**5173-S.E AMH CRJ H1780.2 - NOT FOR FLOOR USE**

**ESSB 5173** - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary

**ADOPTED AS AMENDED 04/07/2023**

Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**"Sec.**  RCW 6.15.010 and 2021 c 50 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in RCW 6.15.050, the following personal property is exempt from execution, attachment, and garnishment:

(a) All wearing apparel of every individual and family, but not to exceed ((~~three thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $3,500 in value in furs, jewelry, and personal ornaments for any individual.

(b) All private libraries including electronic media, which includes audiovisual, entertainment, or reference media in digital or analogue format, of every individual, but not to exceed ((~~three thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $3,500 in value, and all family pictures and keepsakes.

(c) A cell phone, personal computer, and printer.

(d) To each individual or, as to community property of spouses maintaining a single household as against a creditor of the community, to the community, provided that each spouse is entitled to his or her own exemptions in this subsection (1)(d):

(i) ((~~The individual's or community's~~)) All household goods, appliances, furniture, and home and yard equipment, not to exceed ((~~six thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $6,500 in value for the individual ((~~or thirteen thousand dollars for the community, no single item to exceed seven hundred fifty dollars~~)), said amount to include provisions and fuel for ((~~the~~)) comfortable maintenance ((~~of the individual or community~~));

(ii) In a bankruptcy case, any other personal property, except personal earnings as provided under RCW 6.15.050(1), not to exceed $10,000 in value. The value shall be determined as of the date the bankruptcy petition is filed;

(iii) Other than in a bankruptcy case as described in (d)(ii) of this subsection, other personal property, except personal earnings as provided under RCW 6.15.050(1), not to exceed ((~~three thousand dollars~~)) $3,000 in value, ((~~of which not more than one thousand five hundred dollars in value may consist of cash, and~~)) of which not more than:

(A) For all debts except private student loan debt and consumer debt, ((~~five hundred dollars~~)) $500 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(A) shall be automatically protected and may not exceed ((~~five hundred dollars~~)) $500, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities.

(B) For all private student loan debt, ((~~two thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $2,500 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. $1,000 in value shall be automatically protected. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(B) may not exceed ((~~two thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $2,500, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities.

(C) For all consumer debt, ((~~two thousand dollars~~)) $2,000 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. $1,000 in value shall be automatically protected. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(C) may not exceed ((~~two thousand dollars~~)) $2,000, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities;

((~~(iii) For an individual, a~~)) (iv) A motor vehicle ((~~used for personal transportation,~~)) not to exceed ((~~three thousand two hundred fifty dollars or for a community two motor vehicles used for personal transportation, not to exceed six thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $15,000 in aggregate value;

((~~(iv)~~)) (v) Any past due, current, or future child support paid or owed to the debtor, which can be traced;

((~~(v)~~)) (vi) All professionally prescribed health aids for the debtor or a dependent of the debtor; ((~~and~~

~~(vi)~~)) (vii) To any individual, the right to or proceeds of a payment not to exceed twenty thousand dollars on account of personal bodily injury, not including pain and suffering or compensation for actual pecuniary loss, of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is a dependent; or the right to or proceeds of a payment in compensation of loss of future earnings of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is or was a dependent, to the extent reasonably necessary for the support of the debtor and any dependent of the debtor; and

(viii) In a bankruptcy case, the right to or proceeds of personal injury of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is a dependent; or the right to or proceeds of a payment in compensation of loss of future earnings of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is or was a dependent are free of the enforcement of the claims of creditors, except to the extent such claims are for the satisfaction of any liens or subrogation claims arising out of the claims for personal injury or death. The exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(vi)~~)) (viii) does not apply to the right of the state of Washington, or any agent or assignee of the state, as a lienholder or subrogee under RCW 43.20B.060.

(e) ((~~To each qualified individual, one of the following exemptions:~~

~~(i) To a farmer, farm trucks, farm stock, farm tools, farm equipment, supplies and seed, not to exceed ten thousand dollars in value;~~

~~(ii) To a physician, surgeon, attorney, member of the clergy, or other professional person, the individual's library, office furniture, office equipment and supplies, not to exceed ten thousand dollars in value;~~

~~(iii)~~)) To any ((~~other~~)) individual, the tools ((~~and~~)), instruments ((~~and~~)), materials, and supplies used to carry on his or her trade ((~~for the support of himself or herself or family,~~)) not to exceed ((~~ten thousand dollars~~)) $15,000 in value.

(f) Tuition units, under chapter 28B.95 RCW, purchased more than two years prior to the date of a bankruptcy filing or court judgment, and contributions to any other qualified tuition program under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 529 of the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, and to a Coverdell education savings account, also known as an education individual retirement account, under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 530 of the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, contributed more than two years prior to the date of a bankruptcy filing or court judgment.

