

**Chapter 48.18 RCW**  
**THE INSURANCE CONTRACT**

**Sections**

- 48.18.010 Scope of chapter.
- 48.18.020 Power to contract.
- 48.18.030 Insurable interest—Personal insurances—Nonprofit organizations—Rules.
- 48.18.040 Insurable interest—Property insurances.
- 48.18.050 Named insured—Interest insured.
- 48.18.060 Application—Consent—When required.
- 48.18.070 Alteration of application.
- 48.18.080 Application as evidence.
- 48.18.090 Warranties and misrepresentations, effect of.
- 48.18.100 Forms of policies—Filing, certification, and approval—Exceptions.
- 48.18.103 Forms of commercial property casualty policies—Legislative intent—Issuance prior to filing—Disapproval by commissioner—Definition.
- 48.18.110 Grounds for disapproval.
- 48.18.120 Standard forms.
- 48.18.125 Loss payable and mortgagee clauses for property and automobile physical damage insurances—Requirement to use adopted forms.
- 48.18.130 Standard provisions.
- 48.18.140 Contents of policies in general.
- 48.18.150 Additional contents.
- 48.18.160 Charter or bylaw provisions.
- 48.18.170 "Premium" defined.
- 48.18.180 Stated premium must include all charges.
- 48.18.190 Policy must contain entire contract.
- 48.18.200 Limiting actions, jurisdiction.
- 48.18.210 Execution of policies.
- 48.18.220 Receipt of premium to bind coverage—Contents of receipt.
- 48.18.230 Binders—Duration—Premium.
- 48.18.240 Binders—Insurance producer's or title insurance agent's liability.
- 48.18.250 Underwriters' and combination policies.
- 48.18.260 Delivery of policy.
- 48.18.278 Terms for cancellation, nonrenewal, or modification of portable electronics policy—Application of RCW 48.18.290 and 48.18.2901 to portable electronics insurance.
- 48.18.280 Renewal of policy.
- 48.18.289 Cancellation, nonrenewal, renewal offer—Notice to insurance producer or title insurance agent.
- 48.18.290 Cancellation by insurer.
- 48.18.2901 Renewal required—Exceptions.
- 48.18.291 Cancellation of private automobile insurance by insurer—Notice—Requirements.
- 48.18.292 Refusal to renew private automobile insurance by insurer—Change in amount of premium or deductibles.
- 48.18.293 Nonliability of commissioner, agents, insurer for information giving reasons for cancellation or refusal to renew—Proof of mailing of notice.

48.18.295 RCW 48.18.290 through 48.18.297 not to prevent  
cancellation or nonrenewal, when.

48.18.296 Contracts to which RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297  
inapplicable.

48.18.297 Private passenger automobile defined.

48.18.298 Disability insurance—Refusal to renew by insurer.

48.18.299 Disability insurance—Cancellation by insurer.

48.18.300 Cancellation by insured.

48.18.310 Cancellation by commissioner.

48.18.320 Annulment of liability policies.

48.18.340 Dividends payable to real party in interest.

48.18.350 Breach of warranty prior to loss—Effect.

48.18.360 Assignment of policies—Life and disability.

48.18.370 Payment discharges insurer—Life and disability.

48.18.375 Assignment of interests under group insurance policy.

48.18.390 Simultaneous deaths—Payment of proceeds—Life insurance.

48.18.400 Exemption of proceeds—Disability.

48.18.410 Exemption of proceeds—Life.

48.18.420 Exemption of proceeds—Group life.

48.18.430 Exemption of proceeds, commutation—Annuities.

48.18.440 Spouse's rights in life insurance policy.

48.18.450 Life insurance payable to trustee named as beneficiary in  
the policy.

48.18.452 Life insurance designating as beneficiary a trustee named  
by will.

48.18.460 Proof of loss—Furnishing forms—May require oath.

48.18.470 Claims administration—Not waiver.

48.18.480 Discrimination prohibited.

48.18.510 Validity of noncomplying forms.

48.18.520 Construction of policies.

48.18.540 Cancellations, denials, refusals to renew—Written  
notification.

48.18.543 Single premium credit insurance—Residential mortgage  
loan—Restrictions—Definitions.

48.18.545 Underwriting restrictions that apply to personal  
insurance—Credit history or insurance score—Rules.

48.18.547 Underwriting restrictions that apply to medical  
malpractice insurance—Rules.

48.18.550 Victims of domestic abuse—Prohibition on certain  
cancellations, denials, refusals to renew, and  
different rates—Domestic abuse defined.

48.18.553 Victims of hate crime offenses—Restrictions of  
underwriting actions—Definitions.

48.18.555 Property insurance—Actions resulting from arson or  
malicious mischief—Definitions.

48.18.558 Property insurers—Assistance to prevent or reduce  
severity of claims or losses—Prior approval of  
commissioner—Pilot program permitted.

48.18.559 Property insurers—Rules addressing assistance to prevent  
or reduce severity of claims or losses.

48.18.565 Homeowner's insurance—Foster parent.

48.18.570 Life insurance—Lawful travel destinations.

48.18.580 Employer-owned life insurance—Requirements.

48.18.583 Employer-owned life insurance—Application to policies.

- 48.18.586 Employer-owned life insurance—Rules.
- 48.18.600 Usage-based insurance—Restrictions on information collected.
- 48.18.610 Customer satisfaction benefits.
- 48.18.900 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.

*Exemptions of proceeds of insurance on exempt property: RCW 6.15.030.*

*False claims or proof: RCW 48.30.230.*

*Misrepresentation in application: RCW 48.30.210.*

**RCW 48.18.010 Scope of chapter.** This chapter applies to insurances other than ocean marine and foreign trade insurances. [2005 c 337 § 2; 1947 c 79 § .18.01; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.01.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** See note following RCW 48.18.030.

**RCW 48.18.020 Power to contract.** (1) Any person eighteen years or older shall be considered of full legal age and may contract for or with respect to insurance. Any person seventeen years or younger shall be considered a minor for purposes of Title 48 RCW.

(2) A minor not less than fifteen years of age as at nearest birthday may, notwithstanding such minority, contract for life or disability insurance on his or her own life or body, for his or her own benefit or for the benefit of his or her father, mother, spouse, child, brother, sister, or grandparent, and may exercise all rights and powers with respect to or under the contract as though of full legal age, and may surrender his or her interest therein and give a valid discharge for any benefit accruing or money payable thereunder. The minor shall not, by reason of his minority, be entitled to rescind, avoid, or repudiate the contract, or any exercise of a right or privilege thereunder, except, that such minor, not otherwise emancipated, shall not be bound by any unperformed agreement to pay, by promissory note or otherwise any premium on any such insurance contract. [2009 c 549 § 7064; 1973 1st ex.s. c 163 § 2; 1970 ex.s. c 17 § 4; 1947 c 79 § .18.02; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.02.]

**RCW 48.18.030 Insurable interest—Personal insurances—Nonprofit organizations—Rules.** (1) Any individual of competent legal capacity may insure his or her own life or body for the benefit of any person. A person may not insure the life or body of another individual unless the benefits under the contract are payable to the individual insured or the individual's personal representative, or to a person having, at the time when the contract was made, an insurable interest in the individual insured.

(2) If the beneficiary, assignee or other payee under any contract made in violation of this section receives from the insurer any benefits accruing upon the death, disability, or injury of the individual insured, the individual insured or the individual's executor or administrator may maintain an action to recover any benefits from the person receiving them.

(3) (a) "Insurable interest" as used in this section and in RCW 48.18.060 includes only the following interests:

(i) In the case of individuals related closely by blood or by law, a substantial interest engendered by love and affection; and

(ii) In the case of other persons, a lawful and substantial economic interest in having the life, health, or bodily safety of the individual insured continue, as distinguished from an interest that would arise only by, or would be enhanced in value by, the death, disability, or injury of the individual insured.

(b) An individual who is party to a contract or option for the purchase or sale of an interest in a business partnership or firm, or of shares of stock of a close corporation or of an interest in those shares, has an insurable interest in the life of each individual party to the contract and for the purposes of that contract only, in addition to any insurable interest that may otherwise exist as to the life of such individual.

(c) A guardian, trustee, or other fiduciary has an insurable interest in the life of any person for whose benefit the fiduciary holds property, and in the life of any other individual in whose life the person has an insurable interest.

(d) Subject to rules adopted under subsection (4) of this section, upon joint application with a nonprofit organization for, or transfer to a nonprofit organization of, an insurance policy on the life of a person naming the organization as owner and beneficiary, a nonprofit organization's interest in the life of a person if:

(i) The nonprofit organization was established exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, or to promote amateur athletic competition, to conduct testing for public safety, or to prevent cruelty to children or animals; and

(ii) The nonprofit organization:

(A) Has existed for a minimum of five years; or

(B) Has been issued a certificate of exemption to conduct a charitable gift annuity business under RCW 48.38.010, or is authorized to conduct a charitable gift annuity business under RCW 28B.10.485; or

(C) Has been organized, and at all times has been operated, exclusively for benefit of, to perform the functions of, or to carry out the purposes of one or more nonprofit organizations described in (d) (ii) (A) or (B) of this subsection and is operated, supervised, or controlled by or in connection with one or more of those nonprofit organizations; and

(iii) For a joint application, the person is not an employee, officer, or director of the organization who receives significant compensation from the organization and who became affiliated with the organization in that capacity less than one year before the joint application.

(4) The commissioner may adopt rules governing joint applications for, and transfers of, life insurance under subsection (3) (d) of this section. The rules may include:

(a) Standards for full and fair disclosure that set forth the manner, content, and required disclosure for the sale of life insurance issued under subsection (3) (d) of this section; and

(b) For joint applications, a grace period of thirty days during which the insured person may direct the nonprofit organization to return the policy and the insurer to refund any premium paid to the party that, directly or indirectly, paid the premium; and

(c) Standards for granting an exemption from the five-year existence requirement of subsection (3) (d) (ii) (A) of this section to a

private foundation that files with the insurance commissioner documents, stipulations, and information as the insurance commissioner may require to carry out the purpose of subsection (3)(d) of this section.

