

**RCW 88.02.570 Exemptions. (Effective until January 1, 2029.)**

Vessel registration is required under this chapter except for the following:

- (1) A military vessel owned by the United States government;
- (2) A public vessel owned by the United States government, unless the vessel is a type used for recreation;
- (3) A vessel clearly identified as being:
  - (a) Owned by a state, county, or city; and
  - (b) Used primarily for governmental purposes;
- (4) A vessel either (a) registered or numbered under the laws of a country other than the United States or (b) having a valid United States customs service cruising license issued pursuant to 19 C.F.R. Sec. 4.94. Either vessel is exempt from registration only for the first sixty days of use on Washington state waters. On or before the sixty-first day of use on Washington state waters, any vessel in the state under this subsection must obtain a vessel visitor permit as required under RCW 88.02.610;
- (5) A vessel that is currently registered or numbered under the laws of the state of principal operation or that has been issued a valid number under federal law. However, either vessel must be registered in Washington state if the state of principal operation changes to Washington state by the sixty-first day after the vessel arrives in Washington state;
- (6) (a) A vessel owned by a nonresident if:
  - (i) The vessel is located upon the waters of this state exclusively for repairs, alteration, or reconstruction, or any testing related to these services;
  - (ii) An employee of the facility providing these services is on board the vessel during any testing; and
  - (iii) The nonresident files an affidavit with the department of revenue by the sixty-first day verifying that the vessel is located upon the waters of this state for these services.
- (b) The nonresident must continue to file an affidavit every sixty days thereafter, as long as the vessel is located upon the waters of this state exclusively for repairs, alteration, reconstruction, or testing;
- (7) A vessel equipped with propulsion machinery of less than ten horsepower that:
  - (a) Is owned by the owner of a vessel for which a valid vessel number has been issued;
  - (b) Displays the number of that numbered vessel followed by the suffix "1" in the manner prescribed by the department; and
  - (c) Is used as a tender for direct transportation between the numbered vessel and the shore and for no other purpose;
- (8) A vessel under sixteen feet in overall length that has no propulsion machinery of any type or that is not used on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or on the high seas beyond the territorial seas for vessels owned in the United States and are powered by propulsion machinery of ten or less horsepower;
- (9) A vessel with no propulsion machinery of any type for which the primary mode of propulsion is human power;
- (10) A vessel primarily engaged in commerce that has or is required to have a valid marine document as a vessel of the United States. A commercial vessel that the department of revenue determines has the external appearance of a vessel that would otherwise be required to register under this chapter, must display decals issued

annually by the department of revenue that indicate the vessel's exempt status;

(11) A vessel primarily engaged in commerce that is owned by a resident of a country other than the United States;

(12) A vessel owned by a nonresident person brought into the state for use or enjoyment while temporarily within the state for not more than six months in any continuous twelve-month period that (a) is currently registered or numbered under the laws of the state of principal use or (b) has been issued a valid number under federal law. This type of vessel is exempt from registration only for the first sixty days of use on Washington state waters. On or before the sixty-first day of use on Washington state waters, any vessel under this subsection must obtain a nonresident vessel permit as required under RCW 88.02.620;

(13) A vessel used in this state by a nonresident individual possessing a valid use permit issued under RCW 82.08.700 or 82.12.700;

(14) A vessel held for sale by any licensed dealer; and

(15) A vessel with propulsion machinery that draws two hundred fifty watts or less and propels the vessel no faster than ten miles per hour and is not used on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or on the high seas beyond the territorial seas for vessels owned in the United States. [2016 c 114 § 2; (2016 c 114 § 1 expired July 1, 2019); 2015 3rd sp.s. c 6 § 804; 2010 c 161 § 1018; 2007 c 22 § 3; 2002 c 286 § 12; 1998 c 198 § 1; 1997 c 83 § 1; 1991 c 339 § 30. Prior: 1989 c 393 § 13; 1989 c 102 § 1; 1985 c 452 § 1; 1984 c 250 § 2; 1983 2nd ex.s. c 3 § 44; 1983 c 7 § 16. Formerly RCW 88.02.030.]

**Expiration date—2021 c 150; 2017 c 323; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 6 §§ 802-805:** See note following RCW 88.02.620.

**Findings—Intent—Tax preference performance statement—2021 c 150; 2017 c 323; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 6 §§ 802-805:** See note following RCW 88.02.640.

**Effective date—2016 c 114 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2019." [2016 c 114 § 4.]

**Expiration date—2016 c 114 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act expires July 1, 2019." [2016 c 114 § 3.]

**Effective dates—2015 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See note following RCW 82.04.4266.

**Effective date—Intent—Legislation to reconcile chapter 161, Laws of 2010 and other amendments made during the 2010 legislative session—2010 c 161:** See notes following RCW 46.04.013.

