

Chapter 59.21 RCW
MOBILE HOME RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

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RCW 59.21.005 Declaration—Purpose. The legislature recognizes that it is quite costly for tenants who own homes in manufactured/mobile home parks to relocate when the park in which they reside is closed or converted to another use. Many such tenants need financial assistance in order to relocate from a manufactured/mobile home park. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a mechanism for assisting manufactured/mobile home tenants to relocate their manufactured/mobile homes to suitable alternative sites or demolish and dispose of their homes and secure alternative housing of their choice. [2021 c 28 § 1; 2019 c 390 § 1; 1995 c 122 § 2; 1991 c 327 § 8.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 390: "The legislature finds that manufactured housing communities provide significant opportunity for affordable housing, but at the same time, vacancy rates in established communities are very low. Siting a replacement manufactured home on a manufactured housing community lot is basic to a landlord's right to continue in business and to provide opportunity for housing that is needed. Imposing undue burdens and new restrictions for the siting of replacement manufactured homes may deem lots unusable as home sites thus, exacerbating the low vacancy rates and reducing affordable housing opportunities. The legislature intends to provide protection for manufactured housing communities by not prohibiting the siting of a manufactured/mobile home on an existing lot based solely on lack of compliance with the existing separation and setback requirements that regulate distance between such homes." [2019 c 390 § 13.]

Tax preference performance statement and expiration—2019 c 390:
See note following RCW 84.36.560.

RCW 59.21.006 Declaration—Intent—Purpose—1995 c 122. The legislature recognizes that, in the decision of *Guimont et al. v. Clarke*, 121 Wn.2d (1993), the Washington supreme court held the mobile home relocation assistance program of chapter 59.21 RCW invalid for its monetary burden on mobile home park-owners. However, during the program's operation, substantial funds were validly collected from mobile home owners and accumulated in the mobile home park relocation fund, created under the program. The legislature intends to utilize those funds for the purposes for which they were collected. The legislature also recognizes that, for a period of almost three years since this state's courts invalidated the program, no such assistance was available. The most needy tenants may have been forced to sell or abandon rather than relocate their homes in the face of park closures. Because the purpose of the program was to assist relocation, those persons should be compensated in a like manner to those who could afford to pay for relocation without assistance. To that end, the legislature has: (1) Repealed RCW 59.21.020, 59.21.035, 59.21.080, 59.21.085, 59.21.095, 59.21.900, 59.21.901, 59.21.902, and 59.21.903; (2) amended RCW 59.21.010, 59.21.030, 59.21.040, 59.21.050, 59.21.070, *59.21.100, 59.21.110, and 43.84.092; (3) reenacted without amendment RCW 59.21.005 and **59.21.105; and (4) added new sections to chapter 59.21 RCW. [1995 c 122 § 1.]

Reviser's note: *(1) RCW 59.21.100 and 59.21.110 were not amended by 1995 c 122.

** (2) RCW 59.21.105 was reenacted and amended by 1995 c 122.

RCW 59.21.010 Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Assignee" means an individual or entity who has agreed to advance allowable relocation assistance expenses in exchange for the assignment and transfer of a right to reimbursement from the fund.

(2) "Department" means the department of commerce.

(3) "Director" means the director of the department of commerce.

(4) "Fund" means the manufactured/mobile home park relocation fund established under RCW 59.21.050.

(5) "Landlord" or "park-owner" means the owner of the manufactured/mobile home park that is being closed at the time relocation assistance is provided.

(6) "Low-income household" means a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose adjusted income is less than 80 percent of the median family income, adjusted for household size, for the county where the manufactured/mobile home is located.

(7) "Manufactured/mobile home park" or "park" means real property that is rented or held out for rent to others for the placement of two or more manufactured/mobile homes for the primary purpose of production of income, except where the real property is rented or held out for rent for seasonal recreational purpose only and is not intended for year-round occupancy.

(8) "Relocate" means to do one of the following:

(a) Remove a manufactured/mobile home from a manufactured/mobile home park being closed and reinstall it in another location;

(b) Remove a manufactured/mobile home from a manufactured/mobile home park being closed and demolish and dispose of it and secure other housing; or

(c) Remove a manufactured/mobile home from a manufactured/mobile home park being closed by selling or gifting the home to a third party and secure other housing.