(5) Nothing in this section permits the personal representative of the insured's estate to recover the proceeds of a policy on the life of a deceased insured person that was applied for jointly by, or transferred to, an organization covered by subsection (3)(d) of this section, where the organization was named owner and beneficiary of the policy.

This subsection applies to all life insurance policies applied for by, or transferred to, an organization covered by subsection (3)(d) of this section, regardless of the time of application or transfer and regardless of whether the organization would have been covered at the time of application or transfer. [2005 c 337 § 3; 1992 c 51 § 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 89 § 3; 1947 c 79 § .18.03; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.03.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** "The legislature finds that there is a long-standing principle that corporations have an insurable interest in the lives of key personnel. Nationally, some corporations have begun to insure the lives of personnel that have not met the insurable interest standard of Washington. Entry-level workers have been insured by their corporate employer for the benefit of the corporate employer. The legislature intends to clarify this subject and preclude corporations from insuring the lives of employees when the employees are not key personnel and the corporations have no insurable interest in the lives of those employees." [2005 c 337 § 1.]

*Use of trust funds by fiduciaries for life insurance: RCW 11.110.120.*

**RCW 48.18.040 Insurable interest—Property insurances.** (1) No contract of insurance on property or of any interest therein or arising therefrom shall be enforceable except for the benefit of persons having an insurable interest in the things insured.

(2) "Insurable interest" as used in this section means any lawful and substantial economic interest in the safety or preservation of the subject of the insurance free from loss, destruction, or pecuniary damage. [1947 c 79 § .18.04; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.04.]

**RCW 48.18.050 Named insured—Interest insured.** When the name of a person intended to be insured is specified in the policy, such insurance can be applied only to his or her own proper interest. This section shall not apply to life and disability insurances. [2009 c 549 § 7065; 1947 c 79 § .18.05; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.05.]

**RCW 48.18.060 Application—Consent—When required.** A life or disability insurance contract upon an individual may not be made or take effect unless at the time the contract is made the individual insured applies for or consents to the contract in writing, except in the following cases:

(1) A spouse may insure the life of the other spouse.

(2) Any person having an insurable interest in the life of a minor, or any person upon whom a minor is dependent for support and maintenance, may insure the life of the minor.

(3) A contract of group or blanket disability insurance may be effectuated upon an individual.

(4) A contract of group life insurance may be effectuated upon an individual, except as otherwise provided in RCW 48.18.580. [2005 c 337 § 5; 1947 c 79 § .18.06; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.06.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** See note following RCW 48.18.030.

**RCW 48.18.070 Alteration of application.** (1) Any application for insurance in writing by the applicant shall be altered solely by the applicant or by his or her written consent, except that insertions may be made by the insurer for administrative purposes only in such manner as to indicate clearly that such insertions are not to be ascribed to the applicant. Violation of this provision shall be a misdemeanor.

(2) Any insurer issuing an insurance contract upon such an application unlawfully altered by its officer, employee, or agent shall not have available in any action arising out of such contract, any defense which is based upon the fact of such alteration, or as to any item in the application which was so altered. [2009 c 549 § 7066; 1947 c 79 § .18.07; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.07.]

**RCW 48.18.080 Application as evidence.** (1) No application for the issuance of any insurance policy or contract shall be admissible in evidence in any action relative to such policy or contract, unless a true copy of the application was attached to or otherwise made a part of the policy when issued and delivered. This provision shall not apply to policies or contracts of industrial life insurance.

(2) If any policy of life or disability insurance delivered in this state is reinstated or renewed, and the insured or the beneficiary or assignee of the policy makes written request to the insurer for a copy of the application, if any, for such reinstatement or renewal, the insurer shall, within fifteen days after receipt of such request at its home office or at any of its branch offices, deliver or mail to the person making such request, a copy of such application. If such copy is not so delivered or mailed, the insurer shall be precluded from introducing the application as evidence in any action or proceeding based upon or involving the policy or its reinstatement or renewal. [1947 c 79 § .18.08; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.08.]

**RCW 48.18.090 Warranties and misrepresentations, effect of.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, no oral or written misrepresentation or warranty made in the negotiation of an insurance contract, by the insured or in his or her behalf, shall be deemed material or defeat or avoid the contract or prevent it attaching, unless the misrepresentation or warranty is made with the intent to deceive.

(2) In any application for life or disability insurance made in writing by the insured, all statements therein made by the insured

shall, in the absence of fraud, be deemed representations and not warranties. The falsity of any such statement shall not bar the right to recovery under the contract unless such false statement was made with actual intent to deceive or unless it materially affected either the acceptance of the risk or the hazard assumed by the insurer. [2009 c 549 § 7067; 1947 c 79 § .18.09; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.09.]

**RCW 48.18.100 Forms of policies—Filing, certification, and approval—Exceptions.**

(1) No insurance policy form or application form where written application is required and is to be attached to the policy, or printed life or disability rider or endorsement form may be issued, delivered, or used unless it has been filed with and approved by the commissioner. This section does not apply to:

- (a) Surety bond forms;
- (b) Forms filed under RCW 48.18.103;
- (c) Forms exempted from filing requirements by the commissioner under RCW 48.18.103;
- (d) Manuscript policies, riders, or endorsements of unique character designed for and used with relation to insurance upon a particular subject;
- (e) Contracts of insurance procured under the provisions of chapter 48.15 RCW; or
- (f) Forms filed under the requirements of RCW 48.43.733.

(2) Every such filing containing a certification, in a form approved by the commissioner, by either the chief executive officer of the insurer or by an actuary who is a member of the American academy of actuaries, attesting that the filing complies with Title 48 RCW and Title 284 of the Washington Administrative Code, may be used by the insurer immediately after filing with the commissioner. The commissioner may order an insurer to cease using a certified form upon the grounds set forth in RCW 48.18.110. This subsection does not apply to certain types of policy forms designated by the commissioner by rule.

(3) Except as provided in RCW 48.18.103 and 48.43.733, every filing that does not contain a certification pursuant to subsection (2) of this section must be made not less than thirty days in advance of issuance, delivery, or use. At the expiration of the thirty days, the filed form shall be deemed approved unless prior thereto it has been affirmatively approved or disapproved by order of the commissioner. The commissioner may extend by not more than an additional fifteen days the period within which he or she may affirmatively approve or disapprove any form, by giving notice of the extension before expiration of the initial thirty-day period. At the expiration of the period that has been extended, and in the absence of prior affirmative approval or disapproval, the form shall be deemed approved. The commissioner may withdraw any approval at any time for cause. By approval of any form for immediate use, the commissioner may waive any unexpired portion of the initial thirty-day waiting period.

(4) The commissioner's order disapproving any form or withdrawing a previous approval must state the grounds for disapproval.

(5) No form may knowingly be issued or delivered as to which the commissioner's approval does not then exist.

(6) The commissioner may, by rule, exempt from the requirements of this section any class or type of insurance policy forms if filing

and approval is not desirable or necessary for the protection of the public.

(7) Every member or subscriber to a rating organization must adhere to the form filings made on its behalf by the organization. Deviations from the organization are permitted only when filed with the commissioner in accordance with this chapter.

(8) Medical malpractice insurance form filings are subject to the provisions of this section.

(9) Variable contract forms; disability insurance policy forms; individual life insurance policy forms; life insurance policy illustration forms; industrial life insurance contract, individual medicare supplement insurance policy, and long-term care insurance policy forms, which are amended solely to comply with the changes in nomenclature required by RCW 48.18A.035, 48.20.013, 48.20.042, 48.20.072, 48.23.380, 48.23A.040, 48.23A.070, 48.25.140, 48.66.120, and 48.76.090 are exempt from this section. [2015 c 19 § 2; 2008 c 217 § 12; 2006 c 8 § 214; 2005 c 223 § 8; 1997 c 428 § 3; 1989 c 25 § 1; 1982 c 181 § 16; 1947 c 79 § .18.10; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.10.]

**Intent—2015 c 19:** "It is the intent of the legislature to enhance competition and create regulatory uniformity in the filing requirements for group health benefit plans other than small group plans, as well as stand-alone dental plan and stand-alone vision plan rates and forms in order to increase competition among carriers and provide a more competitive market for these products." [2015 c 19 § 1.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings and subheadings not law—Severability—2006 c 8:** See notes following RCW 5.64.010.

**Effective date—1989 c 25:** "This act shall take effect on September 1, 1989." [1989 c 25 § 10.]

**Severability—1982 c 181:** See note following RCW 48.03.010.

*Format of disability policies: RCW 48.20.012.*

**RCW 48.18.103 Forms of commercial property casualty policies—Legislative intent—Issuance prior to filing—Disapproval by commissioner—Definition.**

(1) It is the intent of the legislature to assist the purchasers of commercial property casualty insurance by allowing policies to be issued more expeditiously and provide a more competitive market for forms.

(2) Commercial property casualty policies may be issued prior to filing the forms.

(3) All commercial property casualty forms must be filed with the commissioner within thirty days after an insurer issues any policy using them. This subsection does not apply to:

(a) Types or classes of forms that the commissioner exempts from filing by rule; and

(b) Manuscript policies, riders, or endorsements of unique character designed for and used with relation to insurance upon a particular subject.

(4) If, within thirty days after a commercial property casualty form has been filed, the commissioner finds that the form does not meet the requirements of this chapter, the commissioner shall disapprove the form and give notice to the insurer or rating organization that made the filing, specifying how the form fails to meet the requirements and stating when, within a reasonable period thereafter, the form shall be deemed no longer effective. The commissioner may extend the time for review an additional fifteen days by giving notice to the insurer prior to the expiration of the original thirty-day period.

