

**RCW 15.24.100 Procedure for eliminating assessment.** (1) A petition may be filed with the commission to reduce the assessment authorized in RCW 15.24.090 to zero. To be valid, the petition must be signed by at least eight percent of all apple growers eligible to vote in commission referendum elections. The petition shall contain the name of a person designated to represent the petitioners.

(2) Upon receipt of a valid petition, the commission shall prepare a document discussing the substance of the petition. A statement in favor of the petition shall be written by the proponents of the petition. A statement opposing the petition may be written by the commission or an opponent. The document and a notice of public hearing shall be sent to apple growers eligible to vote in commission referendum elections at least twenty days prior to the scheduled public hearings. The commission shall hold public hearings in Yakima and Wenatchee on the petition.

(3) Following the public hearings, the question of whether to reduce the assessment authorized in RCW 15.24.090 to zero shall be referred to a referendum mail ballot. The commission shall certify to the director a list of apple growers eligible to vote in commission referendum elections. The referendum shall be conducted and supervised by the director using the certified list. Inadvertent failure to notify a grower does not invalidate a referendum.

(4) The referendum will be approved if a simple majority of apple growers voting in the referendum election vote in favor of the elimination of the assessment. The director will certify the results of the vote.

(5) The referendum vote shall be binding and may not be overturned by action of the commission or director. If the referendum is approved, the commission shall immediately commence activities to wind down its operations. However, the elimination of the assessment shall not be effective until six months from the date the referendum result is certified by the director. If the referendum fails, neither the commission nor the director will take further action on the petition.

(6) The commission is responsible for all its own costs and all the director's costs associated with the hearing, notice, and referendum process. A subsequent petition may not be filed any sooner than five years following the certification of the results of any previously held referendum conducted under this section. [2018 c 22 s 8; 2016 sp.s. c 15 s 8; 2004 c 178 s 11; 2002 c 313 s 123; 1967 c 240 s 28; 1963 c 145 s 7; 1961 c 11 s 15.24.100. Prior: 1937 c 195 s 9; RRS s 2874-9.]

**Explanatory statement—2018 c 22:** See note following RCW 1.20.051.

**Effective dates—2002 c 313:** See note following RCW 15.65.020.