(2) For purposes of this section, "value" means the reasonable market value of the debtor's interest in an article or item at the time it is selected for exemption, exclusive of all liens and encumbrances thereon.

(3)(a) In the case of married persons, each spouse is entitled to the exemptions provided in this section, which may be combined with the other spouse's exemption in the same property or taken in different exempt property.

(b) Whenever a debtor claims a combined exemption with their spouse, a creditor may serve on the debtor a written demand for evidence that the debtor is married and their spouse has agreed to the combined exemption. The demand must expressly and clearly state the debtor has 30 days to send the creditor a response by mail or email, the specific mailing or email address the debtor must send a response to, and that the debtor may establish the existence of their marriage through documentary evidence such as a copy of their marriage certificate or an equivalent document, and may establish each spouse's agreement to combine exemptions with a written declaration given under penalty of perjury that has been signed by both spouses. The creditor shall provide the debtor with a one-page form declaration for this purpose with its demand for evidence.

(c) If the debtor fails to timely respond to the creditor's demand, or the creditor concludes in good faith on the basis of the debtor's response that the debtor is not married or their spouse has not consented to combine exemptions, the creditor may seek a declaratory judgment pursuant to chapter 7.24 RCW, from the superior court of the county in which the debtor resides or from the court wherein the exemption claim is at issue, that the debtor is not legally entitled to claim a combined exemption. If the court finds a combined exemption was claimed in bad faith, the court may award costs and attorneys' fees to the creditor. If the court finds the creditor objected to the combined exemption or sought declaratory judgment in bad faith, the court may award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to the debtor. A creditor shall not seek to execute, attach, garnish, or otherwise collect funds or property a debtor has claimed as subject to a specific combined exemption unless a court has issued a declaratory judgment that the debtor is not legally entitled to claim the combined exemption at issue.

(4)(a) Beginning April 2026, and each April on a three-year interval thereafter, the department of revenue must adjust the applicable amounts for the following three-year interval by multiplying the current applicable amounts by one plus the percentage by which the most current consumer price index available on January 31st of the year of such April exceeds the consumer price index for the prior three-year period, and rounding the result to the nearest $25. If an adjustment under this subsection (4) would reduce the applicable amounts under this section, the department of revenue must not adjust the applicable amounts for use in the three-year interval. The department of revenue must publish the adjusted applicable amounts on its public website by April 1st of the first year of the three-year interval in which the applicable amounts are adjusted. The adjusted applicable amounts calculated under this subsection (4) take effect on April 1st of the calendar year in which they are adjusted under this subsection (4).

(b) For purposes of this subsection (4):

(i) "Applicable amounts" means each dollar amount in effect under this section.

(ii) "Consumer price index" means the consumer price index seasonally adjusted for all urban consumers, all items, for the United States as calculated by the United States bureau of labor statistics or its successor agency.

**Sec.**  RCW 6.15.010 and 2019 c 371 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in RCW 6.15.050, the following personal property is exempt from execution, attachment, and garnishment:

(a) All wearing apparel of every individual and family, but not to exceed ((~~three thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $3,500 in value in furs, jewelry, and personal ornaments for any individual.

(b) All private libraries including electronic media, which includes audiovisual, entertainment, or reference media in digital or analogue format, of every individual, but not to exceed ((~~three thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $3,500 in value, and all family pictures and keepsakes.

(c) A cell phone, personal computer, and printer.

(d) To each individual or, as to community property of spouses maintaining a single household as against a creditor of the community, to the community, provided that each spouse is entitled to his or her own exemptions in this subsection (1)(d):

(i) ((~~The individual's or community's~~)) All household goods, appliances, furniture, and home and yard equipment, not to exceed ((~~six thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $6,500 in value for the individual ((~~or thirteen thousand dollars for the community, no single item to exceed seven hundred fifty dollars~~)), said amount to include provisions and fuel for ((~~the~~)) comfortable maintenance ((~~of the individual or community~~));

(ii) In a bankruptcy case, any other personal property, except personal earnings as provided under RCW 6.15.050(1), not to exceed $10,000 in value. The value shall be determined as of the date the bankruptcy petition is filed;

(iii) Other than in a bankruptcy case as described in (d)(ii) of this subsection, other personal property, except personal earnings as provided under RCW 6.15.050(1), not to exceed ((~~three thousand dollars~~)) $3,000 in value, ((~~of which not more than one thousand five hundred dollars in value may consist of cash, and~~)) of which not more than:

(A) For all debts except private student loan debt and consumer debt, ((~~five hundred dollars~~)) $500 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(A) may not exceed ((~~five hundred dollars~~)) $500, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities.