(5) Upon a final determination of a disapproval of a policy form under subsection (4) of this section, the insurer must amend any previously issued disapproved form by endorsement to comply with the commissioner's disapproval.

(6) For purposes of this section, "commercial property casualty" means insurance pertaining to a business, profession, occupation, nonprofit organization, or public entity for the lines of property and casualty insurance defined in RCW 48.11.040, 48.11.050, 48.11.060, or 48.11.070, but does not mean medical malpractice insurance or portable electronics insurance as defined in RCW 48.120.005.

(7) Except as provided in subsection (5) of this section, the disapproval shall not affect any contract made or issued prior to the expiration of the period set forth in the notice of disapproval.

(8) Every member or subscriber to a rating organization must adhere to the form filings made on its behalf by the organization. An insurer may deviate from forms filed on its behalf by an organization only if the insurer files the forms with the commissioner in accordance with this chapter.

(9) In the event a hearing is held on the actions of the commissioner under subsection (4) of this section, the burden of proof shall be on the commissioner. [2013 c 152 § 1; 2006 c 8 § 215; 2005 c 223 § 9; 2003 c 248 § 4; 1997 c 428 § 1.]

**Findings—Intent—Part headings and subheadings not law—Severability—2006 c 8:** See notes following RCW 5.64.010.

**RCW 48.18.110 Grounds for disapproval.** (1) The commissioner shall disapprove any such form of policy, application, rider, or endorsement, or withdraw any previous approval thereof, only:

(a) If it is in any respect in violation of or does not comply with this code or any applicable order or regulation of the commissioner issued pursuant to the code; or

(b) If it does not comply with any controlling filing theretofore made and approved; or

(c) If it contains or incorporates by reference any inconsistent, ambiguous or misleading clauses, or exceptions and conditions which unreasonably or deceptively affect the risk purported to be assumed in the general coverage of the contract; or

(d) If it has any title, heading, or other indication of its provisions which is misleading; or

(e) If purchase of insurance thereunder is being solicited by deceptive advertising.

(2) In addition to the grounds for disapproval of any such form as provided in subsection (1) of this section, the commissioner may disapprove any form of disability insurance policy if the benefits provided therein are unreasonable in relation to the premium charged. Rates, or any modification of rates effective on or after July 1, 2008, for individual health benefit plans may not be used until sixty days after they are filed with the commissioner. If the commissioner does not disapprove a rate filing within sixty days after the insurer has filed the documents required in RCW 48.20.025(2) and any rules adopted pursuant thereto, the filing shall be deemed approved. [2008 c 303 § 1; 2000 c 79 § 2; 1985 c 264 § 9; 1982 c 181 § 9; 1947 c 79 § .18.11; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.11.]

**Effective date—Severability—2000 c 79:** See notes following RCW 48.04.010.

**Severability—1982 c 181:** See note following RCW 48.03.010.

**RCW 48.18.120 Standard forms.** (1) The commissioner shall, after hearing, from time to time promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to define and effect reasonable uniformity in all basic contracts of fire insurance which are commonly known as the standard form fire policies and may be so referred to in this code, and the usual supplemental coverages, riders, or endorsements thereon or thereto, to the end that such definitions shall be applied in the construction of the various sections of this code wherein such terms are used and that there be a reasonable concurrency of contract where two or more insurers insure the same subject and risk. All such forms heretofore approved by the commissioner and for use as of immediately prior to the effective date of this code, may continue to be so used until the further order of the commissioner made pursuant to this subsection or pursuant to any other provision of this code.

(2) The commissioner may from time to time, after hearing, promulgate such rules and regulations as he or she deems necessary to establish reasonable minimum standard conditions and terminology for basic benefits to be provided by disability insurance contracts which are subject to chapters 48.20 and 48.21 RCW, for the purpose of expediting his or her approval of such contracts pursuant to this code. No such promulgation shall be inconsistent with standard provisions as required pursuant to RCW 48.18.130, nor contain requirements inconsistent with requirements relative to the same benefit provision as formulated or approved by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. [2009 c 549 § 7068; 1957 c 193 § 10; 1947 c 79 § .18.12; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.12.]

**RCW 48.18.125 Loss payable and mortgagee clauses for property and automobile physical damage insurances—Requirement to use adopted forms.** The commissioner is hereby authorized, and shall within a reasonable time following July 30, 1967, adopt standard forms for loss payable and mortgagee clauses for property and automobile physical damage insurances, pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 48.18.120(1). Following the adoption of such forms, no insurer authorized to do business in the state shall use any form other than those so adopted. [1967 ex.s. c 12 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.130 Standard provisions.** (1) Insurance contracts shall contain such standard provisions as are required by the applicable chapters of this code pertaining to contracts of particular kinds of insurance. The commissioner may waive the required use of a particular standard provision in a particular insurance contract form if

(a) he or she finds such provision unnecessary for the protection of the insured, and inconsistent with the purposes of the contract, and

(b) the contract is otherwise approved by him or her.

(2) No insurance contract shall contain any provision inconsistent with or contradictory to any such standard provision used or required to be used, but the commissioner may, except as to the standard provisions of individual disability insurance contracts as required under chapter 48.20 RCW, approve any provision which is in his or her opinion more favorable to the insured than the standard provision or optional standard provision otherwise required. No endorsement, rider, or other documents attached to such contract shall vary, extend, or in any respect conflict with any such standard provision, or with any modification thereof so approved by the commissioner as being more favorable to the insured.

(3) In lieu of the standard provisions required by this code for contracts for particular kinds of insurance, substantially similar standard provisions required by the law of a foreign or alien insurer's domicile may be used when approved by the commissioner. [2009 c 549 § 7069; 1947 c 79 § .18.13; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.13.]

*Standard provisions*

*disability: Chapter 48.20 RCW.*

*group and blanket disability: Chapter 48.21 RCW.*

*group life and annuities: Chapter 48.24 RCW.*

*industrial life: Chapter 48.25 RCW.*

*life insurance and annuities: Chapter 48.23 RCW.*

**RCW 48.18.140 Contents of policies in general.** (1) The written instrument, in which a contract of insurance is set forth, is the policy.

(2) A policy shall specify:

(a) The names of the parties to the contract. The insurer's name shall be clearly shown in the policy.

(b) The subject of the insurance.

(c) The risk insured against.

(d) The time at which the insurance thereunder takes effect and the period during which the insurance is to continue.

(e) A statement of the premium, and if other than life, disability, or title insurance, the premium rate where applicable.

(f) The conditions pertaining to the insurance.

(3) If under the contract the exact amount of premiums is determinable only at termination of the contract, a statement of the basis and rates upon which the final premium is to be determined and paid shall be specified in the policy.

(4) (a) Periodic payment plans for private passenger automobile insurance shall allow a specific day of the month for a due date for payment of premiums. A late charge may not be required if payment is received within five days of the date payment is due.

(b) The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement this subsection and shall take no disciplinary action against an insurer until ninety days after the effective date of the rule.

(5) This section shall not apply to surety insurance contracts. [2002 c 344 § 1; 1989 c 25 § 2; 1957 c 193 § 11; 1947 c 79 § .18.14; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.14.]

**Effective date—1989 c 25:** See note following RCW 48.18.100.

**RCW 48.18.150 Additional contents.** A policy may contain additional provisions, which are not inconsistent with this code, and which are

(1) required to be so inserted by the laws of the insurer's state of domicile; or

(2) necessary, on account of the manner in which the insurer is constituted or operated, to state the rights and obligations of the parties to the contract. [1947 c 79 § .18.15; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.15.]

**RCW 48.18.160 Charter or bylaw provisions.** No policy shall contain any provision purporting to make any portion of the charter, bylaws, or other constituent document of the insurer a part of the contract unless such portion is set forth in full in the policy. Any policy provision in violation of this section shall be invalid. [1947 c 79 § .18.16; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.16.]

**RCW 48.18.170 "Premium" defined.** "Premium" as used in this code means all sums charged, received, or deposited as consideration for an insurance contract or the continuance thereof. "Premium" does not include a regulatory surcharge imposed by RCW 48.02.190, except as otherwise provided in this section. Any assessment, or any "membership," "policy," "survey," "inspection," "service" or similar fee or charge made by the insurer in consideration for an insurance contract is deemed part of the premium. [2007 c 153 § 1; 1947 c 79 § .18.17; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.17.]

**RCW 48.18.180 Stated premium must include all charges.** (1) The premium stated in the policy shall be inclusive of all fees, charges, premiums, or other consideration charged for the insurance or for the procurement thereof.

(2) No insurer or its officer, employee, appointed insurance producer, or other representative shall charge or receive any fee, compensation, or consideration for insurance which is not included in the premium specified in the policy.

(3) Each violation of this section is a gross misdemeanor.

(4) This section does not apply to:

(a) A fee paid to an insurance producer by an insured as provided in RCW 48.17.270; or

(b) A regulatory surcharge imposed by RCW 48.02.190. [2008 c 217 § 13; 2007 c 153 § 2; 1994 c 203 § 2; 1947 c 79 § .18.18; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.18.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**RCW 48.18.190 Policy must contain entire contract.** No agreement in conflict with, modifying, or extending any contract of insurance shall be valid unless in writing and made a part of the policy. [1947 c 79 § .18.19; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.19.]

**RCW 48.18.200 Limiting actions, jurisdiction.** (1) Except as provided by subsection (3) of this section, no insurance contract delivered or issued for delivery in this state and covering subjects located, resident, or to be performed in this state, shall contain any condition, stipulation, or agreement

(a) requiring it to be construed according to the laws of any other state or country except as necessary to meet the requirements of the motor vehicle financial responsibility laws of such other state or country; or

(b) depriving the courts of this state of the jurisdiction of action against the insurer; or

(c) limiting right of action against the insurer to a period of less than one year from the time when the cause of action accrues in connection with all insurances other than property and marine and transportation insurances. In contracts of property insurance, or of marine and transportation insurance, such limitation shall not be to a period of less than one year from the date of the loss.