(9) "Relocation assistance" means the monetary assistance provided under this chapter, including reimbursement for the costs of relocation as well as cash assistance provided to allow the tenant to secure new housing.

(10) "Tenant" means a person that owns a manufactured/mobile home located on a rented lot in a manufactured/mobile home park.

(11) "Third party" means a person or persons who purchase or are gifted a tenant's home, with the condition they are responsible for removing the home on or prior to the park closure date and relocate the home under subsection (8)(a) or (b) of this section. The third party is not entitled to relocation assistance related to relocation of the purchased or gifted home. [2023 c 259 § 1; 2019 c 390 § 2. Prior: 2009 c 565 § 47; 2002 c 257 § 1; 1998 c 124 § 1; 1995 c 122 § 3; 1991 c 327 § 10; 1990 c 171 § 1; 1989 c 201 § 1.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 59.21.005.

Tax preference performance statement and expiration—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 84.36.560.

Effective date—2002 c 257: "This act takes effect January 1, 2003." [2002 c 257 § 5.]

RCW 59.21.021 Relocation assistance—Eligibility—Amounts of assistance—Distribution of assistance—Reimbursement—Application to receive relocation assistance. (1) If a manufactured/mobile home park is, or is scheduled to be, closed or converted to another use, eligible tenants shall be entitled to relocation assistance on a first-come, first-serve[d] basis. The department shall give priority for distribution of relocation assistance to eligible tenants residing in parks that are closed as a result of park-owner fraud or as a result of health and safety concerns as determined by the local board of health. Payments shall be made upon the department's verification of eligibility, subject to the availability of remaining funds.

(2) Eligibility for relocation assistance funds is limited to low-income households in manufactured/mobile home parks that are, or are scheduled to be, closed or converted to another use.

(3) Eligible tenants are entitled to financial assistance from the fund, up to a maximum of \$17,000 for a multisection home and up to a maximum of \$11,000 for a single-section home. The department shall distribute relocation assistance for each eligible tenant as follows:

(a) \$12,000 for a multisection home and \$8,000 for a single-section home shall be disbursed in the form of cash assistance to help the tenant relocate the home or secure alternative housing; and

(b) The remainder of the total assistance shall be disbursed once the tenant has transferred the title to the park-owner, relocated the home, or demolished and disposed of the home. The tenant must either transfer title of the manufactured/mobile home to the park-owner, relocate, or demolish and dispose of the home by the park closure date to receive the remainder of the assistance. A tenant who removes the tenant's home on or before the park closure date and reinstalls the

home in another location within 12 months after the closure date is eligible to receive the remainder of the assistance.

(4) In the event that the tenant does not relocate or demolish and dispose of the home by the park closure date, the park-owner may seek reimbursement from the fund in the amount of \$4,000 for a multisection home and \$2,500 for a single-section home.

(a) To receive such reimbursement, the park-owner must provide documentation to the department demonstrating costs incurred for demolition and disposal of the home.

(b) The park-owner may seek reimbursement for additional costs incurred for demolition and disposal of the home up to an additional \$4,500 for a multisection home and \$3,000 for a single-section home from the portion of the relocation fund to which park-owners must contribute pursuant to RCW 59.30.050.

(5) Any individual or organization may apply to receive relocation assistance from the fund, for use in combination with funds from public or private sources, toward relocation of tenants eligible under this section, with agreement from the tenant.

(6) The legislature intends the cash assistance provided under subsection (3) of this section to be considered a one-time direct grant payment that shall be excluded from household income calculations for purposes of determining the eligibility of the recipient for benefits or assistance under any state program financed in whole or in part with state funds. [2023 c 259 § 2; 2021 c 28 § 2; 2019 c 390 § 3; 2005 c 399 § 5; 2002 c 257 § 2; 1998 c 124 § 2; 1995 c 122 § 5.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 59.21.005.

Tax preference performance statement and expiration—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 84.36.560.

Effective date—2002 c 257: See note following RCW 59.21.010.

RCW 59.21.030 Closure notice—Requirements. (1) The closure notice required by RCW 59.20.080 before park closure or conversion of the park shall be given to the director and all tenants in writing, and conspicuously posted at all park entrances.

(2) The closure notice required under RCW 59.20.080 must be in substantially the following form:

"CLOSURE NOTICE TO TENANTS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN on the day of,, of a conversion of this mobile home park or manufactured housing community to a use other than for mobile homes, manufactured homes, or park models, or of a conversion of the mobile home park or manufactured housing community to a mobile home park cooperative or a mobile home park subdivision. This change of use becomes effective on the day of,, which is the date twelve months after the date this closure notice is given.