(B) For all private student loan debt, ((~~two thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $2,500 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(B) may not exceed ((~~two thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $2,500, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities.

(C) For all consumer debt, ((~~two thousand dollars~~)) $2,000 in value may consist of bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities. The maximum exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(C) may not exceed ((~~two thousand dollars~~)) $2,000, regardless of the number of existing separate bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, stocks, bonds, or other securities;

((~~(iii) For an individual, a~~)) (iv) A motor vehicle ((~~used for personal transportation,~~)) not to exceed ((~~three thousand two hundred fifty dollars or for a community two motor vehicles used for personal transportation, not to exceed six thousand five hundred dollars~~)) $15,000 in aggregate value;

((~~(iv)~~)) (v) Any past due, current, or future child support paid or owed to the debtor, which can be traced;

((~~(v)~~)) (vi) All professionally prescribed health aids for the debtor or a dependent of the debtor; ((~~and~~

~~(vi)~~)) (vii) To any individual, the right to or proceeds of a payment not to exceed twenty thousand dollars on account of personal bodily injury, not including pain and suffering or compensation for actual pecuniary loss, of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is a dependent; or the right to or proceeds of a payment in compensation of loss of future earnings of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is or was a dependent, to the extent reasonably necessary for the support of the debtor and any dependent of the debtor; and

(viii) In a bankruptcy case, the right to or proceeds of personal injury of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is a dependent; or the right to or proceeds of a payment in compensation of loss of future earnings of the debtor or an individual of whom the debtor is or was a dependent are free of the enforcement of the claims of creditors, except to the extent such claims are for the satisfaction of any liens or subrogation claims arising out of the claims for personal injury or death. The exemption under this subsection (1)(d)((~~(vi)~~)) (viii) does not apply to the right of the state of Washington, or any agent or assignee of the state, as a lienholder or subrogee under RCW 43.20B.060.

(e) ((~~To each qualified individual, one of the following exemptions:~~

~~(i) To a farmer, farm trucks, farm stock, farm tools, farm equipment, supplies and seed, not to exceed ten thousand dollars in value;~~

~~(ii) To a physician, surgeon, attorney, member of the clergy, or other professional person, the individual's library, office furniture, office equipment and supplies, not to exceed ten thousand dollars in value;~~

~~(iii)~~)) To any ((~~other~~)) individual, the tools ((~~and~~)), instruments ((~~and~~)), materials, and supplies used to carry on his or her trade ((~~for the support of himself or herself or family,~~)) not to exceed ((~~ten thousand dollars~~)) $15,000 in value.

(f) Tuition units, under chapter 28B.95 RCW, purchased more than two years prior to the date of a bankruptcy filing or court judgment, and contributions to any other qualified tuition program under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 529 of the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, and to a Coverdell education savings account, also known as an education individual retirement account, under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 530 of the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, contributed more than two years prior to the date of a bankruptcy filing or court judgment.

(2) For purposes of this section, "value" means the reasonable market value of the debtor's interest in an article or item at the time it is selected for exemption, exclusive of all liens and encumbrances thereon.

(3)(a) In the case of married persons, each spouse is entitled to the exemptions provided in this section, which may be combined with the other spouse's exemption in the same property or taken in different exempt property.

(b) Whenever a debtor claims a combined exemption with their spouse, a creditor may serve on the debtor a written demand for evidence that the debtor is married and their spouse has agreed to the combined exemption. The demand must expressly and clearly state the debtor has 30 days to send the creditor a response by mail or email, the specific mailing or email address the debtor must send a response to, and that the debtor may establish the existence of their marriage through documentary evidence such as a copy of their marriage certificate or an equivalent document, and may establish each spouse's agreement to combine exemptions with a written declaration given under penalty of perjury that has been signed by both spouses. The creditor shall provide the debtor with a one-page form declaration for this purpose with its demand for evidence.

(c) If the debtor fails to timely respond to the creditor's demand, or the creditor concludes in good faith on the basis of the debtor's response that the debtor is not married or their spouse has not consented to combine exemptions, the creditor may seek a declaratory judgment pursuant to chapter 7.24 RCW, from the superior court of the county in which the debtor resides or from the court wherein the exemption claim is at issue, that the debtor is not legally entitled to claim a combined exemption. If the court finds a combined exemption was claimed in bad faith, the court may award costs and attorneys' fees to the creditor. If the court finds the creditor objected to the combined exemption or sought declaratory judgment in bad faith, the court may award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to the debtor. A creditor shall not seek to execute, attach, garnish, or otherwise collect funds or property a debtor has claimed as subject to a specific combined exemption unless a court has issued a declaratory judgment that the debtor is not legally entitled to claim the combined exemption at issue.

