

Chapter 59.30 RCW
MANUFACTURED/MOBILE HOME COMMUNITIES—DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND
REGISTRATION

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RCW 59.30.010 Findings—Purpose—Intent. (1) The legislature finds that there are factors unique to the relationship between a manufactured/mobile home tenant and a manufactured/mobile home community landlord. Once occupancy has commenced, the difficulty and expense in moving and relocating a manufactured/mobile home can affect the operation of market forces and lead to an inequality of the bargaining position of the parties. Once occupancy has commenced, a tenant may be subject to violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act without an adequate remedy at law. This chapter is created for the purpose of protecting the public, fostering fair and honest competition, and regulating the factors unique to the relationship between the manufactured/mobile home tenant and the manufactured/mobile home community landlord.

(2) The legislature finds that taking legal action against a manufactured/mobile home community landlord for violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act can be a costly and lengthy process, and that many people cannot afford to pursue a court process to vindicate statutory rights. Manufactured/mobile home community landlords will also benefit by having access to a process that resolves disputes quickly and efficiently.

(3) (a) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to provide an equitable as well as a less costly and more efficient way for manufactured/mobile home tenants and manufactured/mobile home community landlords to resolve disputes, and to provide a mechanism for state authorities to quickly locate manufactured/mobile home community landlords.

(b) The legislature intends to authorize the department of revenue to register manufactured/mobile home communities and collect a registration fee.

(c) The legislature intends to authorize the attorney general to:

(i) Produce and distribute educational materials regarding the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act and the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program created in RCW 59.30.030;

(ii) Administer the dispute resolution program by taking complaints, conducting investigations, making determinations, issuing fines and other penalties, and participating in administrative dispute resolutions, when necessary, when there are alleged violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act; and

(iii) Collect and annually report upon data related to disputes and violations, and make recommendations on modifying chapter 59.20 RCW, to the appropriate committees of the legislature. [2011 c 298 § 29; 2007 c 431 § 1.]

Purpose—Intent—Agency transfer—Contracting—Effective date—2011 c 298: See notes following RCW 19.02.020.

Implementation—2007 c 431: "The attorney general may take the necessary steps to ensure that this act is implemented on its effective date." [2007 c 431 § 12.]

RCW 59.30.020 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Complainant" means a landlord, community owner, or tenant, who has a complaint alleging a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW.

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

(3) "Director" means the director of revenue.

(4) "Landlord" or "community owner" means the owner of a mobile home park or a manufactured housing community and includes the agents of a landlord.

(5) "Manufactured home" means a single-family dwelling built according to the United States department of housing and urban development manufactured home construction and safety standards act, which is a national preemptive building code. A manufactured home also: (a) Includes plumbing, heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems; (b) is built on a permanent chassis; and (c) can be transported in one or more sections with each section at least eight feet wide and forty feet long when transported, or when installed on the site is three hundred twenty square feet or greater.

(6) "Manufactured/mobile home" means either a manufactured home or a mobile home.

(7) "Manufactured/mobile home lot" means a portion of a manufactured/mobile home community designated as the location of one mobile home, manufactured home, or park model and its accessory buildings, and intended for the exclusive use as a primary residence by the occupants of that mobile home, manufactured home, or park model.

(8) "Mobile home" means a factory-built dwelling built prior to June 15, 1976, to standards other than the United States department of housing and urban development code, and acceptable under applicable state codes in effect at the time of construction or introduction of the home into the state. Mobile homes have not been built since the introduction of the United States department of housing and urban development manufactured home construction and safety act.

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

(10) "Owner" means one or more persons, jointly or severally, in whom is vested:

(a) All or part of the legal title to the real property; or
(b) All or part of the beneficial ownership, and a right to present use and enjoyment of the real property.

(11) "Park model" means a recreational vehicle intended for permanent or semipermanent installation and is used as a primary residence.

(12) "Recreational vehicle" means a travel trailer, motor home, truck camper, or camping trailer that is primarily designed and used as temporary living quarters, is either self-propelled or mounted on or drawn by another vehicle, is transient, is not occupied as a primary residence, and is not immobilized or permanently affixed to a manufactured/mobile home lot.

(13) "Respondent" means a landlord, community owner, or tenant, alleged to have committed a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW.

(14) "Tenant" means any person, except a transient as defined in RCW 59.20.030, who rents a mobile home lot. [2012 c 213 § 6. Prior: 2011 c 298 § 30; 2007 c 431 § 2.]

Purpose—Intent—Agency transfer—Contracting—Effective date—2011 c 298: See notes following RCW 19.02.020.

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.030 Dispute resolution program—Purpose—Attorney general duties. (1) The attorney general shall administer a manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program.

(2) The purpose of the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program is to provide manufactured/mobile home community landlords and tenants with a cost-effective and time-efficient process to resolve disputes regarding alleged violations of the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act.