**Effective date—2007 c 22:** See note following RCW 82.08.700.

**Effective date—2002 c 286:** See RCW 79.100.901.

**Effective date—1998 c 198:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 27, 1998]." [1998 c 198 § 2.]

**Effective date—1985 c 452:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1985." [1985 c 452 § 2.]

**Construction—Severability—Effective dates—1983 2nd ex.s. c 3:**  
See notes following RCW 82.04.255.

*Commission to adopt rules: RCW 79A.60.595.*

*Partial exemption from ad valorem taxes of ships and vessels exempt from excise tax under RCW 88.02.570(10): RCW 84.36.080.*

**RCW 88.02.570 Exemptions. (Effective January 1, 2029.)** Vessel registration is required under this chapter except for the following:

- (1) A military vessel owned by the United States government;
- (2) A public vessel owned by the United States government, unless the vessel is a type used for recreation;
- (3) A vessel clearly identified as being:
  - (a) Owned by a state, county, or city; and
  - (b) Used primarily for governmental purposes;
- (4) A vessel either (a) registered or numbered under the laws of a country other than the United States or (b) having a valid United States customs service cruising license issued pursuant to 19 C.F.R. Sec. 4.94. Either vessel is exempt from registration only for the first sixty days of use on Washington state waters. On or before the sixty-first day of use on Washington state waters, any vessel in the state under this subsection must obtain a vessel visitor permit as required under RCW 88.02.610;
- (5) A vessel that is currently registered or numbered under the laws of the state of principal operation or that has been issued a valid number under federal law. However, either vessel must be registered in Washington state if the state of principal operation changes to Washington state by the sixty-first day after the vessel arrives in Washington state;
- (6) A vessel owned by a nonresident if:
  - (a) The vessel is located upon the waters of this state exclusively for repairs, alteration, or reconstruction, or any testing related to these services;
  - (b) An employee of the facility providing these services is on board the vessel during any testing; and
  - (c) The nonresident files an affidavit with the department of revenue by the sixty-first day verifying that the vessel is located upon the waters of this state for these services.The nonresident shall continue to file an affidavit every sixty days thereafter, as long as the vessel is located upon the waters of this state exclusively for repairs, alteration, reconstruction, or testing;
- (7) A vessel equipped with propulsion machinery of less than ten horsepower that:
  - (a) Is owned by the owner of a vessel for which a valid vessel number has been issued;
  - (b) Displays the number of that numbered vessel followed by the suffix "1" in the manner prescribed by the department; and

(c) Is used as a tender for direct transportation between the numbered vessel and the shore and for no other purpose;

(8) A vessel under sixteen feet in overall length that has no propulsion machinery of any type or that is not used on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or on the high seas beyond the territorial seas for vessels owned in the United States and are powered by propulsion machinery of ten or less horsepower;

(9) A vessel with no propulsion machinery of any type for which the primary mode of propulsion is human power;

(10) A vessel primarily engaged in commerce that has or is required to have a valid marine document as a vessel of the United States. A commercial vessel that the department of revenue determines has the external appearance of a vessel that would otherwise be required to register under this chapter, must display decals issued annually by the department of revenue that indicate the vessel's exempt status;

(11) A vessel primarily engaged in commerce that is owned by a resident of a country other than the United States;

(12) A vessel owned by a nonresident natural person brought into the state for use or enjoyment while temporarily within the state for not more than six months in any continuous twelve-month period that (a) is currently registered or numbered under the laws of the state of principal use or (b) has been issued a valid number under federal law. This type of vessel is exempt from registration only for the first sixty days of use on Washington state waters. On or before the sixty-first day of use on Washington state waters, any vessel under this subsection must obtain a nonresident vessel permit as required under RCW 88.02.620;

(13) A vessel used in this state by a nonresident individual possessing a valid use permit issued under RCW 82.08.700 or 82.12.700;

(14) A vessel held for sale by any licensed dealer; and

(15) A vessel with propulsion machinery that draws two hundred fifty watts or less and propels the vessel no faster than ten miles per hour and is not used on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or on the high seas beyond the territorial seas for vessels owned in the United States. [2016 c 114 § 2; 2010 c 161 § 1018; 2007 c 22 § 3; 2002 c 286 § 12; 1998 c 198 § 1; 1997 c 83 § 1; 1991 c 339 § 30. Prior: 1989 c 393 § 13; 1989 c 102 § 1; 1985 c 452 § 1; 1984 c 250 § 2; 1983 2nd ex.s. c 3 § 44; 1983 c 7 § 16. Formerly RCW 88.02.030.]

**Effective date—2016 c 114 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2019." [2016 c 114 § 4.]

**Effective date—Intent—Legislation to reconcile chapter 161, Laws of 2010 and other amendments made during the 2010 legislative session—2010 c 161:** See notes following RCW 46.04.013.

**Effective date—2007 c 22:** See note following RCW 82.08.700.

**Effective date—2002 c 286:** See RCW 79.100.901.

**Effective date—1998 c 198:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 27, 1998]." [1998 c 198 § 2.]

**Effective date—1985 c 452:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1985." [1985 c 452 § 2.]

**Construction—Severability—Effective dates—1983 2nd ex.s. c 3:**  
See notes following RCW 82.04.255.

*Commission to adopt rules: RCW 79A.60.595.*

*Partial exemption from ad valorem taxes of ships and vessels exempt from excise tax under RCW 88.02.570(10): RCW 84.36.080.*