

Chapter 8.04 RCW
EMINENT DOMAIN BY STATE

Sections

- 8.04.005 Condemnation final actions—Notice requirements.
- 8.04.010 Petition for appropriation—Contents.
- 8.04.020 Notice—Contents—Service—Publication.
- 8.04.060 Adjournment of proceedings—Further notice.
- 8.04.070 Hearing—Order adjudicating public use.
- 8.04.080 Order to direct determination of damages and offsetting benefits.
- 8.04.090 Order for immediate possession—Payment of tender into court.
- 8.04.092 Determination of adequacy of payment—Jury trial—Costs.
- 8.04.094 Demand for trial—Time of trial—Decree of appropriation.
- 8.04.097 Acquisition when several ownerships.
- 8.04.098 Acquisition when several ownerships—Public use.
- 8.04.099 Acquisition when several ownerships—Selection of single jury.
- 8.04.100 Cases may be consolidated for trial.
- 8.04.110 Trial—Damages to be found.
- 8.04.112 Damages to buildings.
- 8.04.114 Damages to buildings—Where based on readjustment or moving.
- 8.04.120 Judgment—Decree of appropriation—Recording.
- 8.04.130 Payment of damages—Effect—Costs—Appellate review.
- 8.04.140 Claimants, payment of—Conflicting claims.
- 8.04.150 Appellate review.
- 8.04.160 Award, how paid into court.
- 8.04.170 Condemnation for military purposes.
- 8.04.180 Condemnation for military purposes—Construction.

*Additional provisions applicable to eminent domain proceedings:
Chapter 8.25 RCW.*

*Appointment of guardian ad litem for minors, incapacitated persons:
RCW 8.25.270.*

City streets as state highways—Rights-of-way: RCW 47.24.030.

Condemnation of blighted property: Chapter 35.80A RCW.

Department of ecology: RCW 43.21A.450, 43.21A.610 through 43.21A.642.

*Department of fish and wildlife—Acquisition of property—Condemnation—
When authorized: RCW 77.12.037.*

*Department of transportation—Airports, facilities: RCW 47.68.100,
47.68.120.*

Joint operating agency: RCW 43.52.391.

Mt. St. Helens recovery—Department of transportation: RCW 43.01.210.

Parks and recreation commission: RCW 79A.05.030(7).

Puget Sound ferry and toll bridge system: RCW 47.60.020.

Quinault Tribal Highway: RCW 47.20.725.

Relocation assistance: Chapter 8.26 RCW.

State agency housing: RCW 43.82.030.

State highways: Chapter 47.12 RCW.

Tidelands, shorelands, oyster reserves—Department of natural resources: RCW 79.110.350.

RCW 8.04.005 Condemnation final actions—Notice requirements.

Proceedings under this chapter are subject to the notice requirements of RCW 8.25.290. Compliance with RCW 8.25.290 is required before an action can be filed under this chapter. [2007 c 68 § 2.]

RCW 8.04.010 Petition for appropriation—Contents.

Whenever any officer, board, commission, or other body representing the state is authorized by the legislature to acquire any land, real estate, premises, or other property, deemed necessary for the public uses of the state, or any department or institution thereof, the attorney general shall present to the superior court of the county in which the land, real estate, premises, or other property so sought to be acquired or appropriated is situated, a petition in which the land, real estate, premises, or other property sought to be appropriated shall be described with reasonable certainty, and setting forth the name of each and every owner, encumbrancer, or other person or party interested therein, or any part thereof, insofar as can be ascertained from the public records, the object for which the property is sought to be appropriated, and praying that a jury be impanelled to ascertain and determine the compensation to be made in money to such owner or owners, respectively, and to all tenants, encumbrancers, and others interested, for taking such land, real estate, premises, or other property, or in case a jury is waived, as in other civil cases in courts of record, in the manner prescribed by law, then that the compensation to be made as aforesaid be ascertained and determined by the court. [1955 c 156 § 6; 1911 c 64 § 1; 1891 c 74 § 1; RRS § 891.]

RCW 8.04.020 Notice—Contents—Service—Publication.