(4)(a) Beginning April 2026, and each April on a three-year interval thereafter, the department of revenue must adjust the applicable amounts for the following three-year interval by multiplying the current applicable amounts by one plus the percentage by which the most current consumer price index available on January 31st of the year of such April exceeds the consumer price index for the prior three-year period, and rounding the result to the nearest $25. If an adjustment under this subsection (4) would reduce the applicable amounts under this section, the department of revenue must not adjust the applicable amounts for use in the three-year interval. The department of revenue must publish the adjusted applicable amounts on its public website by April 1st of the first year of the three-year interval in which the applicable amounts are adjusted. The adjusted applicable amounts calculated under this subsection (4) take effect on April 1st of the calendar year in which they are adjusted under this subsection (4).

(b) For purposes of this subsection (4):

(i) "Applicable amounts" means each dollar amount in effect under this section.

(ii) "Consumer price index" means the consumer price index seasonally adjusted for all urban consumers, all items, for the United States as calculated by the United States bureau of labor statistics or its successor agency.

**Sec.**  RCW 51.32.040 and 2013 c 125 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in RCW 43.20B.720, 72.09.111, 74.20A.260, and 51.32.380, no money paid or payable under this title shall, ((~~before the issuance and delivery of the payment,~~)) be assigned, charged, or taken in execution, attached, garnished, or pass or be paid to any other person by operation of law, any form of voluntary assignment, or power of attorney. Any such assignment or charge is void unless the transfer is to a financial institution at the request of a worker or other beneficiary and made in accordance with RCW 51.32.045. Payments retain their exempt status even after issuance.

(2)(a) If any worker suffers (i) a permanent partial injury and dies from some other cause than the accident which produced the injury before he or she receives payment of the award for the permanent partial injury or (ii) any other injury before he or she receives payment of any monthly installment covering any period of time before his or her death, the amount of the permanent partial disability award or the monthly payment, or both, shall be paid to the surviving spouse or the child or children if there is no surviving spouse. If there is no surviving spouse and no child or children, the award or the amount of the monthly payment shall be paid by the department or self-insurer and distributed consistent with the terms of the decedent's will or, if the decedent dies intestate, consistent with the terms of RCW 11.04.015.

(b) If any worker suffers an injury and dies from it before he or she receives payment of any monthly installment covering time loss for any period of time before his or her death, the amount of the monthly payment shall be paid to the surviving spouse or the child or children if there is no surviving spouse. If there is no surviving spouse and no child or children, the amount of the monthly payment shall be paid by the department or self-insurer and distributed consistent with the terms of the decedent's will or, if the decedent dies intestate, consistent with the terms of RCW 11.04.015.

(c) Any application for compensation under this subsection (2) shall be filed with the department or self-insuring employer within one year of the date of death. The department or self-insurer may satisfy its responsibilities under this subsection (2) by sending any payment due in the name of the decedent and to the last known address of the decedent.

(3)(a) Any worker or beneficiary receiving benefits under this title who is subsequently confined in, or who subsequently becomes eligible for benefits under this title while confined in, any institution under conviction and sentence shall have all payments of the compensation canceled during the period of confinement. After discharge from the institution, payment of benefits due afterward shall be paid if the worker or beneficiary would, except for the provisions of this subsection (3), otherwise be entitled to them.

(b) If any prisoner is injured in the course of his or her employment while participating in a work or training release program authorized by chapter 72.65 RCW and is subject to the provisions of this title, he or she is entitled to payments under this title, subject to the requirements of chapter 72.65 RCW, unless his or her participation in the program has been canceled, or unless he or she is returned to a state correctional institution, as defined in RCW 72.65.010(3), as a result of revocation of parole or new sentence.

(c) If the confined worker has any beneficiaries during the confinement period during which benefits are canceled under (a) or (b) of this subsection, they shall be paid directly the monthly benefits which would have been paid to the worker for himself or herself and the worker's beneficiaries had the worker not been confined.

(4) Any lump sum benefits to which a worker would otherwise be entitled but for the provisions of this section shall be paid on a monthly basis to his or her beneficiaries.