(2) Any such condition, stipulation, or agreement in violation of this section shall be void, but such voiding shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of the contract.

(3) For purposes of out-of-network payment disputes between a health carrier and health care provider covered under the provisions of chapter 48.49 RCW, the arbitration provisions of chapter 48.49 RCW apply. [2019 c 427 § 29; 1947 c 79 § .18.20; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.20.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 427:** See RCW 48.49.003 and 48.49.900.

**RCW 48.18.210 Execution of policies.** (1) Every insurance contract shall be executed in the name of and on behalf of the insurer by its officer, employee, or representative duly authorized by the insurer.

(2) A facsimile signature of any such executing officer, employee or representative may be used in lieu of an original signature.

(3) No insurance contract heretofore or hereafter issued and which is otherwise valid shall be rendered invalid by reason of the apparent execution thereof on behalf of the insurer by the imprinted facsimile signature of any individual not authorized so to execute as of the date of the policy, if the policy is countersigned with the original signature of an individual then so authorized to countersign. [1947 c 79 § .18.21; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.21.]

**RCW 48.18.220 Receipt of premium to bind coverage—Contents of receipt.** Where an insurance producer, title insurance agent, or other representative of an insurer receives premium money at the time that the insurance producer, title insurance agent, or representative purports to bind coverage, the receipt shall state: (a) That it is a binder, (b) a brief description of the coverage bound, and (c) the identity of the insurer in which the coverage is bound. This section does not apply as to life and disability insurances. [2008 c 217 § 14; 1967 ex.s. c 12 § 2.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**RCW 48.18.230 Binders—Duration—Premium.** (1) A "binder" is used to bind insurance temporarily pending the issuance of the policy. No binder shall be valid beyond the issuance of the policy as to which it was given, or beyond ninety days from its effective date, whichever period is the shorter.

(2) If the policy has not been issued a binder may be extended or renewed beyond such ninety days upon the commissioner's written approval, or in accordance with such rules and regulations relative thereto as the commissioner may promulgate.

(3) Where the premium used in the binder differs from the actual policy premium by less than ten dollars, the insurer shall not be required to notify the insured and may use the actual policy premium. [1996 c 95 § 1; 1947 c 79 § .18.23; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.23.]

**RCW 48.18.240 Binders—Insurance producer's or title insurance agent's liability.** The commissioner may suspend or revoke the license of any insurance producer or title insurance agent issuing or purporting to issue any binder as to any insurer named therein as to which he or she is not then authorized so to bind. [2008 c 217 § 15; 1947 c 79 § .18.24; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.24.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**RCW 48.18.250 Underwriters' and combination policies.** (1) Two or more authorized insurers may jointly issue, and shall be jointly and severally liable on, an underwriters' policy bearing their names. Any one insurer may issue policies in the name of an underwriter's department and such policies shall plainly show the true name of the insurer.

(2) Two or more authorized insurers may, with the commissioner's approval, issue a combination policy which shall contain provisions substantially as follows:

(a) That the insurers executing the policy shall be severally liable for the full amount of any loss or damage, according to the terms of the policy, or for specified percentages or amounts thereof, aggregating the full amount of insurance under the policy.

(b) That service of process, or of any notice or proof of loss required by such policy, upon any of the insurers executing the policy, shall constitute service upon all such insurers.

(3) This section shall not apply to co-surety obligations. [1947 c 79 § .18.25; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.25.]

**RCW 48.18.260 Delivery of policy.** (1) Subject to the insurer's requirements as to payment of premium, every policy shall be delivered to the insured or to the person entitled thereto within a reasonable period of time after its issuance.

(2) In event the original policy is delivered or is so required to be delivered to or for deposit with any vendor, mortgagee, or pledgee of any motor vehicle or aircraft, and in which policy any interest of the vendee, mortgagor, or pledgor in or with reference to such vehicle or aircraft is insured, a duplicate of such policy, or memorandum thereof setting forth the type of coverage, limits of liability, premiums for the respective coverages, and duration of the policy, shall be delivered by the vendor, mortgagee, or pledgee to each such vendee, mortgagor, or pledgor named in the policy or coming within the group of persons designated in the policy to be so included. If the policy does not provide coverage of legal liability for injury to persons or damage to the property of third parties, a conspicuous statement of such fact shall be printed, written, or stamped on the face of such duplicate policy or memorandum. [1947 c 79 § .18.26; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.26.]

*Vehicle seller must furnish buyer itemized statement of insurance and other charges: RCW 46.70.130.*

**RCW 48.18.278 Terms for cancellation, nonrenewal, or modification of portable electronics policy—Application of RCW 48.18.290 and 48.18.2901 to portable electronics insurance.** (1) The cancellation provisions in RCW 48.18.290 and the nonrenewal provisions in RCW 48.18.2901 apply to portable electronics insurance policies issued under chapter 48.120 RCW, unless inconsistent with this section in which case this section controls.

(2) An insurer may cancel, nonrenew, modify, or otherwise change the terms and conditions of a policy of portable electronics only:

(a) Upon providing the policyholder and enrolled customers with at least thirty days' notice; or

(b) As provided in subsections (5) through (7) of this section.

(3) An insurer may not increase premiums or deductibles or otherwise restrict benefits more than once in any six-month period.

(4) If an insurer changes the terms and conditions, then the insurer must provide:

(a) The vendor policyholder with a revised policy endorsement; and

(b) Each enrolled customer with:

(i) A revised certificate or endorsement and a summary of material changes; or

(ii) If the change is limited to a change in premium, a revised certificate, endorsement, updated brochure, or other evidence indicating a change in premium.

(5) An insurer may terminate an enrolled customer's enrollment under a portable electronics insurance policy upon fifteen days' notice for discovery of fraud or material misrepresentation in obtaining coverage or in the presentation of a claim.

(6) An insurer may terminate an enrolled customer's enrollment under a portable electronics insurance policy upon ten days' notice for nonpayment of premium.

(7) An insurer may immediately terminate an enrolled customer's enrollment under a portable electronics insurance policy:

(a) Without notice, if the enrolled customer ceases to have an active service with the vendor of portable electronics; or

(b) Without prior notice if an enrolled customer exhausts the aggregate limit of liability, if any, under the terms of the portable electronics insurance policy and the insurer sends notice of termination to the enrolled customer within thirty calendar days after exhaustion of the limit. However, if notice is not timely sent, coverage continues notwithstanding the aggregate limit of liability until the insurer sends notice of termination to the enrolled customer.

(8) If a policy of portable electronics insurance is being canceled or terminated by the insurer, the notice must include the insurer's actual reason for cancellation or termination.

(9) When a portable electronics insurance policy is terminated by a policyholder, the insurer must mail or deliver written notice to each enrolled customer advising the enrolled customer of the termination of the policy and the effective date of termination. The written notice must be mailed or delivered to the enrolled customer at least thirty days prior to the termination. The written notice must include the actual reason for the termination. However, if the policyholder is a vendor licensed as a specialty producer pursuant to RCW 48.120.010, the notice required by this subsection must be mailed or delivered by the vendor.

(10) Any notice or correspondence with respect to a policy of portable electronics insurance required under this section or otherwise required by law must be in writing. Notice or correspondence may be sent either by mail or by electronic means. If the notice or correspondence is mailed, it must be sent to the vendor of portable electronics at the vendor's mailing address specified for that purpose and to its affected enrolled customers' last known mailing addresses on file with the insurer.

The insurer or vendor of portable electronics must maintain proof of mailing in a form authorized or accepted by the United States postal service or other commercial mail delivery service. If a notice or correspondence is sent by electronic means, it must be sent to the vendor of portable electronics at the vendor's electronic mail address specified for that purpose and to its affected enrolled customers' last known electronic mail address as provided by each enrolled customer to the insurer or vendor of portable electronics, as the case may be.

For purposes of this subsection, an enrolled customer's provision of an electronic mail address to the insurer, supervising person, or vendor of portable electronics means that the enrolled customer consents to receive notices and correspondence by electronic mail as long as a disclosure to that effect is provided to the consumer at the time the consumer provides an electronic mail address. The insurer or vendor of portable electronics, as the case may be, must maintain proof that the notice or correspondence was sent.

(11) Notice or correspondence required by this section or otherwise required by law may be sent by the supervising person appointed by the insurer on behalf of an insurer or a vendor. [2013 c 152 § 8.]

**RCW 48.18.280 Renewal of policy.** Any insurance policy terminating by its terms at a specified expiration date and not otherwise renewable, may be renewed or extended at the option of the insurer and upon a currently authorized policy form and at the premium rate then required therefor for a specific additional period or periods by a certificate or by endorsement of the policy, and without requiring the issuance of a new policy. [1947 c 79 § .18.28; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.28.]

**RCW 48.18.289 Cancellation, nonrenewal, renewal offer—Notice to insurance producer or title insurance agent.** Whenever a notice of cancellation or nonrenewal or an offer to renew is furnished to an insured in accord with any provision of this chapter, a copy of such notice or offer shall be provided within five working days to the insurance producer or title insurance agent on the account. When possible, the copy to the insurance producer or title insurance agent may be provided electronically. [2008 c 217 § 16; 2000 c 220 § 1; 1988 c 249 § 1; 1987 c 14 § 1.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**Effective date—1988 c 249:** "This act shall take effect September 1, 1988." [1988 c 249 § 4.]

**RCW 48.18.290 Cancellation by insurer.** (1) Cancellation by the insurer of any policy which by its terms is cancellable at the option of the insurer, or of any binder based on such policy which does not contain a clearly stated expiration date, may be effected as to any interest only upon compliance with the following:

(a) For all insurance policies other than medical malpractice insurance policies or fire insurance policies canceled under RCW 48.53.040:

(i) The insurer must deliver or mail written notice of cancellation to the named insured at least forty-five days before the effective date of the cancellation; and

(ii) The cancellation notice must include the insurer's actual reason for canceling the policy.

