

RCW 50.29.063 Predecessor or successor employers—Transfer to obtain reduced array calculation factor rate—Evasion of successor provisions—Penalties.

(1) If it is found that a significant purpose of the transfer of a business was to obtain a reduced array calculation factor rate, then the following applies:

(a) If the successor was an employer at the time of the transfer, then the experience rating accounts of the employers involved shall be combined into a single account and the employers assigned the higher of the predecessor or successor array calculation factor rate to take effect as of the date of the transfer.

(b) If the successor was not an employer at the time of the transfer, then the experience rating account of the acquired business must not be transferred and, instead, the sum of the rate determined by the commissioner under RCW 50.29.025(1)(d) and 50.29.041, if applicable, shall be assigned.

(2) If any part of a delinquency for which an assessment is made under this title is due to an intent to knowingly evade the successorship provisions of RCW 50.29.062 and this section, then with respect to the employer, and to any business found to be knowingly promoting the evasion of such provisions:

(a) The commissioner shall, for the rate year in which the commissioner makes the determination under this subsection and for each of the three consecutive rate years following that rate year, assign to the employer or business the total rate, which is the sum of the recalculated array calculation factor rate and a civil penalty assessment rate, calculated as follows:

(i) Recalculate the array calculation factor rate as the array calculation factor rate that should have applied to the employer or business under RCW 50.29.025 and 50.29.062; and

(ii) Calculate a civil penalty assessment rate in an amount that, when added to the array calculation factor rate determined under (a)(i) of this subsection for the applicable rate year, results in a total rate equal to the maximum array calculation factor rate under RCW 50.29.025 plus two percent, which total rate is not limited by any maximum array calculation factor rate established in RCW 50.29.025(1)(b)(ii);

(b) The employer or business may be prosecuted under the penalties prescribed in RCW 50.36.020; and

(c) The employer or business must pay for the employment security department's reasonable expenses of auditing the employer's or business's books and collecting the civil penalty assessment.

(3) If the person knowingly evading the successorship provisions, or knowingly attempting to evade these provisions, or knowingly promoting the evasion of these provisions, is not an employer, the person is subject to a civil penalty assessment of five thousand dollars per occurrence. In addition, the person is subject to the penalties prescribed in RCW 50.36.020 as if the person were an employer. The person must also pay for the employment security department's reasonable expenses of auditing his or her books and collecting the civil penalty assessment.

(4) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Knowingly" means having actual knowledge of or acting with deliberate ignorance or reckless disregard for the prohibition involved and includes, but is not limited to, intent to evade, misrepresentation, or willful nondisclosure.

(b) "Person" means and includes an individual, a trust, estate, partnership, association, company, or corporation.

(c) "Transfer of a business" includes the transfer or acquisition of substantially all or a portion of the operating assets, which may include the employer's workforce.

(5) Any decision to assess a penalty under this section shall be made by the chief administrative officer of the tax branch or his or her designee.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed to deny an employer the right to appeal the assessment of a penalty in the manner provided in RCW 50.32.030.

(7) The commissioner shall engage in prevention, detection, and collection activities related to evasion of the successorship provisions of RCW 50.29.062 and this section, and establish procedures to enforce this section. [2021 c 2 s 21; 2010 c 25 s 3; 2009 c 225 s 2; 2007 c 327 s 3; 2006 c 47 s 1.]

Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2021 c 2: See notes following RCW 50.04.323.

Conflict with federal requirements—2010 c 25: See note following RCW 50.29.021.

Conflict with federal requirements—2009 c 225: See note following RCW 50.29.062.

Severability—Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2007 c 327: See notes following RCW 50.24.014.

Conflict with federal requirements—Severability—Effective date—Retroactive application—2006 c 47: See notes following RCW 50.29.062.