PARK OR COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OR OWNERSHIP INFORMATION:

For information during the period preceding the effective change of use of this mobile home park or manufactured housing community on the day of,, contact:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

PURCHASER INFORMATION, if applicable:

Contact information for the purchaser of the mobile home park or manufactured housing community property consists of the following:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

PARK PURCHASE BY TENANT ORGANIZATIONS, if applicable:

The owner of this mobile home park or manufactured housing community may be willing to entertain an offer of purchase by an organization or group consisting of park or community tenants or a not-for-profit agency designated by the tenants. Tenants should contact the park owner or park management with such an offer. Any such offer must be made and accepted prior to closure, and the timeline for closure remains unaffected by an offer. Acceptance of any offer is at the discretion of the owner and is not a first right of refusal.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE RESOURCES:

For information about the availability of relocation assistance, contact the Office of Mobile/Manufactured Home Relocation Assistance within the Department of Commerce."

(3) The closure notice required by RCW 59.20.080 must also meet the following requirements:

(a) A copy of the closure notice must be provided with all rental agreements signed after the original park closure notice date as required under RCW 59.20.060;

(b) Notice to the director must include: (i) A good faith estimate of the timetable for removal of the mobile homes; (ii) the reason for closure; and (iii) a list of the names and mailing addresses of the current registered park tenants. Notice required under this subsection must be sent to the director within ten business days of the date notice was given to all tenants as required by RCW 59.20.080; and

(c) Notice must be recorded in the office of the county auditor for the county where the mobile home park is located.

(4) The department must mail every tenant an application and information on relocation assistance within ten business days of receipt of the notice required in subsection (1) of this section. [2019 c 342 § 10; 2006 c 296 § 1; 1995 c 122 § 7; 1990 c 171 § 3; 1989 c 201 § 3.]

RCW 59.21.033 Notice—Translated versions—Legal or advocacy resource information. (1) The department shall produce and maintain on its website translated versions of the notice under RCW 59.21.030 in the top ten languages spoken in Washington state and, at the discretion of the department, other languages. The notice must be made available upon request in printed form on one letter size paper, eight and one-half by eleven inches, and in an easily readable font size.

(2) The department shall also provide on its website information on where tenants can access legal or advocacy resources, including information on any immigrant and cultural organizations where tenants can receive assistance in their primary language. [2019 c 342 § 11.]

RCW 59.21.040 Relocation assistance—Exemptions. A tenant is not entitled to relocation assistance under this chapter if: (1) The

tenant has given notice to the landlord of his or her intent to vacate the park and terminate the tenancy before any written notice of closure pursuant to RCW 59.20.080(1)(e) has been given; (2) the tenant purchased a mobile home already situated in the park or moved a mobile home into the park after a written notice of closure pursuant to RCW 59.20.090 has been given and the person received actual prior notice of the change or closure; or (3) the tenant receives assistance from an outside source that exceeds the maximum amounts of assistance to which a person is entitled under RCW 59.21.021(3), except that a tenant receiving relocation assistance from a landlord pursuant to RCW 59.20.080 remains eligible for the maximum amounts of assistance under this chapter. However, no tenant may be denied relocation assistance under subsection (1) of this section if the tenant has remained on the premises and continued paying rent for a period of at least six months after giving notice of intent to vacate and before receiving formal notice of a closure or change of use. [2023 c 259 § 3; 2023 c 40 § 17; 1998 c 124 § 4; 1995 c 122 § 8; 1989 c 201 § 4.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 40: See note following RCW 59.20.030.

RCW 59.21.050 Relocation fund—Administration—Tenant's application—Form. (1)(a) The existence of the manufactured/mobile home park relocation fund in the custody of the state treasurer is affirmed.

(b) Expenditures from the fund may only be used as follows:

(i) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, all moneys received from the fee as specified in RCW 46.17.155 must be used only for relocation assistance awarded under this chapter.

(ii) All moneys received from the fee as specified in RCW 59.30.050 must be used only for the relocation coordination program created in RCW 59.21.120.

(c) Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the fund. All relocation payments to tenants shall be made from the fund. The fund is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for expenditures.