(b) For medical malpractice insurance policies:

(i) The insurer must deliver or mail written notice of the cancellation to the named insured at least ninety days before the effective date of the cancellation; and

(ii) The cancellation notice must include the insurer's actual reason for canceling the policy and describe the significant risk factors that led to the insurer's underwriting action, as defined under RCW 48.18.547(1)(e).

(c) If an insurer cancels a policy described under (a) or (b) of this subsection for nonpayment of premium, the insurer must deliver or mail the cancellation notice to the named insured at least ten days before the effective date of the cancellation.

(d) If an insurer cancels a fire insurance policy under RCW 48.53.040, the insurer must deliver or mail the cancellation notice to the named insured at least five days before the effective date of the cancellation.

(e) Like notice must also be so delivered or mailed to each mortgagee, pledgee, or other person shown by the policy to have an interest in any loss which may occur thereunder. For purposes of this subsection (1)(e), "delivered" includes electronic transmittal, facsimile, or personal delivery.

(2) The mailing of any such notice shall be effected by depositing it in a sealed envelope, directed to the addressee at his or her last address as known to the insurer or as shown by the insurer's records, with proper prepaid postage affixed, in a letter depository of the United States post office. The insurer shall retain in its records any such item so mailed, together with its envelope, which was returned by the post office upon failure to find, or deliver the mailing to, the addressee.

(3) The affidavit of the individual making or supervising such a mailing, shall constitute prima facie evidence of such facts of the mailing as are therein affirmed.

(4) The portion of any premium paid to the insurer on account of the policy, unearned because of the cancellation and in amount as computed on the pro rata basis, must be actually paid to the insured or other person entitled thereto as shown by the policy or by any endorsement thereon, or be mailed to the insured or such person as soon as possible, and no later than forty-five days after the date of notice of cancellation to the insured for homeowners', dwelling fire, and private passenger auto. Any such payment may be made by cash, or by check, bank draft, or money order.

(5) This section shall not apply to contracts of life or disability insurance without provision for cancellation prior to the date to which premiums have been paid, or to contracts of insurance procured under the provisions of chapter 48.15 RCW. [2006 c 8 § 212; 1997 c 85 § 1; 1988 c 249 § 2; 1986 c 287 § 1; 1985 c 264 § 17; 1982 c 110 § 7; 1980 c 102 § 7; 1979 ex.s. c 199 § 5; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 119 § 2; 1947 c 79 § .18.29; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.29.]

**Application—2006 c 8 §§ 211-213:** See note following RCW 48.18.547.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings and subheadings not law—Severability—2006 c 8:** See notes following RCW 5.64.010.

**Effective date—1988 c 249:** See note following RCW 48.18.289.

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** "Sections 17 through 22 of this act apply to all new or renewal policies issued or renewed after May 10, 1985. Sections 17 through 22 of this act shall not apply to or affect the validity of any notice of cancellation mailed or delivered prior to May 10, 1985. Sections 17 through 22 of this act shall not be construed to affect cancellation of a renewal policy, if notice of cancellation is mailed or delivered within forty-five days after May 10, 1985. Sections 17 through 22 of this act shall not be construed to require notice, other than that already required, of intention not to renew any policy which expires less than forty-five days after May 10, 1985." [1985 c 264 § 24.]

**RCW 48.18.2901 Renewal required—Exceptions.** (1) Each insurer must renew any insurance policy subject to RCW 48.18.290 unless one of the following situations exists:

(a) (i) For all insurance policies subject to RCW 48.18.290 (1) (a):

(A) The insurer must deliver or mail written notice of nonrenewal to the named insured at least forty-five days before the expiration date of the policy; and

(B) The notice must include the insurer's actual reason for refusing to renew the policy.

(ii) For medical malpractice insurance policies subject to RCW 48.18.290 (1) (b):

(A) The insurer must deliver or mail written notice of the nonrenewal to the named insured at least ninety days before the expiration date of the policy; and

(B) The notice must include the insurer's actual reason for refusing to renew the policy and describe the significant risk factors that led to the insurer's underwriting action, as defined under RCW 48.18.547 (1) (e);

(b) At least twenty days prior to its expiration date, the insurer has communicated, either directly or through its agent, its willingness to renew in writing to the named insured and has included in that writing a statement of the amount of the premium or portion thereof required to be paid by the insured to renew the policy, and the insured fails to discharge when due his or her obligation in connection with the payment of such premium or portion thereof;

(c) The insured has procured equivalent coverage prior to the expiration of the policy period;

(d) The contract is evidenced by a written binder containing a clearly stated expiration date which has expired according to its terms; or

(e) The contract clearly states that it is not renewable, and is for a specific line, subclassification, or type of coverage that is not offered on a renewable basis. This subsection (1) (e) does not restrict the authority of the insurance commissioner under this code.

(2) Any insurer failing to include in the notice required by subsection (1) (b) of this section the amount of any increased premium resulting from a change of rates and an explanation of any change in the contract provisions shall renew the policy if so required by that subsection according to the rates and contract provisions applicable to the expiring policy. However, renewal based on the rates and contract provisions applicable to the expiring policy shall not prevent the insurer from making changes in the rates and/or contract provisions of the policy once during the term of its renewal after at least twenty days' advance notice of such change has been given to the named insured.

(3) Renewal of a policy shall not constitute a waiver or estoppel with respect to grounds for cancellation which existed before the effective date of such renewal, or with respect to cancellation of fire policies under chapter 48.53 RCW.

(4) "Renewal" or "to renew" means the issuance and delivery by an insurer of a contract of insurance replacing at the end of the contract period a contract of insurance previously issued and delivered by the same insurer, or the issuance and delivery of a certificate or notice extending the term of a contract beyond its policy period or term. However, (a) any contract of insurance with a policy period or term of six months or less whether or not made

continuous for successive terms upon the payment of additional premiums shall for the purpose of RCW 48.18.290 and 48.18.293 through 48.18.295 be considered as if written for a policy period or term of six months; and (b) any policy written for a term longer than one year or any policy with no fixed expiration date, shall, for the purpose of RCW 48.18.290 and 48.18.293 through 48.18.295, be considered as if written for successive policy periods or terms of one year.

(5) A midterm blanket reduction in rate, approved by the commissioner, for medical malpractice insurance shall not be considered a renewal for purposes of this section. [2006 c 8 § 213; 2002 c 347 § 1; 1993 c 186 § 1; 1988 c 249 § 3; 1986 c 287 § 2; 1985 c 264 § 20.]

**Application—2006 c 8 §§ 211-213:** See note following RCW 48.18.547.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings and subheadings not law—Severability—2006 c 8:** See notes following RCW 5.64.010.

**Effective date—1988 c 249:** See note following RCW 48.18.289.

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** See note following RCW 48.18.290.

**RCW 48.18.291 Cancellation of private automobile insurance by insurer—Notice—Requirements.** (1) A contract of insurance predicated wholly or in part upon the use of a private passenger automobile may not be terminated by cancellation by the insurer until at least twenty days after mailing written notice of cancellation to the named insured at the latest address filed with the insurer by or on behalf of the named insured, accompanied by the reason therefor. If cancellation is for nonpayment of premium, or is within the first thirty days after the contract has been in effect, at least ten days notice of cancellation, accompanied by the reason therefor, shall be given. In case of a contract evidenced by a written binder which has been delivered to the insured, if the binder contains a clearly stated expiration date, no additional notice of cancellation or nonrenewal is required.

(2) (a) A notice of cancellation by the insurer as to a contract of insurance to which subsection (1) of this section applies is not valid if sent more than sixty days after the contract has been in effect unless:

(i) The named insured fails to discharge when due any of his or her obligations in connection with the payment of premium for the policy or any installment thereof, whether payable directly to the insurer or to its agent or indirectly under any premium finance plan or extension of credit; or

(ii) The driver's license of the named insured, or of any other operator who customarily operates an automobile insured under the policy, has been suspended, revoked, or canceled during the policy period or, if the policy is a renewal, during its policy period or the one hundred eighty days immediately preceding the effective date of the renewal policy.

(b) Modification by the insurer of automobile physical damage coverage by the inclusion of a deductible not exceeding one hundred dollars is not a cancellation of the coverage or of the policy.

(3) The substance of subsections (1) and (2)(a) of this section must be set forth in each contract of insurance subject to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, and may be in the form of an attached endorsement.

(4) A notice of cancellation of a policy that may be canceled only pursuant to subsection (2) of this section is not effective unless the reason therefor accompanies or is included in the notice of cancellation. [2003 c 248 § 5; 1985 c 264 § 18; 1979 ex.s. c 199 § 6; 1969 ex.s. c 241 § 19.]

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** See note following RCW 48.18.290.

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** "Sections 19 through 25 of this 1969 amendatory act shall become operative September 1, 1969, and shall apply to policies written or renewed, or which have a renewal anniversary thereafter. Sections 19 through 25 of this 1969 amendatory act shall not apply to or affect the validity of any notice of cancellation mailed or delivered prior to the operative date of this amendatory act. Sections 19 through 25 of this 1969 amendatory act shall not be construed to affect cancellation of a renewal policy, if notice of cancellation is mailed or delivered within sixty days after the operative date of sections 19 through 25 of this amendatory act. Sections 19 through 25 of this 1969 amendatory act shall not be construed to require notice of intention not to renew any policy which expires less than thirty days after the operative date of sections 19 through 25 of this 1969 amendatory act." [1969 ex.s. c 241 § 25.]

