

RCW 41.80.400 Assistant attorneys general. (1) In addition to the agencies defined in RCW 41.80.005 and subject to the provisions of this section, this chapter applies to assistant attorneys general.

(2) (a) Assistant attorneys general who are not otherwise excluded from bargaining under (b) of this subsection are granted the right to collectively bargain.

(b) Division chiefs, deputy attorneys general, the solicitor general, assistant attorneys general in the labor and personnel division, special assistant attorneys general, confidential employees as defined in RCW 41.80.005, and any assistant or deputy attorney general who reports directly to the attorney general are excluded from this section and do not have the right to collectively bargain.

(3) The only unit appropriate for the purpose of collective bargaining under this chapter is a statewide unit of all assistant attorneys general not otherwise excluded from bargaining.

(4) The governor or the governor's designee and an exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate one master collective bargaining agreement for assistant attorneys general. [2019 c 145 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 145: "The legislature finds that the legal services provided by assistant attorneys general in the office of the attorney general are crucial to the ability of the state officials, agencies, colleges, boards, and commissions to function and fulfill their obligations to the citizens of the state. Assistant attorneys general are exempt from civil service under RCW 41.06.070. The assistant attorneys general currently have no mechanism through which to collectively bargain for salary increases. The legislature finds the office of the attorney general has experienced increased difficulty recruiting and retaining attorneys due to the disparity in wages paid to assistant attorneys general as compared to attorneys in other public sector positions. This type of turnover is costly to the office of the attorney general, negatively impacts morale, interferes with the ability of the office to succession plan, and ultimately harms the citizens of this state. Therefore, it is the legislature's intent to empower assistant attorneys general to collectively bargain for fair wages that will foster job satisfaction and the highest standards of professional competence among assistant attorneys general." [2019 c 145 § 1.]