but does not include the state.

(6) "Protected class" means a class of voters who are members of a race, color, or language minority group in the state of Washington, as this class is referenced and defined in the federal voting rights act, 52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq. [2023 c 56 § 2; 2018 c 113 § 103.]

**Effective date—2023 c 56:** See note following RCW 29A.92.720.