**RCW 48.18.292 Refusal to renew private automobile insurance by insurer—Change in amount of premium or deductibles.** (1) Each insurer shall be required to renew any contract of insurance subject to RCW 48.18.291 unless one of the following situations exists:

(a) The insurer gives the named insured at least twenty days' notice in writing as provided for in RCW 48.18.291(1), that it proposes to refuse to renew the insurance contract upon its expiration date; and sets forth therein the actual reason for refusing to renew; or

(b) At least twenty days prior to its expiration date, the insurer has communicated its willingness to renew in writing to the named insured, and has included therein a statement of the amount of the premium or portion thereof required to be paid by the insured to renew the policy, including the amount by which the premium or deductibles have changed from the previous policy period, and the date by which such payment must be made, and the insured fails to discharge when due his or her obligation in connection with the payment of such premium or portion thereof; or

(c) The insured's insurance producer has procured other coverage acceptable to the insured prior to the expiration of the policy period.

(2) Renewal of a policy shall not constitute a waiver or estoppel with respect to grounds for cancellation which existed before the effective date of such renewal.

(3) "Renewal" or "to renew" means the issuance and delivery by an insurer of a contract of insurance replacing at the end of the contract period a contract of insurance previously issued and delivered by the same insurer, or the issuance and delivery of a certificate or notice extending the term of a contract beyond its policy period or term: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That any contract of insurance with a policy period or term of six months or less whether or not made continuous for successive terms upon the payment of additional premiums shall for the purpose of RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297 be considered as if written for a policy period or term of six months: PROVIDED, FURTHER, That any policy written for a term longer than one year or any policy with no fixed expiration date, shall, for the purpose of RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297, be considered as if written for successive policy periods or terms of one year.

(4) On and after January 1, 1980, no policy of insurance subject to RCW 48.18.291 shall be issued for a policy period or term of less than six months.

(5) No insurer shall refuse to renew the liability and/or collision coverage of an automobile insurance policy on the basis that an insured covered by the policy of the insurer has submitted one or more claims under the comprehensive, road service, or towing coverage of the policy. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the nonrenewal of comprehensive, road service, or towing coverage on the basis of one or more claims submitted by an insured. [2008 c 217 § 17; 1985 c 264 § 19; 1981 c 339 § 17; 1979 ex.s. c 199 § 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 152 § 3; 1969 ex.s. c 241 § 20.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** See note following RCW 48.18.290.

**Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 152:** See note following RCW 48.05.140.

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** See note following RCW 48.18.291.

**RCW 48.18.293 Nonliability of commissioner, agents, insurer for information giving reasons for cancellation or refusal to renew—Proof of mailing of notice.** (1) There shall be no liability on the part of, and no cause of action of any nature shall arise against, the insurance commissioner, his or her agents, or members of his or her staff, or against any insurer, its authorized representative, its agents, its employees, or any firm, person or corporation furnishing to the insurer information as to reasons for cancellation or refusal to renew, for any statement made by any of them in any written notice of cancellation or refusal to renew, or in any other communications, oral or written, specifying the reasons for cancellation or refusal to renew or the providing of information pertaining thereto, or for statements made or evidence submitted in any hearing conducted in connection therewith.

(2) Proof of mailing of notice of cancellation or refusal to renew or of reasons for cancellation, to the named insured, at the latest address filed with the insurer by or on behalf of the named insured shall be sufficient proof of notice. [2009 c 549 § 7070; 1969 ex.s. c 241 § 21.]

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** See note following RCW 48.18.291.

**RCW 48.18.295 RCW 48.18.290 through 48.18.297 not to prevent cancellation or nonrenewal, when.** Nothing in RCW 48.18.290 through 48.18.297 shall be construed to prevent the cancellation or nonrenewal of any such insurance where:

(1) Such cancellation or nonrenewal is ordered by the commissioner under a statutory delinquency proceeding commenced under the provisions of chapter 48.31 RCW, or

(2) Permission for such cancellation or nonrenewal has been given by the commissioner on a showing that the continuation of such coverage can reasonably be expected to create a condition in the company hazardous to its policyholder, or to its creditors, or to its members, subscribers, or stockholders, or to the public. [1985 c 264 § 21; 1969 ex.s. c 241 § 22; 1967 ex.s. c 95 § 2.]

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** See note following RCW 48.18.290.

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** See note following RCW 48.18.291.

**Severability—1967 ex.s. c 95:** "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 and circumstances is not affected." [1967 ex.s. c 95 § 16.]

**RCW 48.18.296 Contracts to which RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297 inapplicable.** The provisions of RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297 shall not apply to:

(1) Contracts of insurance issued under the assigned risk plan;  
(2) Any policy covering garage, automobile sales agency, repair shop, service station, or public parking place operation hazards; and  
(3) Contracts of insurance procured under the provisions of chapter 48.15 RCW. [1986 c 287 § 3; 1985 c 264 § 22; 1983 1st ex.s. c 32 § 6; 1969 ex.s. c 241 § 23.]

**Application—1985 c 264 §§ 17-22:** See note following RCW 48.18.290.

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** See note following RCW 48.18.291.

**RCW 48.18.297 Private passenger automobile defined.** A private passenger automobile as used in RCW 48.18.291 through 48.18.297 shall mean:

(1) An individually owned motor vehicle of the private passenger or station wagon type that is not used as a public or livery conveyance for passengers, nor rented to others.

(2) Any other individually owned four-wheel motor vehicle with a load capacity of fifteen hundred pounds or less which is not used in the occupation, profession, or business of the insured. [1969 ex.s. c 241 § 24.]

**Construction—1969 ex.s. c 241 §§ 19-25:** See note following RCW 48.18.291.

**RCW 48.18.298 Disability insurance—Refusal to renew by insurer.**

No insurer shall refuse to renew any policy of individual disability insurance issued after July 1, 1973 because of a change in the physical or mental condition or health of any person covered thereunder: PROVIDED, That after approval of the insurance commissioner, an insurer may discharge its obligation to renew the contract by obtaining for the insured coverage with another insurer which is comparable in terms of premiums and benefits. [1973 1st ex.s. c 188 § 1.]

**Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 188:** "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." [1973 1st ex.s. c 188 § 5.]

**RCW 48.18.299 Disability insurance—Cancellation by insurer.** No contract of insurance enumerated in RCW 48.18.298 shall be terminated by cancellation by the insurer during the period of contract except for nonpayment of premium. This section shall not be deemed to affect the right of the insurer to rescind the policy as limited and defined in RCW 48.18.090. [1973 1st ex.s. c 188 § 2.]

**Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 188:** See note following RCW 48.18.298.

**RCW 48.18.300 Cancellation by insured.** (1) Cancellation by the insured of any policy which by its terms is cancellable at the insured's option or of any binder based on such policy may be effected by written notice thereof to the insurer or surrender of the policy or binder for cancellation prior to or on the effective date of such cancellation. In [the] event the policy or binder has been lost or destroyed and cannot be so surrendered, the insurer may in lieu of such surrender accept and in good faith rely upon the insured's written statement setting forth the fact of such loss or destruction.

(2) As soon as possible, and no later than thirty days after the receipt of the notice of cancellation from the policyholder for homeowners', dwelling fire, and private passenger auto insurance, the insurer shall pay to the insured or to the person entitled thereto as shown by the insurer's records, any unearned portion of any premium paid on the policy as computed on the customary short rate or as otherwise specified in the policy: PROVIDED, That the refund of any unearned portion of any premium paid on a contract of dwelling fire

insurance, homeowners' insurance, or insurance predicated upon the use of a private passenger automobile (as defined in RCW 48.18.297 and excluding contracts of insurance and policies enumerated in RCW 48.18.296) shall be computed on a pro rata basis and the insurer shall refund not less than ninety percent of any unearned portion not exceeding one hundred dollars, plus ninety-five percent of any unearned portion over one hundred dollars but not exceeding five hundred dollars, and not less than ninety-seven percent of the amount of any unearned portion in excess of five hundred dollars. If the amount of any refund is less than two dollars, no refund need be made. If no premium has been paid on the policy, the insured shall be liable to the insurer for premium for the period during which the policy was in force.

(3) The surrender of a policy to the insurer for any cause by any person named therein as having an interest insured thereunder shall create a presumption that such surrender is concurred in by all persons so named.

(4) This section shall not apply to life insurance policies or to annuity contracts. [1980 c 102 § 8; 1979 ex.s. c 199 § 8; 1955 c 303 § 16; 1947 c 79 § .18.30; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.30.]

**RCW 48.18.310 Cancellation by commissioner.** The commissioner may order the immediate cancellation of any policy the procuring or effectuation of which was accomplished through or accompanied by a violation of this code, except in cases where the policy by its terms is not cancellable by the insurer and the insured did not knowingly participate in any such violation. [1947 c 79 § .18.31; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.31.]

**RCW 48.18.320 Annulment of liability policies.** No insurance contract insuring against loss or damage through legal liability for the bodily injury or death by accident of any individual, or for damage to the property of any person, shall be retroactively annulled by any agreement between the insurer and insured after the occurrence of any such injury, death, or damage for which the insured may be liable, and any such annulment attempted shall be void. [1947 c 79 § .18.32; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.32.]

**RCW 48.18.340 Dividends payable to real party in interest.** (1) Every insurer issuing participating policies, shall pay dividends, unused premium refunds or savings distributed on account of any such policy, only to the real party in interest entitled thereto as shown by the insurer's records, or to any person to whom the right thereto has been assigned in writing of record with the insurer, or given in the policy by such real party in interest.

(2) Any person who is shown by the insurer's records to have paid for his or her own account, or to have been ultimately charged for, the premium for insurance provided by a policy in which another person is the nominal insured, shall be deemed such real party in interest proportionate to premium so paid or so charged. This subsection shall not apply as to any such dividend, refund, or distribution which would amount to less than one dollar.

(3) This section shall not apply to contracts of group life insurance, group annuities, or group disability insurance. [2009 c 549 § 7071; 1947 c 79 § .18.34; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.34.]