(2) A tenant is eligible for relocation assistance under this chapter only after an application is submitted by that tenant or an organization acting on the tenant's account under RCW 59.21.021(5) on a form approved by the director. The application shall include: (a) A copy of the notice from the park-owner, or other adequate proof, that the tenancy is terminated due to closure of the park or its conversion to another use; (b) a copy of the rental agreement then in force, or other proof that the applicant was a tenant at the time of notice of closure; (c) proof of ownership of the home at the time of notice of closure; (d) a statement, on a form approved by the department, of whether the tenant will transfer title of the home to the park-owner or relocate the home within 90 days of receiving relocation assistance; and (e) other information as may be required by the department to process the application.

(3) The department may deduct a percentage amount of the fee collected under RCW 46.17.155 for administration expenses incurred by the department. [2021 c 28 § 3; 2019 c 390 § 5; 2011 c 158 § 7; 2010 c 161 § 1149; 2002 c 257 § 4; 1998 c 124 § 5; 1995 c 122 § 9; 1991 sp.s. c 13 § 74; 1991 c 327 § 12; 1990 c 171 § 5; 1989 c 201 § 5.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 59.21.005.

Tax preference performance statement and expiration—2019 c 390:
See note following RCW 84.36.560.

Transfer of residual funds to manufactured home installation training account—2011 c 158: See note following RCW 43.22A.100.

Effective date—Intent—Legislation to reconcile chapter 161, Laws of 2010 and other amendments made during the 2010 legislative session—2010 c 161: See notes following RCW 46.04.013.

Effective date—2002 c 257: See note following RCW 59.21.010.

Effective dates—Severability—1991 sp.s. c 13: See notes following RCW 18.08.240.

RCW 59.21.070 Rental agreement—Covenants. If the rental agreement includes a covenant by the landlord as described in *RCW 59.20.060(1)(g)(i), the covenant runs with the land and is binding upon the purchasers, successors, and assigns of the landlord. [1995 c 122 § 10; 1989 c 201 § 10.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 59.20.060 was amended by 2023 c 40 § 3, deleting subsection (1)(g)(i).

RCW 59.21.100 Tenants—Waiver of rights—Attorney approval. A tenant may, with the written approval of his or her attorney-at-law, waive or compromise their right to relocation assistance under this chapter. [1989 c 201 § 14.]

RCW 59.21.105 Existing older mobile homes—Forced relocation—Code waiver. (1) The legislature finds that existing older mobile homes provide affordable housing to many persons, and that requiring these homes that are legally located in mobile home parks to meet new fire, safety, and construction codes because they are relocating due to the closure or conversion of the mobile home park, compounds the economic burden facing these tenants.

(2) Mobile homes that are relocated due to either the closure or conversion of a mobile home park, may not be required by any city or county to comply with the requirements of any applicable fire, safety, or construction code for the sole reason of its relocation. This section shall only apply if the original occupancy classification of the building is not changed as a result of the move.

(3) This section shall not apply to mobile homes that are substantially remodeled or rehabilitated, nor to any work performed in compliance with installation requirements. For the purpose of determining whether a moved mobile home has been substantially remodeled or rebuilt, any cost relating to preparation for relocation or installation shall not be considered. [1995 c 122 § 11; 1991 c 327 § 16.]

RCW 59.21.110 Violations—Penalty. Any person who intentionally violates, intentionally attempts to evade, or intentionally evades the provisions of this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor. [1991 c 327 § 14; 1989 c 201 § 15.]

RCW 59.21.120 Relocation coordination program. (1) A relocation coordination program is created within the department for the purpose of assisting tenants of a mobile home park scheduled for closure or conversion to another use with the process of relocation.

(2) The relocation coordination program assistance may include, but is not limited to, performing casework on behalf of individual tenants, maintaining and distributing informational resources for tenants regarding the process for relocating and disposal of manufactured/mobile homes, researching and distributing current information regarding available locations for manufactured/mobile homes and other forms of available housing, and researching and distributing information regarding other sources of financial assistance that may be available to secure new housing. [2019 c 390 § 8.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 59.21.005.

Tax preference performance statement and expiration—2019 c 390: See note following RCW 84.36.560.

RCW 59.21.905 Effective date—1995 c 122. This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [April 20, 1995]. [1995 c 122 § 15.]

RCW 59.21.906 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521. For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 § 141.]