A notice stating briefly the objects of the petition and containing a description of the land, real estate, premises or property sought to be acquired and appropriated, and stating the time and place when and where the same will be presented to the court or the judge thereof, shall be served on each and every person named therein as owner, encumbrancer, tenant or otherwise interested therein at least ten days previous to the time designated in such notice for the presentation of such petition. Such service shall be made by delivering a copy of such notice to each of the persons or parties so named therein, if a resident of the state; or, in case of the absence of such person or party from his or her usual place of abode, by leaving a copy of such notice at his or her usual place of abode; or, in case of a foreign

corporation, at its principal place of business in this state, with some person of more than sixteen years of age. In case of domestic corporations, such service shall be made upon the president, secretary or other director or trustee of such corporation. In case of persons under the age of eighteen years, on their guardians, or in case no guardian shall have been appointed, then on the person who has the care and custody of such person; in case of idiots, lunatics or distracted persons, on their guardians, or in case no guardian shall have been appointed, then on the person in whose care or charge they are found. In case the land, real estate, premises or other property sought to be appropriated is school or county land, the notice shall be served on the auditor of the county in which the land, real estate, premises or other property sought to be acquired and appropriated is situated. In all cases where the owner or person claiming an interest in such real estate or other property is a nonresident of this state, or where the residence of such owner or person is unknown, and an affidavit of the attorney general shall be filed that such owner or person is a nonresident of this state, or that after diligent inquiry his residence is unknown or cannot be ascertained, service may be made by publication thereof in any newspaper published in the county where such lands are situated once a week for two successive weeks; and in case no newspaper is published in said county, then such publication may be had in a newspaper published in the county nearest the county in which lies the land sought to be acquired and appropriated. And such publication shall be deemed service upon each of such nonresident person or persons whose residence is unknown. Such notice shall be signed by the attorney general of the state of Washington. Such notice may be served by any competent person eighteen years of age or over. Due proof of the service of such notice by affidavit of the person serving the same, or by the printer's affidavit of publication, shall be filed with the clerk of such superior court before or at the time of the presentation of such petition. Want of service of such notice shall render the subsequent proceedings void as to the person not served, but all persons or parties having been served with notice as herein provided, either by publication or otherwise, shall be bound by the subsequent proceedings. In all other cases not otherwise provided for, service of notices, order and other papers in the proceedings, authorized by RCW 8.04.010 through 8.04.160, may be made as the superior court or judge thereof may direct. [1971 ex.s. c 292 § 10; 1891 c 74 § 2; RRS § 892. Formerly RCW 8.04.020, 8.04.030, 8.04.040, 8.04.050.]

Severability—1971 ex.s. c 292: See note following RCW 26.28.010.

Publication of legal notices: Chapter 65.16 RCW.

Publication of notice in eminent domain proceedings: RCW 4.28.120.

Service of process where state land is involved: RCW 8.28.010.

RCW 8.04.060 Adjournment of proceedings—Further notice. The court or judge may, upon application of the said attorney general or any owner or party interested, for reasonable cause, adjourn the proceedings from time to time, and may order new or further notice to

be given to any party whose interest may be affected. [1891 c 74 § 3; RRS § 893.]

RCW 8.04.070 Hearing—Order adjudicating public use. At the time and place appointed for hearing the petition, or to which the hearing may have been adjourned, if the court has satisfactory proof that all parties interested in the lands, real estate, premises or other property described in the petition have been duly served with the notice, and is further satisfied by competent proof that the contemplated use for which the lands, real estate, premises, or other property are sought to be appropriated is really necessary for the public use of the state, it shall make and enter an order, to be recorded in the minutes of the court, and which order shall be final unless appellate review thereof is sought within five days after entry thereof, adjudicating that the contemplated use for which the lands, real estate, premises or other property are sought to be appropriated is really a public use of the state. [1988 c 202 § 6; 1971 c 81 § 33; 1955 c 213 § 2. Prior: 1925 ex.s. c 98 § 1, part; 1891 c 74 § 4, part; RRS § 894, part.]

Rules of court: *Writ procedure superseded by RAP 2.1, 2.2(a)(4), 5.2, 18.22.*

Severability—1988 c 202: See note following RCW 2.24.050.