**Sec.**  RCW 6.27.100 and 2021 c 50 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A writ issued for a continuing lien on earnings shall be substantially in the form provided in RCW 6.27.105. All other writs of garnishment shall be substantially in the following form, but:

(a) If the writ is issued under an order or judgment for child support, the following statement shall appear conspicuously in the caption: "This garnishment is based on a judgment or order for child support";

(b) If the writ is issued under an order or judgment for private student loan debt, the following statement shall appear conspicuously in the caption: "This garnishment is based on a judgment or order for private student loan debt";

(c) If the writ is issued under an order or judgment for consumer debt, the following statement shall appear conspicuously in the caption: "This garnishment is based on a judgment or order for consumer debt"; and

(d) If the writ is issued by an attorney, the writ shall be revised as indicated in subsection (2) of this section:

|  |
| --- |
| "IN THE  . . . . . COURTOF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON IN AND FORTHE COUNTY OF  . . . . . . |
|  , |  |
| Plaintiff, | No.  . . . . |
| vs. |  |  |
|  , | WRIT OF |
| Defendant, | GARNISHMENT |
|  , |  |
| Garnishee |  |
| THE STATE OF WASHINGTON TO:    |
|  | Garnishee |
| AND TO:    |
| Defendant |
| The above-named plaintiff has applied for a writ of garnishment against you, claiming that the above-named defendant is indebted to plaintiff and that the amount to be held to satisfy that indebtedness is $ . . . . . ., consisting of: |
|  | Balance on Judgment or Amount of Claim | $ . . . . |
|  | Interest under Judgment from . . . . to  . . . . | $ . . . . |
|  | Per Day Rate of Estimated Interest | $ . . . . per day |
|  | Taxable Costs and Attorneys' Fees | $ . . . . |
|  | Estimated Garnishment Costs: |
|  | Filing and Ex Parte Fees | $ . . . . |
|  | Service and Affidavit Fees | $ . . . . |
|  | Postage and Costs of Certified Mail | $ . . . . |
|  | Answer Fee or Fees | $ . . . . |
|  | Garnishment Attorney Fee | $ . . . . |
|  | Other | $ . . . . |

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED, unless otherwise directed by the court, by the attorney of record for the plaintiff, or by this writ, not to pay any debt, whether earnings subject to this garnishment or any other debt, owed to the defendant at the time this writ was served and not to deliver, sell, or transfer, or recognize any sale or transfer of, any personal property or effects of the defendant in your possession or control at the time when this writ was served. Any such payment, delivery, sale, or transfer is void to the extent necessary to satisfy the plaintiff's claim and costs for this writ with interest.

YOU ARE FURTHER COMMANDED to answer this writ according to the instructions in this writ and in the answer forms and, within twenty days after the service of the writ upon you, to mail or deliver the original of such answer to the court, one copy to the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney, and one copy to the defendant, at the addresses listed at the bottom of this writ.

If you owe the defendant a debt payable in money in excess of the amount set forth in the first paragraph of this writ, hold only the amount set forth in the first paragraph and any processing fee if one is charged and release all additional funds or property to defendant.

FOR ALL DEBTS EXCEPT PRIVATE STUDENT LOAN DEBT AND CONSUMER DEBT:

If you are a bank or other institution in which the defendant has accounts to which the exemption under RCW 6.15.010(1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(A) applies and the total of the amounts held in all of the defendant's accounts is less than or equal to $500, release all funds or property to the defendant and do not hold any amount. However, if you have documentation that the funds in the account are the community property of married persons or domestic partners, and if the total of the amounts held in all of the combined accounts of the married persons or domestic partners is less than or equal to $1,000, then release all funds or property to the defendant and do not hold any amount.

If you are a bank or other institution in which the defendant has accounts to which the exemption under RCW 6.15.010(1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii)(A) applies and the total of the amounts held in all of the defendant's accounts is in excess of $500, release at least $500, hold no more than the amount set forth in the first paragraph of this writ and any processing fee if one is charged, and release additional funds or property, if any, to the defendant. However, if you have documentation that the funds in the account are the community property of married persons or domestic partners, and if the total of the amounts held in all of the combined accounts of the married persons or domestic partners is in excess of $1,000, release at least $1,000, hold no more than the amount set forth in the first paragraph of this writ and any processing fee if one is charged, and release additional funds or property, if any, to the defendant.

FOR PRIVATE STUDENT LOAN DEBT AND CONSUMER DEBT:

If you are a bank or other institution in which the defendant has accounts to which the exemption under RCW 6.15.010(1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii) (B) or (C) applies and the total of the amounts held in all of the defendant's accounts is less than or equal to $1,000, release all funds or property to the defendant and do not hold any amount. However, if you have documentation that the funds in the account are the community property of married persons or domestic partners, and if the total of the amounts held in all of the combined accounts of the married persons or domestic partners is less than or equal to $2,000, then release all funds or property to the defendant and do not hold any amount.

