

Chapter 35A.11 RCW

LAWS GOVERNING NONCHARTER CODE CITIES AND CHARTER CODE CITIES—POWERS

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RCW 35A.11.010 Rights, powers, and privileges. Each city governed under this optional municipal code, whether charter or noncharter, shall be entitled "City of" (naming it), and by such name shall have perpetual succession; may sue and be sued in all courts and proceedings; use a corporate seal approved by its legislative body; and, by and through its legislative body, such municipality may contract and be contracted with; may purchase, lease, receive, or otherwise acquire real and personal property of every kind, and use, enjoy, hold, lease, control, convey or otherwise dispose of it for the common benefit. [1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.11.010.]

RCW 35A.11.020 Powers vested in legislative bodies of noncharter and charter code cities. The legislative body of each code city shall have power to organize and regulate its internal affairs within the provisions of this title and its charter, if any; and to define the functions, powers, and duties of its officers and employees; within the limitations imposed by vested rights, to fix the compensation and working conditions of such officers and employees and establish and maintain civil service, or merit systems, retirement and pension systems not in conflict with the provisions of this title or of existing charter provisions until changed by the people: PROVIDED,

That nothing in this section or in this title shall permit any city, whether a code city or otherwise, to enact any provisions establishing or respecting a merit system or system of civil service for firefighters and police officers which does not substantially accomplish the same purpose as provided by general law in chapter 41.08 RCW for firefighters and chapter 41.12 RCW for police officers now or as hereafter amended, or enact any provision establishing or respecting a pension or retirement system for firefighters or police officers which provides different pensions or retirement benefits than are provided by general law for such classes.

Such body may adopt and enforce ordinances of all kinds relating to and regulating its local or municipal affairs and appropriate to the good government of the city, and may impose penalties of fine not exceeding five thousand dollars or imprisonment for any term not exceeding one year, or both, for the violation of such ordinances, constituting a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor as provided therein. However, the punishment for any criminal ordinance shall be the same as the punishment provided in state law for the same crime. Such a body alternatively may provide that violation of such ordinances constitutes a civil violation subject to monetary penalty, but no act which is a state crime may be made a civil violation.

The legislative body of each code city shall have all powers possible for a city or town to have under the Constitution of this state, and not specifically denied to code cities by law. By way of illustration and not in limitation, such powers may be exercised in regard to the acquisition, sale, ownership, improvement, maintenance, protection, restoration, regulation, use, leasing, disposition, vacation, abandonment or beautification of public ways, real property of all kinds, waterways, structures, or any other improvement or use of real or personal property, in regard to all aspects of collective bargaining as provided for and subject to the provisions of chapter 41.56 RCW, as now or hereafter amended, and in the rendering of local social, cultural, recreational, educational, governmental, or corporate services, including operating and supplying of utilities and municipal services commonly or conveniently rendered by cities or towns.

In addition and not in limitation, the legislative body of each code city shall have any authority ever given to any class of municipality or to all municipalities of this state before or after the enactment of this title, such authority to be exercised in the manner provided, if any, by the granting statute, when not in conflict with this title. Within constitutional limitations, legislative bodies of code cities shall have within their territorial limits all powers of taxation for local purposes except those which are expressly preempted by the state as provided in RCW 66.08.120, *82.36.440, 48.14.020, and 48.14.080. [2007 c 218 s 66; 1993 c 83 s 8; 1986 c 278 s 7; 1984 c 258 s 807; 1969 ex.s. c 29 s 1; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.11.020.]

***Reviser's note:** Chapter 82.36 RCW was repealed in its entirety by 2013 c 225 s 501, effective July 1, 2016.

Intent—Finding—2007 c 218: See note following RCW 41.08.020.

Effective date—1993 c 83: See note following RCW 35.21.163.

Severability—1986 c 278: See note following RCW 36.01.010.

Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—
Short title—1984 c 258: See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

Effective date—1969 ex.s. c 29: "The effective date of this act is July 1, 1969." [1969 ex.s. c 29 s 2.]

RCW 35A.11.030 Applicability of general law. Powers of eminent domain, borrowing, taxation, and the granting of franchises may be exercised by the legislative bodies of code cities in the manner provided in this title or by the general law of the state where not inconsistent with this title; and the duties to be performed and the procedure to be followed by such cities in regard to the keeping of accounts and records, official bonds, health and safety and other matters not specifically provided for in this title, shall be governed by the general law. For the purposes of this title, "the general law" means any provision of state law, not inconsistent with this title, enacted before or after the passage of this title which is by its terms applicable or available to all cities or towns. [1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.11.030.]

RCW 35A.11.035 Nonpolluting power generation by individual—
Exemption from regulation—Authorization to contract with utility.
See chapter 80.58 RCW.

RCW 35A.11.037 Hydroelectric resources—Separate legal authority
—Creation by irrigation districts and cities, towns, or public
utility districts. See RCW 87.03.825 through 87.03.840.

RCW 35A.11.040 Intergovernmental cooperation and action. The legislative body of a code city may exercise any of its powers or perform any of its functions including purchasing, and participate in the financing thereof, jointly or in cooperation, as provided for in chapter 39.34 RCW. The legislative body of a code city shall have power to accept any gift or grant for any public purpose and may carry out any conditions of such gift or grant when not in conflict with state or federal law. [1979 ex.s. c 18 s 17; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.11.040.]