RCW 8.04.080 Order to direct determination of damages and offsetting benefits. The order shall direct that determination be had of the compensation and damages to be paid all parties interested in the land, real estate, premises or other property sought to be appropriated for the taking and appropriation thereof, together with the injury, if any, caused by such taking and appropriation to the remainder of the lands, real estate, premises, or other property from which the same is to be taken and appropriated after offsetting against any and all such compensation and damages the special benefits, if any, accruing to such remainder by reason of the appropriation and the use by the state of the lands, real estate, premises, and other property described in the petition. The determination shall be made within thirty days after the entry of such order, before a jury if trial by jury is demanded at the hearing either by the petitioner or by the respondents, otherwise by the court sitting without a jury. If no regular venire has been called so as to be available to serve within such time on application of the petitioner at the hearing, the court may by its order continue such determination to the next regular jury term if a regular venire will be called within sixty days, otherwise the court shall call a special jury within said sixty days and direct that a jury panel be selected and summoned pursuant to chapter 2.36 RCW, from the citizens of the county in which the lands, real estate, premises, or other property sought to be appropriated are situated, as many qualified persons as may be necessary in order to form a jury of twelve persons, unless the petitioner and respondents both consent to a less number of jurors (such number to be not less than three), and such consent is entered by the clerk in the minutes of such hearing. In any county with a population of less than seventy thousand, the costs of such special

jury for the trial of such condemnation cases only shall be borne by the state. [1991 c 363 § 8; 1988 c 188 § 15; 1955 c 213 § 3. Prior: 1925 ex.s. c 98 § 1, part; 1891 c 74 § 4, part; RRS § 894, part.]

Rules of court: CR 47, 48.

Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363: See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

Legislative findings—Severability—Effective date—1988 c 188: See notes following RCW 2.36.010.

Juries in courts of limited jurisdiction: RCW 2.36.050.

RCW 8.04.090 Order for immediate possession—Payment of tender into court. In case the state shall require immediate possession and use of the property sought to be condemned, and an order of necessity shall have been granted, and no review has been taken therefrom, the attorney general may stipulate with respondents in accordance with the provisions of this section and RCW 8.04.092 and 8.04.094 for an order of immediate possession and use, and file with the clerk of the court wherein the action is pending, a certificate of the state's requirement of immediate possession and use of the land, which shall state the amount of money offered to the respondents and shall further state that such offer constitutes a continuing tender of such amount. The attorney general shall file a copy of the certificate with the office of financial management, which forthwith shall issue and deliver to him or her a warrant payable to the order of the clerk of the court wherein the action is pending in a sum sufficient to pay the amount offered, which shall forthwith be paid into the registry of the court. The court without further notice to respondent shall enter an order granting to the state the immediate possession and use of the property described in the order of necessity, which order shall bind the petitioner to pay the full amount of any final judgment of compensation and damages which may thereafter be awarded for the taking and appropriation of the lands, real estate, premises, or other property described in the petition and for the injury, if any, to the remainder of the lands, real estate, premises, or other property from which they are to be taken by reason of such taking and appropriation, after offsetting against any and all such compensation and damages the special benefits, if any, accruing to such remainder by reason of the appropriation and use by the state of the lands, real estate, premises, or other property described in the petition. The moneys paid into court may at any time after entry of the order of immediate possession, be withdrawn by respondents, by order of the court, as their interests shall appear. [2011 c 336 § 253; 1979 c 151 § 7; 1973 c 106 § 7; 1955 c 213 § 4. Prior: 1951 c 177 § 1; 1925 ex.s. c 98 § 1, part; RRS § 894, part.]