If you are a bank or other institution in which the defendant has accounts to which the exemption under RCW 6.15.010(1)(d)((~~(ii)~~)) (iii) (B) or (C) applies and the total of the amounts held in all of the defendant's accounts is in excess of $1,000, release at least $1,000, hold no more than the amount set forth in the first paragraph of this writ and any processing fee if one is charged, and release additional funds or property, if any, to the defendant. However, if you have documentation that the funds in the account are the community property of married persons or domestic partners, and if the total of the amounts held in all of the combined accounts of the married persons or domestic partners is in excess of $2,000, release at least $2,000, hold no more than the amount set forth in the first paragraph of this writ and any processing fee if one is charged, and release additional funds or property, if any, to the defendant.

IF YOU FAIL TO ANSWER THIS WRIT AS COMMANDED, A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU FOR THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE PLAINTIFF'S CLAIM AGAINST THE DEFENDANT WITH ACCRUING INTEREST, ATTORNEY FEES, AND COSTS WHETHER OR NOT YOU OWE ANYTHING TO THE DEFENDANT. IF YOU PROPERLY ANSWER THIS WRIT, ANY JUDGMENT AGAINST YOU WILL NOT EXCEED THE AMOUNT OF ANY NONEXEMPT DEBT OR THE VALUE OF ANY NONEXEMPT PROPERTY OR EFFECTS IN YOUR POSSESSION OR CONTROL.

JUDGMENT MAY ALSO BE ENTERED AGAINST THE DEFENDANT FOR COSTS AND FEES INCURRED BY THE PLAINTIFF.

Witness, the Honorable . . . . . . . ., Judge of the above-entitled Court, and the seal thereof, this . . . . day of . . . . . ., . . . . (year)

[Seal]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|   |   |
| Attorney for Plaintiff (or Plaintiff, if no attorney) |  | Clerk of the Court |  |
|   |   |
| Address | By |
|   |   |
| Name of Defendant | Address" |
|   |  |
| Address of Defendant |  |

(2) If an attorney issues the writ of garnishment, the final paragraph of the writ, containing the date, and the subscripted attorney and clerk provisions, shall be replaced with text in substantially the following form:

"This writ is issued by the undersigned attorney of record for plaintiff under the authority of chapter 6.27 of the Revised Code of Washington, and must be complied with in the same manner as a writ issued by the clerk of the court.

|  |
| --- |
| Dated this  . . . . . . . .day of . . . . . . . . . .,  . . . . (year) |
|   |  |
| Attorney for Plaintiff |  |
|   |   |
| Address | Address of the Clerk of the Court" |
|   |  |
| Name of Defendant |  |
|   |  |
| Address of Defendant |  |

**Sec.**  RCW 6.27.140 and 2021 c 35 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The notice required by RCW 6.27.130(1) to be mailed to or served on an individual judgment debtor shall be in the following form, printed or typed in no smaller than size twelve point font:

NOTICE OF GARNISHMENT

AND OF YOUR RIGHTS

A Writ of Garnishment issued in a Washington court has been or will be served on the garnishee named in the attached copy of the writ. After receipt of the writ, the garnishee is required to withhold payment of any money that was due to you and to withhold any other property of yours that the garnishee held or controlled. This notice of your rights is required by law.

YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING EXEMPTION RIGHTS:

WAGES. If the garnishee is your employer who owes wages or other personal earnings to you, your employer is required to pay amounts to you that are exempt under state and federal laws, as explained in the writ of garnishment. You should receive a copy of your employer's answer, which will show how the exempt amount was calculated. A garnishment against wages or other earnings for child support may not be issued under chapter 6.27 RCW. If the garnishment is for private student loan debt, the exempt amount paid to you will be the greater of the following: A percent of your disposable earnings, which is eighty-five percent of the part of your earnings remaining after your employer deducts those amounts which are required by law to be withheld, or fifty times the minimum hourly wage of the highest minimum wage law in the state at the time the earnings are payable. If the garnishment is for consumer debt, the exempt amount paid to you will be the greater of the following: A percent of your disposable earnings, which is eighty percent of the part of your earnings remaining after your employer deducts those amounts which are required by law to be withheld, or thirty-five times the state minimum hourly wage.

BANK ACCOUNTS. If the garnishee is a bank or other institution with which you have an account in which you have deposited benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, veterans' benefits, unemployment compensation, or any federally qualified pension, such as a state or federal pension, individual retirement account (IRA), or 401K plan, you may claim the account as fully exempt if you have deposited only such benefit funds in the account. It may be partially exempt even though you have deposited money from other sources in the same account. An exemption is also available under RCW 26.16.200, providing that funds in a community bank account that can be identified as the earnings of a stepparent are exempt from a garnishment on the child support obligation of the parent.