**RCW 48.18.350 Breach of warranty prior to loss—Effect.** If any breach of a warranty or condition in any insurance contract occurs prior to a loss under the contract, such breach shall not avoid the contract nor avail the insurer to avoid liability, unless the breach exists at the time of the loss. [1947 c 79 § .18.35; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.35.]

**RCW 48.18.360 Assignment of policies—Life and disability.** Subject to the terms of the policy relating to its assignment, life insurance policies, other than industrial or group life insurance policies, and disability policies providing benefits for accidental death, whether such policies were heretofore or are hereafter issued, and under the terms of which the beneficiary may be changed upon the sole request of the insured, may be assigned either by pledge or transfer of title, by an assignment executed by the insured alone and delivered to the insurer, whether or not the pledgee or assignee is the insurer. Industrial life insurance policies may be made assignable only to a bank or trust company. Any such assignment shall entitle the insurer to deal with the assignee as the owner or pledgee of the policy in accordance with the terms of the assignment, until the insurer has received at its home office written notice of termination of the assignment or pledge, or written notice by or on behalf of some other person claiming some interest in the policy in conflict with the assignment. [1947 c 79 § .18.36; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.36.]

**RCW 48.18.370 Payment discharges insurer—Life and disability.** Whenever the proceeds of, or payments under a life or disability insurance policy, heretofore or hereafter issued, become payable and the insurer makes payment thereof in accordance with the terms of the policy, or in accordance with any written assignment thereof pursuant to RCW 48.18.360, the person then designated in the policy or by such assignment as being entitled thereto, shall be entitled to receive such proceeds or payments and to give full acquittance therefor, and such payment shall fully discharge the insurer from all claims under the policy unless, before payment is made, the insurer has received at its home office, written notice by or on behalf of some other person that such other person claims to be entitled to such payment or some interest in the policy. [1947 c 79 § .18.37; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.37.]

**RCW 48.18.375 Assignment of interests under group insurance policy.** A person whose life is insured under a group insurance policy may, subject and pursuant to the terms of the policy, or pursuant to an arrangement between the insured, the group policyholder and the insurer, assign to any or all his or her spouse, children, parents, or a trust for the benefit of any or all of them, all or any part of his or her incidents of ownership, rights, title, and interests, both present and future, under such policy including specifically, but not

by way of limitation, the right to designate a beneficiary or beneficiaries thereunder and the right to have an individual policy issued to him in case of termination of employment or of said group insurance policy. Such an assignment by the insured, made either before or after July 16, 1973, is valid for the purpose of vesting in the assignee, in accordance with any provisions included therein as to the time at which it is to be effective, all of such incidents of ownership, rights, title, and interests so assigned, but without prejudice to the insurer on account of any payment it may make or individual policy it may issue prior to receipt of notice of the assignment. This section acknowledges, declares, and codifies the existing right of assignment of interests under group insurance policies. [2009 c 549 § 7072; 1973 1st ex.s. c 163 § 3.]

**RCW 48.18.390 Simultaneous deaths—Payment of proceeds—Life insurance.** Where the individual insured and the beneficiary designated in a life insurance policy or policy insuring against accidental death have died and there is not sufficient evidence that they have died otherwise than simultaneously, the proceeds of the policy shall be distributed as if the insured had survived the beneficiary, unless otherwise expressly provided in the policy. [1947 c 79 § .18.39; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.39.]

*Simultaneous death, uniform act: Chapter 11.05A RCW.*

**RCW 48.18.400 Exemption of proceeds—Disability.** The proceeds or avails of all contracts of disability insurance and of provisions providing benefits on account of the insured's disability which are supplemental to life insurance or annuity contracts heretofore or hereafter effected shall be exempt from all liability for any debt of the insured, and from any debt of the beneficiary existing at the time the proceeds are made available for his or her use. [2009 c 549 § 7073; 1947 c 79 § .18.40; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.40.]

**RCW 48.18.410 Exemption of proceeds—Life.** (1) The lawful beneficiary, assignee, or payee of a life insurance policy, other than an annuity, heretofore or hereafter effected by any person on his or her own life, or on the life of another, in favor of a person other than himself or herself, shall be entitled to the proceeds and avails of the policy against the creditors and representatives of the insured and of the person effecting the insurance, and such proceeds and avails shall also be exempt from all liability for any debt of such beneficiary, existing at the time the proceeds or avails are made available for his or her own use.

(2) The provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall apply

(a) whether or not the right to change the beneficiary is reserved or permitted in the policy; or

(b) whether or not the policy is made payable to the person whose life is insured or to his or her estate if the beneficiary, assignee or payee shall predecease such person; except, that this subsection shall not be construed so as to defeat any policy provision which provides for disposition of proceeds in the event the beneficiary shall predecease the insured.

(3) The exemptions provided by subsection (1) of this section, subject to the statute of limitations, shall not apply

(a) to any claim to or interest in such proceeds or avails by or on behalf of the insured, or the person so effecting the insurance, or their administrators or executors, in whatever capacity such claim is made or such interest is asserted; or

(b) to any claim to or interest in such proceeds or avails by or on behalf of any person to whom rights thereto have been transferred with intent to defraud creditors; but an insurer shall be liable to all such creditors only as to amounts aggregating not to exceed the amount of such proceeds or avails remaining in the insurer's possession at the time the insurer receives at its home office written notice by or on behalf of such creditors, of claims to recover for such transfer, with specification of the amounts claimed; or

(c) to so much of such proceeds or avails as equals the amount of any premiums or portion thereof paid for the insurance with intent to defraud creditors, with interest thereon, and if prior to the payment of such proceeds or avails the insurer has received at its home office written notice by or on behalf of the creditor, of a claim to recover for premiums paid with intent to defraud creditors, with specification of the amount claimed.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section a policy shall also be deemed to be payable to a person other than the insured if and to the extent that a facility-of-payment clause or similar clause in the policy permits the insurer to discharge its obligation after the death of the individual insured by paying the death benefits to a person as permitted by such clause.

(5) No person shall be compelled to exercise any rights, powers, options or privileges under any such policy. [2009 c 549 § 7074; 1947 c 79 § .18.41; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.41.]

**RCW 48.18.420 Exemption of proceeds—Group life.** (1) A policy of group life insurance or the proceeds thereof payable to the individual insured or to the beneficiary thereunder, shall not be liable, either before or after payment, to be applied to any legal or equitable process to pay any liability of any person having a right under the policy. The proceeds thereof, when not made payable to a named beneficiary or to a third person pursuant to a facility-of-payment clause, shall not constitute a part of the estate of the individual insured for the payment of his or her debts.

(2) This section shall not apply to group life insurance policies issued under RCW 48.24.040 (debtor groups) to the extent that such proceeds are applied to payment of the obligation for the purpose of which the insurance was so issued. [2009 c 549 § 7075; 1947 c 79 § .18.42; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.42.]

**RCW 48.18.430 Exemption of proceeds, commutation—Annuities.**

(1) The benefits, rights, privileges, and options under any annuity contract that are due the annuitant who paid the consideration for the annuity contract are not subject to execution and the annuitant may not be compelled to exercise those rights, powers, or options, and creditors are not allowed to interfere with or terminate the contract, except:

(a) As to amounts paid for or as premium on an annuity with intent to defraud creditors, with interest thereon, and of which the creditor has given the insurer written notice at its home office prior to making the payments to the annuitant out of which the creditor seeks to recover. The notice must specify the amount claimed or the facts that will enable the insurer to determine the amount, and must set forth the facts that will enable the insurer to determine the insurance or annuity contract, the person insured or annuitant and the payments sought to be avoided on the basis of fraud.

(b) The total exemption of benefits presently due and payable to an annuitant periodically or at stated times under all annuity contracts may not at any time exceed three thousand dollars per month for the length of time represented by the installments, and a periodic payment in excess of three thousand dollars per month is subject to garnishee execution to the same extent as are wages and salaries.

(c) If the total benefits presently due and payable to an annuitant under all annuity contracts at any time exceeds payment at the rate of three thousand dollars per month, then the court may order the annuitant to pay to a judgment creditor or apply on the judgment, in installments, the portion of the excess benefits that the court determines to be just and proper, after due regard for the reasonable requirements of the judgment debtor and the judgment debtor's dependent family, as well as any payments required to be made by the annuitant to other creditors under prior court orders.

(2) The benefits, rights, privileges, or options accruing under an annuity contract to a beneficiary or assignee are not transferable or subject to commutation, and if the benefits are payable periodically or at stated times, the same exemptions and exceptions contained in this section for the annuitant apply to the beneficiary or assignee.

(3) An annuity contract within the meaning of this section is any obligation to pay certain sums at stated times, during life or lives, or for a specified term or terms, issued for a valuable consideration, regardless of whether or not the sums are payable to one or more persons, jointly or otherwise, but does not include payments under life insurance contracts at stated times during life or lives, or for a specified term or terms. [2011 c 162 § 4; 2005 c 223 § 10; 1949 c 190 § 25; 1947 c 79 § .18.43; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 45.18.43.]

**RCW 48.18.440 Spouse's rights in life insurance policy. (1)**

Every life insurance policy heretofore or hereafter made payable to or for the benefit of the spouse of the insured, and every life insurance policy heretofore or hereafter assigned, transferred, or in any way made payable to a spouse or to a trustee for the benefit of a spouse, regardless of how such assignment or transfer is procured, shall, unless contrary to the terms of the policy, inure to the separate use and benefit of such spouse: PROVIDED, That the beneficial interest of a spouse in a policy upon the life of a child of the spouses, however such interest is created, shall be deemed to be a community interest and not a separate interest, unless expressly otherwise provided by the policy.

(2) In any life insurance policy heretofore or hereafter issued upon the life of a spouse the designation heretofore or hereafter made by such spouse of a beneficiary in accordance with the terms of the policy, shall create a presumption that such beneficiary was so designated with the consent of the other spouse, but only as to any

beneficiary who is the child, parent, brother, or sister of either of the spouses. The insurer may in good faith rely upon the representations made by the insured as to the relationship to him or her of any such beneficiary. [2009 c 549 § 7076; 1947 c 79 § .18.44; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.44.]

