

Chapter 79A.45 RCW
SKIING AND COMMERCIAL SKI ACTIVITY

Sections

- 79A.45.010 Ski area sign requirements.
- 79A.45.020 "Trails" or "runs" defined.
- 79A.45.030 Standard of conduct—Prohibited acts—Responsibility.
- 79A.45.040 Skiing outside of trails or boundaries—Notice of skier responsibility.
- 79A.45.050 Leaving scene of skiing accident—Penalty—Notice.
- 79A.45.060 Insurance requirements for operators.
- 79A.45.070 Skiing in an area or trail closed to the public—Penalty.

RCW 79A.45.010 Ski area sign requirements. (1) The operator of any ski area shall maintain a sign system based on international or national standards and as may be required by the state parks and recreation commission.

All signs for instruction of the public shall be bold in design with wording short, simple, and to the point. All such signs shall be prominently placed.

Entrances to all machinery, operators', and attendants' rooms shall be posted to the effect that unauthorized persons are not permitted therein.

The sign "Working on Lift" or a similar warning sign shall be hung on the main disconnect switch and at control points for starting the auxiliary or prime mover when a person is working on the passenger tramway.

(2) All signs required for normal daytime operation shall be in place, and those pertaining to the tramway, lift, or tow operations shall be adequately lighted for night skiing.

(3) If a particular trail or run has been closed to the public by an operator, the operator shall place a notice thereof at the top of the trail or run involved, and no person shall ski on a run or trail which has been designated "Closed".

(4) An operator shall place a notice at the embarking terminal or terminals of a lift or tow which has been closed that the lift or tow has been closed and that a person embarking on such a lift or tow shall be considered to be a trespasser.

(5) Any snow making machines or equipment shall be clearly visible and clearly marked. Snow grooming equipment or any other vehicles shall be equipped with a yellow flashing light at any time the vehicle is moving on or in the vicinity of a ski run; however, low profile vehicles, such as snowmobiles, may be identified in the alternative with a flag on a mast of not less than six feet in height.

(6) The operator of any ski area shall maintain a readily visible sign on each rope tow, wire rope tow, j-bar, t-bar, ski lift, or other similar device, advising the users of the device that:

(a) Any person not familiar with the operation of the lift shall ask the operator thereof for assistance and/or instruction; and

(b) The skiing-ability level recommended for users of the lift and the runs served by the device shall be classified "easiest", "more difficult", and "most difficult". [1991 c 75 § 1; 1989 c 81 § 2; 1977 ex.s. c 139 § 1. Formerly RCW 70.117.010.]

Severability—1989 c 81: See note following RCW 79A.45.020.

RCW 79A.45.020 "Trails" or "runs" defined. As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

"Trails" or "runs" means those trails or runs that have been marked, signed, or designated by the ski area operator as ski trails or ski runs within the ski area boundary. [1989 c 81 § 1. Formerly RCW 70.117.015.]

Severability—1989 c 81: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1989 c 81 § 6.]

RCW 79A.45.030 Standard of conduct—Prohibited acts—Responsibility. (1) In addition to the specific requirements of this section, all skiers shall conduct themselves within the limits of their individual ability and shall not act in a manner that may contribute to the injury of themselves or any other person.

(2) No person shall:

(a) Embark or disembark upon a ski lift except at a designated area;

(b) Throw or expel any object from any tramway, ski lift, commercial skimobile, or other similar device while riding on the device;

(c) Act in any manner while riding on a rope tow, wire rope tow, j-bar, t-bar, ski lift, or similar device that may interfere with the proper or safe operation of the lift or tow;

(d) Wilfully engage in any type of conduct which may injure any person, or place any object in the uphill ski track which may cause another to fall, while traveling uphill on a ski lift; or

(e) Cross the uphill track of a j-bar, t-bar, rope tow, wire rope tow, or other similar device except at designated locations.

(3) Every person shall maintain control of his or her speed and course at all times, and shall stay clear of any snowgrooming equipment, any vehicle, any lift tower, and any other equipment on the mountain.

(4) A person shall be the sole judge of his or her ability to negotiate any trail, run, or uphill track and no action shall be maintained against any operator by reason of the condition of the track, trail, or run unless the condition results from the negligence of the operator.

(5) Any person who boards a rope tow, wire rope tow, j-bar, t-bar, ski lift, or other similar device shall be presumed to have sufficient abilities to use the device. No liability shall attach to any operator or attendant for failure to instruct the person on the use of the device, but a person shall follow any written or verbal instructions that are given regarding the use.

(6) Because of the inherent risks in the sport of skiing all persons using the ski hill shall exercise reasonable care for their own safety. However, the primary duty shall be on the person skiing downhill to avoid any collision with any person or object below him or her.

(7) Any person skiing outside the confines of trails open for skiing or runs open for skiing within the ski area boundary shall be

responsible for any injuries or losses resulting from his or her action.

(8) Any person on foot or on any type of sliding device shall be responsible for any collision whether the collision is with another person or with an object.

(9) A person embarking on a lift or tow without authority shall be considered to be a trespasser. [1989 c 81 § 3; 1977 ex.s. c 139 § 2. Formerly RCW 70.117.020.]

Severability—1989 c 81: See note following RCW 79A.45.020.

RCW 79A.45.040 Skiing outside of trails or boundaries—Notice of skier responsibility. Ski area operators shall place a notice of the provisions of RCW 79A.45.030(7) on their trail maps, at or near the ticket booth, and at the bottom of each ski lift or similar device. [2000 c 11 § 91; 1989 c 81 § 5. Formerly RCW 70.117.025.]

Severability—1989 c 81: See note following RCW 79A.45.020.

RCW 79A.45.050 Leaving scene of skiing accident—Penalty—Notice.

(1) Any person who is involved in a skiing accident and who departs from the scene of the accident without leaving personal identification or otherwise clearly identifying himself or herself before notifying the proper authorities or obtaining assistance, knowing that any other person involved in the accident is in need of medical or other assistance, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) An operator shall place a prominent notice containing the substance of this section in such places as are necessary to notify the public. [1989 c 81 § 4; 1977 ex.s. c 139 § 3. Formerly RCW 70.117.030.]

Severability—1989 c 81: See note following RCW 79A.45.020.

RCW 79A.45.060 Insurance requirements for operators. (1) Every operator of an aerial lift, surface lift, or similar device shall maintain liability insurance of not less than one million dollars per occurrence.

(2) This section shall not apply to operators of tramways that are not open to the general public and that are operated without charge, except that this section shall apply to operators of tramways that are operated by schools, ski clubs, or similar organizations. [2014 c 133 § 6; 1977 ex.s. c 139 § 4. Formerly RCW 70.117.040.]

RCW 79A.45.070 Skiing in an area or trail closed to the public—Penalty. A person is guilty of a misdemeanor if the person knowingly skis in an area or on a ski trail, owned or controlled by a ski area operator, that is closed to the public and that has signs posted indicating the closure. [2011 c 276 § 1.]