OTHER EXEMPTIONS. If the garnishee holds other property of yours, some or all of it may be exempt under RCW 6.15.010, a Washington statute that exempts certain property of your choice (including, if the judgment is for private student loan debt, up to $2,500.00 in a bank account ((~~if you owe on private student loan debts;~~)), or for a marital community or domestic partnership up to $5,000.00 in a bank account; if the judgment is for other consumer debt, up to $2,000.00 in a bank account ((~~if you owe on consumer debts; or~~)), or for a marital community or domestic partnership up to $4,000.00 in a bank account; or, if the judgment is for any other debts, up to $500.00 in a bank account ((~~for all other debts~~)), or for a marital community or domestic partnership up to $1,000.00 in a bank account) and certain other property such as household furnishings, tools of trade, and a motor vehicle (all limited by differing dollar values).

HOW TO CLAIM EXEMPTIONS. Fill out the enclosed claim form and mail or deliver it as described in instructions on the claim form. If the plaintiff does not object to your claim, the funds or other property that you have claimed as exempt must be released not later than 10 days after the plaintiff receives your claim form. If the plaintiff objects, the law requires a hearing not later than 14 days after the plaintiff receives your claim form, and notice of the objection and hearing date will be mailed to you at the address that you put on the claim form.

THE LAW ALSO PROVIDES OTHER EXEMPTION RIGHTS. IF NECESSARY, AN ATTORNEY CAN ASSIST YOU TO ASSERT THESE AND OTHER RIGHTS, BUT YOU MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY TO AVOID LOSS OF RIGHTS BY DELAY.

(2)(a) If the writ is to garnish funds or property held by a financial institution, the claim form required by RCW 6.27.130(1) to be mailed to or served on an individual judgment debtor shall be in the following form, printed or typed in no smaller than size twelve point font:

|  |
| --- |
| [Caption to be filled in by judgment creditoror plaintiff before mailing.] |
| Name of Court |  |
|   | No . . . . . . |
| Plaintiff, |  |
| vs. |  |
|   | EXEMPTION CLAIM |
| Defendant, |  |
| Garnishee Defendant |  |
| INSTRUCTIONS: |
| 1. | Read this whole form after reading the enclosed notice. Then put an X in the box or boxes that describe your exemption claim or claims and write in the necessary information on the blank lines. If additional space is needed, use the bottom of the last page or attach another sheet. |
| 2. | Make two copies of the completed form. Deliver the original form by first-class mail or in person to the clerk of the court, whose address is shown at the bottom of the writ of garnishment. Deliver one of the copies by first-class mail or in person to the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are shown at the bottom of the writ. Keep the other copy. YOU SHOULD DO THIS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN 28 DAYS (4 WEEKS) AFTER THE DATE ON THE WRIT. |
| I/We claim the following money or property as exempt: |
| IF BANK ACCOUNT IS GARNISHED: |
| [  ] The account contains payments from: |
| [  ] | Temporary assistance for needy families, SSI, or other public assistance. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Social Security. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Veterans' Benefits. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Federally qualified pension, such as a state or federal pension, individual retirement account (IRA), or 401K plan. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Unemployment Compensation. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Child support. I receive $ . . . . . monthly. |
| [  ] | Other. Explain  |
| ((~~[  ]~~ | ~~$2,500 exemption for private student loan debts.~~ |
| ~~[  ]~~ | ~~$2,000 exemption for consumer debts.~~ |
| ~~[  ]~~ | ~~$500 exemption for all other debts.~~)) |
| [  ] I/We claim the following exemptions: |
| [  ] | Exemption for private student loan debts: |
|  | [  ]  $2,500 for an individual; or |
|  | [  ]  $5,000 for a marital community or domesticpartnership. |
| [  ] | Exemption for consumer debts: |
|  | [  ]  $2,000 for an individual; or |
|  | [  ]  $4,000 for a marital community or domesticpartnership. |
| [  ] | Exemption for all other debts: |
|  | [  ]  $500 for an individual; or |
|  | [  ]  $1,000 for a marital community or domesticpartnership. |
| IF EXEMPTION IN BANK ACCOUNT IS CLAIMED, ANSWER ONE OR BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING: |
| [  ] | No money other than from above payments are in the account. |
| [  ] | Moneys in addition to the above payments have been deposited in the account. Explain  |
|  |   |
|  |   |
| OTHER PROPERTY: |
| [  ] | Describe property  |
|  |   |
|  | (If you claim other personal property as exempt, you must attach a list of all other personal property that you own.) |
|   |   |
|  | Print: Your name | If married or in a state registered domestic partnership, |
|  | name of husband/wife/state registered domestic partner |
|   |   |
|  | Your signature | Signature of husband, |
|  | wife, or state registered domestic partner |
|   |   |
|   |   |
|  | Address | Address |
|  | (if different from yours) |
|   |   |
|  | Telephone number | Telephone number |
|  | (if different from yours) |

CAUTION: If the plaintiff objects to your claim, you will have to go to court and give proof of your claim. For example, if you claim that a bank account is exempt, you may have to show the judge your bank statements and papers that show the source of the money you deposited in the bank. Your claim may be granted more quickly if you attach copies of such proof to your claim.

