

RCW 49.60.520 Television closed-captioning in places of public accommodation.

(1)(a) Any person that owns or manages a place of public accommodation that offers a closed-captioned television receiver for use in any public area must activate closed captioning with black background, white text color, and a style and size of font that is readable to people with low vision, unless:

(i) The only receiver of television programming available in a public area is technically incapable of displaying closed captioning; or

(ii) The place of public accommodation is otherwise exempt from the closed captioning requirement under state or federal law.

(b) In a public area with multiple televisions, up to 50 percent of on-premises televisions may be exempt from displaying closed captioning. The exempted televisions must clearly display that they do not have volume or are on mute.

(c) A place of public accommodation may deactivate closed captioning on a television receiver actively displaying text at the request of a vision impaired person. The deactivation of closed captioning is for the length of time the requestor is at the place of public accommodation.

(2) If multiple television models are displayed together for sale in a public area, at least one closed-captioned television must be available for viewing.

(3) If after 90 days from July 25, 2021, a person that owns or manages a place of public accommodation fails to comply with the requirements of this section, that person shall be subject to a civil fine of up to \$75 for each violation. Written notice of the violation must be provided to the person and must state that the fine will be assessed. The notice must also state that the person has an opportunity to cure the violation by complying with the requirement within 30 days after delivery of the notice. If the person demonstrates compliance within the 30-day period, the fine will not be assessed, and the violation must be dismissed. Any subsequent violation shall result in a civil fine of up to \$150.

(4) For purposes of this section the following definitions apply:

(a) "Closed-captioned television receiver" means a receiver of television programming that has the ability to display closed captioning including, but not limited to, a television, digital set-top box, and other technology capable of displaying closed captioning for television programming.

(b) "Closed captioning" means a transcript or dialog of the audio portion of a television program that is displayed on either the bottom or top portion of a television receiver screen when the user activates the feature. There is no requirement for the closed-captioned transcript or dialog to be in any language other than the language of the audio programming, or a default language where a television receiver only displays one language.

(c) "Public area" means any part of a place of public accommodation that is open to the general public.

(5) A violation of this section is a violation of this chapter.

(6) The human rights commission must prepare an educational pamphlet advising employers and employees of their duty and liability under this section. The pamphlet should be made available online. Employers must provide employees with training on this section using the pamphlet. [2021 c 229 § 1.]