RCW 8.04.092 Determination of adequacy of payment—Jury trial—Costs. The amount paid into court shall constitute just compensation paid for the taking of such property: PROVIDED, That respondents may, in the same action, request a trial for the purpose of assessing the amount of compensation to be made and the amount of damages arising

from the taking. At the trial, the date of valuation of the property shall be the date of entry of the order granting to the state immediate possession and use of the property. If, pursuant to such hearing, the verdict of the jury, unless a jury is waived by all parties, or decision of the court, awards respondents an amount in excess of the tender, the court shall order the excess paid to respondents with interest thereon from the time of the entry of the order of immediate possession, and shall charge the costs of the action to the state. If, pursuant to the trial, the verdict of the jury or decision of the court awards respondents an amount equal to the tender, the costs of the action shall be charged to the state, and if the verdict or decision awards an amount less than the amount of the tender, the state shall be taxed for costs and the state, if respondents have accepted the tender and withdrawn the amount paid into court, shall be entitled to a judgment for the difference; otherwise, the excess on deposit shall be returned to the state. [1983 c 140 § 1; 1955 c 155 § 1; 1951 c 177 § 2.]

RCW 8.04.094 Demand for trial—Time of trial—Decree of appropriation. If any respondent shall elect to demand a trial for the purpose of assessing just compensation and damages arising from the taking, he or she shall so move within sixty days from the date of entry of the order of immediate possession and use, and the issues shall be brought to trial within one year from the date of such order unless good and sufficient proof shall be offered and it shall appear therefrom to the court that the hearing could not have been held within said year. In the event that no such demand be timely made or having been timely made, shall not be brought to trial within the limiting period, the court, upon application of the state, shall enter a decree of appropriation for the amount paid into court under the provisions of RCW 8.04.090, as the total sum to which respondents are entitled, and such decree shall be final and nonappealable. [2011 c 336 § 254; 1951 c 177 § 3.]

RCW 8.04.097 Acquisition when several ownerships. Whenever it becomes necessary on behalf of the state to acquire by condemnation more than one tract of land, property, or property rights, existing in any one county, and held in different ownerships or interests, the state may consolidate and file a single petition as one action against the several tracts of land, property, or property rights held by said different ownerships or interests, setting forth separately the descriptions of the tracts of land, property, or property rights needed, and the owners, persons, or parties interested therein. [1955 c 156 § 1. Formerly RCW 8.04.190.]

RCW 8.04.098 Acquisition when several ownerships—Public use. At the time and place appointed for hearing the petition, the court may enter an order adjudicating public use as affecting all tracts of land, property, or property rights as described therein, which order shall be final as to those respondents not seeking a review to the supreme court or the court of appeals within five days after the entry thereof. [1971 c 81 § 34; 1955 c 156 § 2. Formerly RCW 8.04.200.]

RCW 8.04.099 Acquisition when several ownerships—Selection of single jury. Thereafter, if requested by the state, a single jury shall be selected to hear and determine in separate trials, the amount of compensation and damages, if any, that shall be paid for the different tracts, parcels, property, or property rights, as set forth in the petition. [1955 c 156 § 3. Formerly RCW 8.04.210.]

Juries—Civil actions, selection, impaneling, and swearing of: Chapters 2.36, 4.44 RCW.

RCW 8.04.100 Cases may be consolidated for trial. At the time of fixing the date for trial by jury in any case the court may, on application of the petitioner, order that any one or more condemnation cases then pending before the court and requiring determination by a jury of the compensation and damages as aforesaid be consolidated and tried before one and the same jury but with a separate award to be made in each case. If necessary, the sheriff, under direction of the court or judge thereof, shall summon as many qualified persons as may be required to complete the jury from citizens of the county where such lands, real estate, premises or other property sought to be appropriated are situated. [1955 c 213 § 5. Prior: 1925 ex.s. c 98 § 1, part; RRS § 894, part.]

RCW 8.04.110 Trial—Damages to be found. A judge of the superior court shall preside at the trial to determine the compensation and damage to be awarded, which trial shall be held at the courthouse in the county where the land, real estate, premises or other property sought to be appropriated or acquired is situated: and in the case of each such trial by jury the jurors by their verdict shall fix as a lump sum the total amount of damages which shall result to all persons or parties and to any county and to all tenants, encumbrancers and others interested therein, by reason of the appropriation and use of the lands, real estate, premises or other property sought to be appropriated or acquired. Upon the trial, witnesses may be examined in behalf of either party to the proceedings as in civil actions; and a witness served with a subpoena in each proceeding shall be punished for failure to appear at such trial, or for perjury, as upon a trial of a civil action. In case a jury is not demanded as provided for in *section 894 such total amount of damages shall be ascertained and determined by the court or judge thereof and the proceedings shall be the same as in trials of an issue of fact by the court. [1925 ex.s. c 98 § 2; 1891 c 74 § 5; RRS § 895.]