Severability—1979 ex.s. c 18: See note following RCW 35A.01.070.

RCW 35A.11.050 Statement of purpose and policy. The general grant of municipal power conferred by this chapter and this title on legislative bodies of noncharter code cities and charter code cities is intended to confer the greatest power of local self-government consistent with the Constitution of this state and shall be construed liberally in favor of such cities. Specific mention of a particular municipal power or authority contained in this title or in the general law shall be construed as in addition and supplementary to, or explanatory of the powers conferred in general terms by this chapter. [1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.11.050.]

RCW 35A.11.060 Participation in Economic Opportunity Act programs. The legislative body of any city or town is hereby authorized and empowered in its discretion by resolution or ordinance passed by a majority of the legislative body, to take whatever action it deems necessary to enable the city or town to participate in the programs set forth in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452; 78 Stat. 508), as amended. Such participation may be engaged in as a sole city or town operation or in conjunction or cooperation with the state, any other city or town, county, or municipal corporation, or any private corporation qualified under said Economic Opportunity Act. [1971 ex.s. c 177 s 4.]

RCW 35A.11.070 Tourist promotion. See RCW 35.21.700.

RCW 35A.11.080 Initiative and referendum—Election to exercise—Restriction or abandonment. The qualified electors or legislative body of a noncharter code city may provide for the exercise in their city of the powers of initiative and referendum, upon electing so to do in the manner provided for changing the classification of a city or town in RCW 35A.02.020, 35A.02.025, 35A.02.030, and 35A.02.035, as now or hereafter amended.

The exercise of such powers may be restricted or abandoned upon electing so to do in the manner provided for abandoning the plan of government of a noncharter code city in RCW 35A.06.030, 35A.06.040, 35A.06.050, and 35A.06.060, as now or hereafter amended. [1979 ex.s. c 18 s 18; 1973 1st ex.s. c 81 s 1.]

Severability—1979 ex.s. c 18: See note following RCW 35A.01.070.

Imposition or increase of business and occupation tax—Referendum procedure required—Exclusive procedure: RCW 35.21.706.

Initiative and referendum petitions: RCW 35A.29.170.

RCW 35A.11.090 Initiative and referendum—Effective date of ordinances—Exceptions. Ordinances of noncharter code cities the qualified electors of which have elected to exercise the powers of initiative and referendum shall not go into effect before thirty days from the time of final passage and are subject to referendum during the interim except:

- (1) Ordinances initiated by petition;
- (2) Ordinances necessary for immediate preservation of public peace, health, and safety or for the support of city government and its existing public institutions which contain a statement of urgency and are passed by unanimous vote of the council;
- (3) Ordinances providing for local improvement districts;
- (4) Ordinances appropriating money;
- (5) Ordinances providing for or approving collective bargaining;
- (6) Ordinances providing for the compensation of or working conditions of city employees; and
- (7) Ordinances authorizing or repealing the levy of taxes; which excepted ordinances shall go into effect as provided by the general

law or by applicable sections of Title 35A RCW as now or hereafter amended. [1973 1st ex.s. c 81 s 2.]

RCW 35A.11.100 Initiative and referendum—Exercise of powers.

Except as provided in RCW 35A.11.090, and except that the number of registered voters needed to sign a petition for initiative or referendum shall be fifteen percent of the total number of names of persons listed as registered voters within the city on the day of the last preceding city general election, the powers of initiative and referendum in noncharter code cities shall be exercised in the manner set forth for the commission form of government in RCW 35.17.240 through 35.17.360, as now or hereafter amended. [1973 1st ex.s. c 81 s 3.]

Sufficiency of petition in code city: RCW 35A.01.040.

RCW 35A.11.110 Members of legislative bodies authorized to serve as volunteer firefighters, volunteer ambulance personnel, or reserve law enforcement officers. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the legislative body of any code city, by resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of the full legislative body, may authorize any of its members to serve as volunteer firefighters, volunteer ambulance personnel, or reserve law enforcement officers, or two or more of such positions, and to receive the same compensation, insurance, and other benefits as are applicable to other volunteer firefighters, volunteer ambulance personnel, or reserve law enforcement officers employed by the code city. [2005 c 38 s 1; 1993 c 303 s 2; 1974 ex.s. c 60 s 2.]

RCW 35A.11.200 Criminal code repeal by city operating municipal court—Agreement covering costs of handling resulting criminal cases—Arbitration. A code city operating a municipal court may not repeal in its entirety that portion of its municipal code defining crimes unless the municipality has reached an agreement with the appropriate county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. The agreement shall include provisions for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. [2005 c 433 s 42; 1984 c 258 s 209.]

Application—Captions not law—Savings—Effective date—2005 c 433: See RCW 7.04A.290 through 7.04A.310 and 7.04A.900.

Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258: See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

RCW 35A.11.210 Juvenile curfews. (1) Any code city has the authority to enact an ordinance, for the purpose of preserving the public safety or reducing acts of violence by or against juveniles that are occurring at such rates as to be beyond the capacity of the police to assure public safety, establishing times and conditions under which juveniles may be present on the public streets, in the public parks, or in any other public place during specified hours.

(2) The ordinance shall not contain any criminal sanctions for a violation of the ordinance. [1994 sp.s. c 7 s 503.]

Finding—Intent—Severability—1994 sp.s. c 7: See notes following RCW 43.70.540.