(3) The attorney general under the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program shall:

(a) Produce educational materials regarding chapter 59.20 RCW and the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program, including a notice in a format that a landlord can reasonably post in a manufactured/mobile home community that summarizes tenant rights and responsibilities, includes information on how to file a complaint with the attorney general, and includes a toll-free telephone number and website address that landlords and tenants can use to seek additional information and communicate complaints;

(b) Distribute the educational materials described in (a) of this subsection to all known landlords and information alerting landlords that:

(i) All landlords must post the notice provided by the attorney general that summarizes tenant rights and responsibilities and includes information on how to file complaints, in a clearly visible location in all common areas of manufactured/mobile home communities, including in each clubhouse;

(ii) The attorney general may visually confirm that the notice is appropriately posted; and

(iii) The attorney general may issue a fine or other penalty if the attorney general discovers that the landlord has not appropriately posted the notice or that the landlord has not maintained the posted notice so that it is clearly visible to tenants;

(c) Distribute the educational materials described in (a) of this subsection to any complainants and respondents, as requested;

(d) Perform dispute resolution activities, including investigations, negotiations, determinations of violations, and imposition of fines or other penalties as described in RCW 59.30.040;

(e) Create and maintain a database of manufactured/mobile home communities that have had complaints filed against them. For each manufactured/mobile home community in the database, the following information must be contained, at a minimum:

(i) The number of complaints received;

(ii) The nature and extent of the complaints received;

(iii) The violation of law complained of; and

(iv) The manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program outcomes for each complaint;

(f) Provide an annual report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the data collected under this section, including program performance measures and recommendations regarding how the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program may be improved, by December 31st, beginning in 2007.

(4) The manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program, including all of the duties of the attorney general under the program as described in this section, shall be funded by the collection of fines, other penalties, and fees deposited into the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account created in RCW 59.30.070, and all other sources directed to the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program. [2007 c 431 § 3.]

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.040 Dispute resolution program—Complaint process.

(1) An aggrieved party has the right to file a complaint with the attorney general alleging a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW.

(2) Upon receiving a complaint under this chapter, the attorney general must:

(a) Inform the complainant of any notification requirements under RCW 59.20.080 for tenant violations or RCW 59.20.200 for landlord violations and encourage the complainant to appropriately notify the respondent of the complaint; and

(b) If a statutory time period is applicable, inform the complainant of the time frame that the respondent has to remedy the complaint under RCW 59.20.080 for tenant violations or RCW 59.20.200 for landlord violations.

(3) After receiving a complaint under this chapter, the attorney general shall initiate the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program by investigating the alleged violations at its discretion and, if appropriate, facilitating negotiations between the complainant and the respondent.

(4) (a) Complainants and respondents shall cooperate with the attorney general in the course of an investigation by (i) responding to subpoenas issued by the attorney general, which may consist of providing access to papers or other documents, and (ii) providing access to the manufactured/mobile home facilities relevant to the investigation. Complainants and respondents must respond to attorney general subpoenas within thirty days.

(b) Failure to cooperate with the attorney general in the course of an investigation is a violation of this chapter.

(5) If after an investigation the attorney general determines that an agreement cannot be negotiated between the parties, the attorney general shall make a written determination on whether a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW has occurred.

(a) If the attorney general finds by a written determination that a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW has occurred, the attorney general shall deliver a written notice of violation to the respondent who committed the violation by certified mail. The notice of violation must specify the violation, the corrective action required, the time within which the corrective action must be taken, the penalties including fines, other penalties, and actions that will result if corrective action is not taken within the specified time period, and the process for contesting the determination, fines, penalties, and other actions included in the notice of violation through an administrative hearing. The attorney general must deliver to the complainant a copy of the notice of violation by certified mail.

(b) If the attorney general finds by a written determination that a violation of chapter 59.20 RCW has not occurred, the attorney general shall deliver a written notice of nonviolation to both the complainant and the respondent by certified mail. The notice of nonviolation must include the process for contesting the determination included in the notice of nonviolation through an administrative hearing.

(6) Corrective action must take place within fifteen business days of the respondent's receipt of a notice of violation, except as required otherwise by the attorney general, unless the respondent has submitted a timely request for an administrative hearing to contest the notice of violation as required under subsection (8) of this section. If a respondent, which includes either a landlord or a tenant, fails to take corrective action within the required time period and the attorney general has not received a timely request for an administrative hearing, the attorney general may impose a fine, up to a maximum of two hundred fifty dollars per violation per day, for each day that a violation remains uncorrected. The attorney general must consider the severity and duration of the violation and the violation's impact on other community residents when determining the appropriate amount of a fine or the appropriate penalty to impose on a respondent. If the respondent shows upon timely application to the attorney general that a good faith effort to comply with the corrective action requirements of the notice of violation has been made and that the corrective action has not been completed because of mitigating factors beyond the respondent's control, the attorney general may delay the imposition of a fine or penalty.

