

RCW 77.12.467 Wildlife rehabilitation program—Requirements to receive funding—Reports accounting for all expenditures of state funds—Permitted expenditures—Adoption of rules. (1) The director shall establish a wildlife rehabilitation program to help support the critical role licensed wildlife rehabilitators play in protecting the public by capturing, testing for disease, and caring for sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife in Washington state. The director shall contract for wildlife rehabilitation services with up to four people in each of the department's six administrative regions. Applicants may submit only one request every two years and must reside in the administrative region for which they have applied. The contracts must be for a term of two years.

(2) In order to receive funding, the wildlife rehabilitator must: (a) Be properly licensed in wildlife rehabilitation under state and federal law; and (b) furnish information concerning his or her identity, including fingerprints for submission to the Washington state patrol to include a national criminal background check. The applicant must pay for the cost of the criminal background check. If the background check reveals that the applicant has been convicted of a felony or gross misdemeanor, the applicant is ineligible to receive funding.

(3) The department must require that contractors submit detailed reports accounting for all expenditures of state funds. The reports must be submitted to the department on a quarterly basis. The department may require the contractor to submit to an inspection of the rehabilitation facility to ensure compliance with department rules governing wildlife rehabilitation. Expenditures that are permitted under this program as they specifically relate to wildlife rehabilitation include: (a) Reimbursement for diagnostic and lab support services; (b) purchase and maintenance of proper restraints and equipment used in the capture, transportation, temporary housing, and release of wildlife; (c) reimbursement of contracted veterinary services; (d) reimbursement of the cost of food, medication, and other consumables; and (e) reimbursement of the cost of continuing education. The department shall give priority to applications submitted that provide for the rehabilitation of endangered or threatened species. Funds may not be used to rehabilitate either nonnative species or nuisance animals, or both, including, but not limited to the following: Eastern gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*); opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*); raccoons (*Procyon lotor*); striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*); spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius*); Eastern cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*); domestic rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*); European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*); and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

(4) The department may adopt any rules as are necessary to carry out this section. [2007 c 246 § 4.]

Finding—2007 c 246: "The legislature finds that licensed wildlife rehabilitators often work closely with local law enforcement, animal control officers, wildlife enforcement officers, and wildlife biologists at the state and federal levels to aid in the safe capture, testing for disease, medical treatment, rehabilitation, and release of wildlife. The state recognizes the critical role licensed wildlife rehabilitators play in capturing and caring for the sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife of Washington state." [2007 c 246 § 1.]