
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1545

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By House State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Mead, Hudgins, Morgan, Ramos, Gregerson, Wylie, Appleton, Bergquist, Doglio, Jinkins, and Pollet)

READ FIRST TIME 02/13/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to curing ballots to assure that votes are
2 counted; and amending RCW 29A.60.165.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29A.60.165 and 2013 c 11 s 63 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) If the voter neglects to sign the ballot declaration, the
7 auditor shall notify the voter by first-class mail and advise the
8 voter of the correct procedures for completing the unsigned
9 declaration. If the ballot is received within three business days of
10 the final meeting of the canvassing board, or the voter has been
11 notified by first-class mail and has not responded at least three
12 business days before the final meeting of the canvassing board, then
13 the auditor shall attempt to notify the voter by telephone, using the
14 voter registration record information.

15 (2)(a) If the handwriting of the signature on a ballot
16 declaration is not the same as the handwriting of the signature on
17 the registration file, the auditor shall notify the voter by first-
18 class mail, enclosing a copy of the declaration, and advise the voter
19 of the correct procedures for updating his or her signature on the
20 voter registration file. If the ballot is received within three
21 business days of the final meeting of the canvassing board, or the

1 voter has been notified by first-class mail and has not responded at
2 least three business days before the final meeting of the canvassing
3 board, then the auditor shall attempt to notify the voter by
4 telephone, using the voter registration record information.

5 (b) If the signature on a ballot declaration is not the same as
6 the signature on the registration file because the name is different,
7 the ballot may be counted as long as the handwriting is clearly the
8 same. The auditor shall send the voter a change-of-name form under
9 RCW 29A.08.440 and direct the voter to complete the form.

10 (c) If the signature on a ballot declaration is not the same as
11 the signature on the registration file because the voter used
12 initials or a common nickname, the ballot may be counted as long as
13 the surname and handwriting are clearly the same.

14 (3) A voter may not cure a missing or mismatched signature for
15 purposes of counting the ballot in a recount.

16 (4) A record must be kept of all ballots with missing and
17 mismatched signatures. The record must contain the date on which the
18 voter was contacted or the notice was mailed, as well as the date on
19 which the voter submitted updated information. The record must be
20 updated each day that ballots are processed under RCW 29A.60.160,
21 each time a voter was contacted or the notice was mailed, and when
22 the voter submitted updated information. ((That record is a public
23 record under chapter 42.56 RCW and may be disclosed to interested
24 parties on written request)) The auditor shall send the record, and
25 any updated records, to the secretary of state no later than forty-
26 eight hours after the record is created or updated. The secretary of
27 state shall make all records publicly available no later than twenty-
28 four hours after receiving the record.

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