(7) The attorney general may issue an order requiring the respondent, or its assignee or agent, to cease and desist from an unlawful practice and take affirmative actions that in the judgment of the attorney general will carry out the purposes of this chapter. The affirmative actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Refunds of rent increases, improper fees, charges, and assessments collected in violation of this chapter;

(b) Filing and utilization of documents that correct a statutory or rule violation; and

(c) Reasonable action necessary to correct a statutory or rule violation.

(8) A complainant or respondent may request an administrative hearing before an administrative law judge under chapter 34.05 RCW to contest:

(a) A notice of violation issued under subsection (5)(a) of this section or a notice of nonviolation issued under subsection (5)(b) of this section;

(b) A fine or other penalty imposed under subsection (6) of this section; or

(c) An order to cease and desist or an order to take affirmative actions under subsection (7) of this section.

The complainant or respondent must request an administrative hearing within fifteen business days of receipt of a notice of violation, notice of nonviolation, fine, other penalty, order, or action. If an administrative hearing is not requested within this time period, the notice of violation, notice of nonviolation, fine, other penalty, order, or action constitutes a final order of the attorney general and is not subject to review by any court or agency.

(9) If an administrative hearing is initiated, the respondent and complainant shall each bear the cost of his or her own legal expenses.

(10) The administrative law judge appointed under chapter 34.12 RCW shall:

(a) Hear and receive pertinent evidence and testimony;

(b) Decide whether the evidence supports the attorney general finding by a preponderance of the evidence; and

(c) Enter an appropriate order within thirty days after the close of the hearing and immediately mail copies of the order to the affected parties.

The order of the administrative law judge constitutes the final agency order of the attorney general and may be appealed to the superior court under chapter 34.05 RCW.

(11) When the attorney general imposes a fine, refund, or other penalty against a respondent, the respondent may not seek any recovery or reimbursement of the fine, refund, or other penalty from a complainant or from other manufactured/mobile home tenants.

(12) All receipts from the imposition of fines or other penalties collected under this section other than those due to a complainant must be deposited into the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account created in RCW 59.30.070.

(13) This section is not exclusive and does not limit the right of landlords or tenants to take legal action against another party as provided in chapter 59.20 RCW or otherwise. Exhaustion of the administrative remedy provided in this chapter is not required before a landlord or tenants may bring a legal action. This section does not apply to unlawful detainer actions initiated under RCW 59.20.080 prior to the filing and service of an unlawful detainer court action; however, a tenant is not precluded from seeking relief under this chapter if the complaint claims the notice of termination violates RCW 59.20.080 prior to the filing and service of an unlawful detainer action. [2007 c 431 § 4.]

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.050 Registration process, fees. (1) The department must register all manufactured/mobile home communities, which registration must be renewed annually. Each community must be

registered separately. The department must mail registration notifications to all known manufactured/mobile home community landlords. Registration information packets must include:

(a) Registration forms; and

(b) Registration assessment information, including registration due dates and late fees, and the collections procedures, liens, and charging costs to tenants.

(2) To apply for registration or registration renewal, the landlord of a manufactured/mobile home community must file with the department an application for registration or registration renewal on a form provided by the department and must pay a registration fee as described in subsection (3) of this section. The department may require the submission of information necessary to assist in identifying and locating a manufactured/mobile home community and other information that may be useful to the state, which must include, at a minimum:

(a) The names and addresses of the owners of the manufactured/mobile home community;

(b) The name and address of the manufactured/mobile home community;

(c) The name and address of the landlord and manager of the manufactured/mobile home community;

(d) The number of lots within the manufactured/mobile home community that are subject to chapter 59.20 RCW; and

(e) The addresses of each manufactured/mobile home lot within the manufactured/mobile home community that is subject to chapter 59.20 RCW.

(3) Each manufactured/mobile home community landlord must pay to the department:

(a) A one-time business license application fee for the first year of registration and, in subsequent years, an annual renewal application fee, as provided in RCW 19.02.075; and

(b) An annual registration assessment of fifteen dollars for each manufactured/mobile home that is subject to chapter 59.20 RCW within a manufactured/mobile home community. Manufactured/mobile home community landlords may charge a maximum of five dollars of this assessment to tenants. Nine dollars of the registration assessment for each manufactured/mobile home must be deposited into the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account created in RCW 59.30.070 to fund the costs associated with the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program. One dollar of the registration assessment must be deposited into the business license account created in RCW 19.02.210. The remaining five dollars of the registration assessment must be deposited into the manufactured/mobile home park relocation fund created in RCW 59.21.050. The annual registration assessment must be reviewed once each biennium by the department and the attorney general and may be adjusted to reasonably relate to the cost of administering this chapter. The registration assessment may not exceed fifteen dollars, but if the assessment is reduced, the portion allocated to the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account, the business license account, and the manufactured/mobile home park relocation fund must be adjusted proportionately.