Rules of court: CR 26 through 37.

***Reviser's note:** "section 894" refers to RRS § 894 herein codified (as amended) as RCW 8.04.070, 8.04.080, 8.04.090, and 8.04.100.

Witnesses, examination of: Title 5 RCW.

RCW 8.04.112 Damages to buildings. If there is a building standing, in whole or in part, upon any land to be taken, the jury shall add to their finding of the value of the land taken, the damages

to the building. If the entire building is taken, or if the building is damaged, so that it cannot be readjusted to the premises, then the measure of damages shall be the fair market value of the building. If part of the building is taken or damaged and the building can be readjusted or replaced on the part of the land remaining, and the state agrees thereto, then the measure of damages shall be the cost of readjusting or moving the building, or the part thereof left, together with the depreciation in the market value of the building by reason of such readjustment or moving. [1955 c 156 § 4.]

RCW 8.04.114 Damages to buildings—Where based on readjustment or moving. If damages are based upon readjustment or moving of building or buildings, the court shall order and fix the time in the judgment and decree of appropriation within which any such building must be moved or readjusted. Upon failure to comply with said order, the state may move said building upon respondent's remaining land and recover its costs and expenses incidental thereto. The state shall have a lien upon the building and the remaining land from the date of the judgment and decree of appropriation for the necessary costs and expenses of removal until the order of the court has been complied with. The amount of the lien and satisfaction thereof shall be by application and entry of a supplemental judgment in said proceedings and execution thereon. [1955 c 156 § 5.]

RCW 8.04.120 Judgment—Decree of appropriation—Recording. At the time of rendering judgment for damages, whether upon default or trial, the court or judge thereof shall also enter a judgment or decree of appropriation of the land, real estate or premises sought to be appropriated, thereby vesting the legal title to the same in the state of Washington. Whenever said judgment or decree of appropriation is made, a certified copy of such judgment or decree of appropriation may be filed for record in the office of the auditor of the county where the said land, real estate or other premises are situated, and shall be recorded by said auditor like a deed of real estate, and with like effect. [1891 c 74 § 6; RRS § 896.]

Recording of deeds of real estate: Title 65 RCW.

RCW 8.04.130 Payment of damages—Effect—Costs—Appellate review. Upon the entry of judgment upon the verdict of the jury or the decision of the court awarding damages, the state may make payment of the damages and the costs of the proceedings by depositing them with the clerk of the court, to be paid out under the direction of the court or judge thereof; and upon making such payment into court of the damages assessed and allowed for any land, real estate, premises, or other property mentioned in the petition, and of the costs, the state shall be released and discharged from any and all further liability therefor, unless upon appeal the owner or party interested recovers a greater amount of damages; and in that case the state shall be liable only for the amount in excess of the sum paid into court and the costs of appeal.

In the event appellate review is sought by any party to the proceedings, the moneys paid into the superior court by the state

pursuant to this section shall remain in the custody of the court until the final determination of the proceedings by the supreme court or the court of appeals. [1988 c 202 § 7; 1971 c 81 § 35; 1951 c 177 § 4; 1925 ex.s. c 98 § 3; 1891 c 74 § 7; RRS § 897.]

Severability—1988 c 202: See note following RCW 2.24.050.

RCW 8.04.140 Claimants, payment of—Conflicting claims. Any person, corporation, or county claiming to be entitled to any money paid into court, as provided in RCW 8.04.010 through 8.04.160, may apply to the court therefor, and upon furnishing evidence satisfactory to the court that he or she or it is entitled to the same, the court shall make an order directing the payment to such claimant the portion of such money as he or she or it shall be found entitled to; but if, upon application, the court or judge thereof should decide that the title to the land, real estate, or premises specified in the application of such claimant was in such condition as to require that an action be commenced to determine the conflicting claims thereto, he or she shall refuse such order until such action is commenced and the conflicting claims to such land, real estate, or premises be determined according to law. [2011 c 336 § 255; 1891 c 74 § 8; RRS § 898.]