IF THE JUDGE DENIES YOUR EXEMPTION CLAIM, YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY THE PLAINTIFF'S COSTS. IF THE JUDGE DECIDES THAT YOU DID NOT MAKE THE CLAIM IN GOOD FAITH, HE OR SHE MAY DECIDE THAT YOU MUST PAY THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY FEES.

(b) If the writ is directed to an employer to garnish earnings, the claim form required by RCW 6.27.130(1) to be mailed to or served on an individual judgment debtor shall be in the following form, printed or typed in no smaller than size twelve point font type:

|  |
| --- |
| [Caption to be filled in by judgment creditoror plaintiff before mailing.] |
|   |  |
| Name of Court |  |
|   | No . . . . . . |
| Plaintiff, |  |
| vs. |  |
|   | EXEMPTION CLAIM |
| Defendant, |  |
|   |  |
| Garnishee Defendant |  |
| INSTRUCTIONS: |
| 1. | Read this whole form after reading the enclosed notice. Then put an X in the box or boxes that describe your exemption claim or claims and write in the necessary information on the blank lines. If additional space is needed, use the bottom of the last page or attach another sheet. |
| 2. | Make two copies of the completed form. Deliver the original form by first-class mail or in person to the clerk of the court, whose address is shown at the bottom of the writ of garnishment. Deliver one of the copies by first-class mail or in person to the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are shown at the bottom of the writ. Keep the other copy. YOU SHOULD DO THIS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN 28 DAYS (4 WEEKS) AFTER THE DATE ON THE WRIT. |
| I/We claim the following money or property as exempt: |
| IF PENSION OR RETIREMENT BENEFITS ARE GARNISHED: |
| [  ] | Name and address of employer who is paying thebenefits:  |
|  |   |
| IF EARNINGS ARE GARNISHED FOR PRIVATE STUDENT LOAN DEBT: |
| [  ] | I claim maximum exemption. |
| IF EARNINGS ARE GARNISHED FOR CONSUMER DEBT: |
| [  ] | I claim maximum exemption. |
|   |   |
|  | Print: Your name | If married or in a state registered domestic partnership, |
|  | name of husband/wife/state registered domestic partner |
|   |   |
|  | Your signature | Signature of husband, |
|  | wife, or state registered domestic partner |
|   |   |
|   |   |
|  | Address | Address |
|  | (if different from yours) |
|   |   |
|  | Telephone number | Telephone number |
|  | (if different from yours) |

CAUTION: If the plaintiff objects to your claim, you will have to go to court and give proof of your claim. For example, if you claim that a bank account is exempt, you may have to show the judge your bank statements and papers that show the source of the money you deposited in the bank. Your claim may be granted more quickly if you attach copies of such proof to your claim.

IF THE JUDGE DENIES YOUR EXEMPTION CLAIM, YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY THE PLAINTIFF'S COSTS. IF THE JUDGE DECIDES THAT YOU DID NOT MAKE THE CLAIM IN GOOD FAITH, HE OR SHE MAY DECIDE THAT YOU MUST PAY THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY FEES.

(c) If the writ under (b) of this subsection is not a writ for the collection of private student loan debt, the exemption language pertaining to private student loan debt may be omitted.

(d) If the writ under (b) of this subsection is not a writ for the collection of consumer debt, the exemption language pertaining to consumer debt may be omitted.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 and 4 of this act expire July 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2025."

Correct the title.

EFFECT: • Provides that, if a debtor claims a combined exemption with their spouse, a creditor may demand evidence that the debtor is married and the spouse has consented to combine exemptions. Establishes a procedural framework for an evidentiary demand, response, and request for declaratory judgment. Prohibits creditors from seeking to execute, attach, garnish, or otherwise collect funds or property a debtor has claimed as subject to a specific combined exemption unless a court has issued a declaratory judgment that the debtor is not legally entitled to claim the combined exemption at issue. Provides for cost and fee shifting in the event of a bad faith combined exemption claim, bad faith objection to such claim, or bad faith request for declaratory judgment.

• Modifies the garnishment notice sent to garnishees by instructing the garnishee to double automatic exemption values for specified funds if the garnishee has documentation that the funds in the account are the community property of married persons or domestic partners.

• Modifies the garnishment exemption notice and form sent to debtors by stating and listing the doubled value of specific exemption maximums for spouses who combine their exemptions.