(4) Initial registrations of manufactured/mobile home communities must be filed before November 1, 2007, or within three months of the availability of mobile home lots for rent within the community. The manufactured/mobile home community is subject to a delinquency fee of two hundred fifty dollars for late initial registrations. The

delinquency fee must be deposited in the business license account. Renewal registrations that are not renewed by the expiration date as assigned by the department are subject to delinquency fees under RCW 19.02.085.

(5) Thirty days after sending late fee notices to a noncomplying landlord, the department may issue a warrant under RCW 59.30.090 for the unpaid registration assessment and delinquency fee. If a warrant is issued by the department under RCW 59.30.090, the department must add a penalty of ten percent of the amount of the unpaid registration assessment and delinquency fee, but not less than ten dollars. The warrant penalty must be deposited into the business license account created in RCW 19.02.210. Chapter 82.32 RCW applies to the collection of warrants issued under RCW 59.30.090.

(6) Registration is effective on the date determined by the department, and the department must issue a registration number to each registered manufactured/mobile home community. The department must provide an expiration date, assigned by the department, to each manufactured/mobile home community who registers. [2019 c 390 § 7; 2013 c 144 § 42; 2011 c 298 § 31; 2007 c 431 § 6.]

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.

Purpose—Intent—Agency transfer—Contracting—Effective date—2011 c 298: See notes following RCW 19.02.020.

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.060 Database. The department must have the capability to compile, update, and maintain the most accurate database possible of all the manufactured/mobile home communities in the state, which must include all of the information collected under RCW 59.30.050, except for the addresses of each manufactured/mobile home lot within the manufactured/mobile home community that is subject to chapter 59.20 RCW, which must be made available to the attorney general and the department of commerce in a format to be determined by a collaborative agreement between the department and the attorney general. [2011 c 298 § 32; 2007 c 431 § 7.]

Purpose—Intent—Agency transfer—Contracting—Effective date—2011 c 298: See notes following RCW 19.02.020.

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.070 Manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account. The manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from sources directed to the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program must be deposited in the account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the costs associated with administering the manufactured/mobile home dispute resolution program. Only the attorney general or the attorney general's designee may

authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. [2007 c 431 § 8.]

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.080 Immunity from suit. The attorney general, director, or individuals acting on behalf of the attorney general or director are immune from suit in any action, civil or criminal, based upon any disciplinary actions or other official acts performed in the course of their duties under this chapter, except their intentional or willful misconduct. [2007 c 431 § 5.]

Implementation—2007 c 431: See note following RCW 59.30.010.

RCW 59.30.090 Unpaid fees—Warrant—Interest—Lien. (1) If any registration assessment or delinquency fee is not paid in full within thirty days after sending late fee notices to a noncomplying landlord, the department may issue a warrant in the amount of such unpaid sums, together with interest thereon from the date the warrant is issued until the date of payment.

(2) Interest must be computed on a daily basis on the amount of outstanding registration assessment and delinquency fee imposed under RCW 59.30.050 at the rate as computed under RCW 82.32.050(2). The rate so computed must be adjusted on the first day of January of each year for use in computing interest for that calendar year. Interest must be deposited in the business license account created in RCW 19.02.210.

(3) The department may file a copy of the warrant with the clerk of the superior court of any county of the state in which real or personal property of the owner of the manufactured/mobile home community may be found. The clerk is entitled to a filing fee under RCW 36.18.012(10). Upon filing, the clerk must enter in the judgment docket the name of the owner of the manufactured/mobile home community mentioned in the warrant and the amount of the registration assessment and delinquency fee, or portion thereof, and any increases and penalties for which the warrant is issued, and the date when the copy is filed.

(4) The amount of the warrant so docketed becomes a lien upon the title to, and interest in, all real and personal property of the owner of the manufactured/mobile home community against whom the warrant is issued the same as a judgment in a civil case duly docketed in the office of the clerk. The warrant so docketed is sufficient to support the issuance of writs of garnishment in favor of the state in the manner provided by law in the case of judgments wholly or partially unsatisfied.

(5) The lien is not superior to bona fide interests of third persons that had vested prior to the filing of the warrant. The phrase "bona fide interests of third persons" does not include any mortgage of real or personal property or any other credit transaction that results in the mortgagee or the holder of the security acting as trustee for unsecured creditors of the owner of the manufactured/mobile home community mentioned in the warrant who executed the chattel or real property mortgage or the document evidencing the credit transaction. [2013 c 144 § 43; 2011 c 298 § 33.]

~~Purpose—Intent—Agency transfer—Contracting—Effective date—2011~~
c 298: See notes following RCW 19.02.020.