RCW 8.04.150 Appellate review. Either party may seek appellate review of the judgment for damages entered in the superior court within thirty days after the entry of judgment as aforesaid, and such review shall bring before the supreme court or the court of appeals the propriety and justness of the amount of damages in respect to the parties to the review: PROVIDED HOWEVER, That upon such review no bond shall be required: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the owner of land, the real estate or premises accepts the sum awarded by the jury, the court or the judge thereof, he or she shall be deemed thereby to have waived conclusively appellate review, and final judgment by default may be rendered in the superior court as in other cases: PROVIDED FURTHER, That no review shall operate so as to prevent the said state of Washington from taking possession of such property pending review after the amount of said award shall have been paid into court. [2011 c 336 § 256; 1988 c 202 § 8; 1971 c 81 § 36; 1891 c 74 § 9; RRS § 899.]

Rules of court: Cf. RAP 5.2, 8.1, 18.22.

Severability—1988 c 202: See note following RCW 2.24.050.

RCW 8.04.160 Award, how paid into court. Whenever the attorney general shall file with the director of financial management a certificate setting forth the amount of any award found against the state of Washington under the provisions of RCW 8.04.010 through 8.04.160, together with the costs of said proceeding, and a description of the lands and premises sought to be appropriated and acquired, and the title of the action or proceeding in which said award is rendered, it shall be the duty of the office of financial management to forthwith issue a warrant upon the state treasury to the

order of the attorney general in a sum sufficient to make payment in money of said award and the costs of said proceeding, and thereupon it shall be the duty of said attorney general to forthwith pay to the clerk of said court in money the amount of said award and costs. [1979 c 151 § 8; 1973 c 106 § 8; 1891 c 74 § 10; RRS § 900.]

RCW 8.04.170 Condemnation for military purposes. Whenever the governor, as commander-in-chief of the military of this state, shall deem it necessary to acquire any lands, real estate, premises, or other property for any military purpose or purposes of this state, either to add to, enlarge, increase, or otherwise improve state military facilities now or hereafter existing or to establish new facilities, the acquisition of which shall have been provided for by the state, by a county or by a city, or by either, all or any thereof, upon certificate by the governor of such necessity, proceedings for the condemnation, appropriation, and taking of the lands, real estate, premises, or other property so certified to be necessary shall be taken as follows:

Where the state is to pay the purchase price it shall be the duty of the attorney general, upon receipt by him or her of said certificate of the governor, to file a petition in the superior court for the county in which such lands, real estate, premises, or other property may be situate praying such condemnation, appropriating, and taking, which petition shall be prosecuted to a final determination in the manner by law provided for other condemnation suits brought by or on behalf of the state;

Where a county is to pay the purchase price it shall be the duty of the prosecuting attorney of said county upon receipt by him or her of said certificate of the governor, to file a petition in the superior court for said county praying such condemnation, appropriation, and taking, which petition shall be prosecuted to a final determination in the manner by law provided for other condemnation suits brought by or on behalf of a county;

Where a city is to pay the purchase price it shall be the duty of the corporation counsel, city attorney, or other head of the legal department of said city, upon receipt by him or her of said certificate of the governor, to file a petition in the superior court for the county in which said city is situate, praying such condemnation, appropriation, and taking, which petition shall be prosecuted to a final determination in the manner by law provided for other condemnation suits brought by or on behalf of such city;

Where the purchase price is to be paid by the state, a county, and a city or by the state and a county, or by the state and a city, or by a county and a city, the condemnation shall be prosecuted to a final determination in the manner by law provided for either or any thereof, as the governor may determine, which determination shall be final and conclusive. [2011 c 336 § 257; 1917 c 153 § 1; RRS § 900-1.]

Notice where military land is involved: RCW 8.28.030.

RCW 8.04.180 Condemnation for military purposes—Construction. Nothing contained in RCW 8.04.170 shall be construed as in any manner applying to condemnation by any county for the purpose of acquiring

title to any site for a mobilization, training and supply station, to be donated by any county to the United States. [1917 c 153 § 2; RRS § 900-2.]