**RCW 48.18.450 Life insurance payable to trustee named as beneficiary in the policy.** Life insurance may be made payable to a trustee to be named as beneficiary in the policy and the proceeds of such insurance paid to such trustee shall be held and disposed of by the trustee as provided in a trust agreement or declaration of trust made by the insured during his or her lifetime. It shall not be necessary to the validity of any such trust agreement or declaration of trust that it have a trust corpus other than the right of the trustee to receive such insurance proceeds as beneficiary, and any such trustee may also receive assets, other than insurance proceeds, by testamentary disposition and administer them according to the terms of the trust agreement or declaration of trust as they exist at the death of the testator. [2009 c 549 § 7077; 1963 c 227 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.452 Life insurance designating as beneficiary a trustee named by will.** A policy of life insurance may designate as beneficiary a trustee or trustees named or to be named by will, if the designation is made in accordance with the provisions of the policy and the requirements of the insurance company. Immediately after the proving of the will the proceeds of such insurance shall be paid to the trustee or trustees named therein to be held and disposed of under the terms of the will as they exist at the death of the testator, but if no qualified trustee makes claim to the proceeds from the insurance company within one year after the death of the insured, or if satisfactory evidence is furnished the insurance company within such one-year period showing that no trustee can qualify to receive the proceeds, payment shall be made by the insurance company to those thereafter entitled. The proceeds of the insurance as collected by the trustee or trustees shall not be subject to debts of the insured and inheritance tax to any greater extent than if such proceeds were payable to any other named beneficiary other than the estate of the insured. Enactment of this section shall not invalidate previous life insurance policy beneficiary designations naming trustees of trusts established by will. [1963 c 227 § 2.]

**RCW 48.18.460 Proof of loss—Furnishing forms—May require oath.** An insurer shall furnish, upon request of any person claiming to have a loss under any insurance contract, forms of proof of loss for completion by such person. But such insurer shall not, by reason of the requirement so to furnish forms, have any responsibility for or with reference to the completion of such proof or the manner of any such completion or attempted completion. If a person makes a claim under a policy of insurance, the insurer may require that the person be examined under an oath administered by a person authorized by state or federal law to administer oaths. [1995 c 285 § 17; 1949 c 190 § 26; 1947 c 79 § .18.46; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 45.18.46.]

**Effective date—1995 c 285:** See RCW 48.30A.900.

**RCW 48.18.470 Claims administration—Not waiver.** None of the following acts by or on behalf of an insurer shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of any provision of a policy or of any defense of the insurer thereunder:

(a) Acknowledgment of the receipt of notice of loss or of claim under the policy.

(b) Furnishing forms for reporting a loss or claim, for giving information relative thereto, or for making proof of loss, or receiving or acknowledging receipt of any such forms or proofs completed or uncompleted.

(c) Investigating any loss or claim under any policy or engaging in negotiations looking toward a possible settlement of any such loss or claim. [1947 c 79 § .18.47; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.47.]

**RCW 48.18.480 Discrimination prohibited.** No insurer shall make or permit any unfair discrimination between insureds or subjects of insurance having substantially like insuring, risk, and exposure factors, and expense elements, in the terms or conditions of any insurance contract, or in the rate or amount of premium charged therefor, or in the benefits payable or in any other rights or privileges accruing thereunder. This provision shall not prohibit fair discrimination by a life insurer as between individuals having unequal expectation of life. [1957 c 193 § 12; 1947 c 79 § .18.48; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.480.]

**RCW 48.18.510 Validity of noncomplying forms.** Any insurance policy, rider, or endorsement hereafter issued and otherwise valid, which contains any condition or provision not in compliance with the requirements of this code, shall not be rendered invalid thereby, but shall be construed and applied in accordance with such conditions and provisions as would have applied had such policy, rider, or endorsement been in full compliance with this code. [1947 c 79 § .18.51; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.51.]

**RCW 48.18.520 Construction of policies.** Every insurance contract shall be construed according to the entirety of its terms and conditions as set forth in the policy, and as amplified, extended, or modified by any rider, endorsement, or application attached to and made a part of the policy. [1947 c 79 § .18.52; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 45.18.52.]

**RCW 48.18.540 Cancellations, denials, refusals to renew—Written notification.** Every insurer upon canceling, denying, or refusing to renew any disability policy, shall, upon written request, directly notify in writing the applicant or insured, as the case may be, of the reasons for the action by the insurer and to any person covered under a group contract. Any benefits, terms, rates, or conditions of such a contract that are restricted, excluded, modified, increased, or reduced shall, upon written request, be set forth in writing and

supplied to the insured and to any person covered under a group contract. The written communications required by this section shall be phrased in simple language that is readily understandable to a person of average intelligence, education, and reading ability. [1993 c 492 § 281.]

**Findings—Intent—1993 c 492:** See notes following RCW 43.20.050.

**Short title—Savings—Reservation of legislative power—Effective dates—1993 c 492:** See RCW 43.72.910 through 43.72.915.

**RCW 48.18.543 Single premium credit insurance—Residential mortgage loan—Restrictions—Definitions.** (1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Licensee" means every insurance producer licensed under chapter 48.17 RCW.

(b) "Residential mortgage loan" means any loan primarily for personal, family, or household use secured by a mortgage or deed of trust on residential real estate upon which is constructed or intended to be constructed a single-family dwelling or multiple-family dwelling of four or less units.

(c) "Single premium credit insurance" means credit insurance purchased with a single premium payment at inception of coverage.

(2) An insurer or licensee may not issue or sell any single premium credit insurance product in connection with a residential mortgage loan unless:

(a) The term of the single premium credit insurance policy is the same as the term of the loan;

(b) The debtor is given the option to buy credit insurance paid with monthly premiums; and

(c) The single premium credit insurance policy provides for a full refund of premiums to the debtor if the credit insurance is canceled within sixty days of the date of the loan.

(3) This section does not apply to residential mortgage loans if:

(a) The loan amount does not exceed ten thousand dollars, exclusive of fees;

(b) The repayment term of the loan does not exceed five years; and

(c) The term of the single premium credit insurance does not exceed the repayment term of the loan. [2008 c 217 § 18; 2003 c 116 § 1.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 217:** See notes following RCW 48.03.020.

**RCW 48.18.545 Underwriting restrictions that apply to personal insurance—Credit history or insurance score—Rules.** (1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Adverse action" has the same meaning as defined in the fair credit reporting act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 et seq. Adverse actions include, but are not limited to:

(i) Cancellation, denial, or nonrenewal of personal insurance coverage;

(ii) Charging a higher insurance premium for personal insurance than would have been offered if the credit history or insurance score had been more favorable, whether the charge is by:

(A) Application of a rating rule;

(B) Assignment to a rating tier that does not have the lowest available rates; or

(C) Placement with an affiliate company that does not offer the lowest rates available to the consumer within the affiliate group of insurance companies; or

(iii) Any reduction, adverse, or unfavorable change in the terms of coverage or amount of any personal insurance due to a consumer's credit history or insurance score. A reduction, adverse, or unfavorable change in the terms of coverage occurs when:

(A) Coverage provided to the consumer is not as broad in scope as coverage requested by the consumer but available to other insureds of the insurer or any affiliate; or

(B) The consumer is not eligible for benefits such as dividends that are available through affiliate insurers.

(b) "Affiliate" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.31B.005(1).

(c) "Consumer" means an individual policyholder or applicant for insurance.

(d) "Consumer report" has the same meaning as defined in the fair credit reporting act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 et seq.

(e) "Credit history" means any written, oral, or other communication of any information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on a consumer's creditworthiness, credit standing, or credit capacity that is used or expected to be used, or collected in whole or in part, for the purpose of serving as a factor in determining personal insurance premiums or eligibility for coverage.

(f) "Insurance score" means a number or rating that is derived from an algorithm, computer application, model, or other process that is based in whole or in part on credit history.

(g) "Personal insurance" means:

(i) Private passenger automobile coverage;

(ii) Homeowner's coverage, including mobile homeowners, manufactured homeowners, condominium owners, and renter's coverage;

(iii) Dwelling property coverage;

(iv) Earthquake coverage for a residence or personal property;

(v) Personal liability and theft coverage;

(vi) Personal inland marine coverage; and

(vii) Mechanical breakdown coverage for personal auto or home appliances.

(h) "Tier" means a category within a single insurer into which insureds with substantially like insuring, risk or exposure factors, and expense elements are placed for purposes of determining rate or premium.

(2) An insurer that takes adverse action against a consumer based in whole or in part on credit history or insurance score shall provide written notice to the applicant or named insured. The notice must state the significant factors of the credit history or insurance score that resulted in the adverse action. The insurer shall also inform the consumer that the consumer is entitled to a free copy of their consumer report under the fair credit reporting act.

(3) An insurer shall not cancel or nonrenew personal insurance based in whole or in part on a consumer's credit history or insurance

score. An offer of placement with an affiliate insurer does not constitute cancellation or nonrenewal under this section.

(4) An insurer may use credit history to deny personal insurance only in combination with other substantive underwriting factors. For the purposes of this subsection:

(a) "Deny" means an insurer refuses to offer insurance coverage to a consumer;

(b) An offer of placement with an affiliate insurer does not constitute denial of coverage; and

(c) An insurer may reject an application when coverage is not bound or cancel an insurance contract within the first sixty days after the effective date of the contract.

(5) Insurers shall not deny personal insurance coverage based on:

(a) The absence of credit history or the inability to determine the consumer's credit history, if the insurer has received accurate and complete information from the consumer;

(b) The number of credit inquiries;

(c) Credit history or an insurance score based on collection accounts identified with a medical industry code;

(d) The initial purchase or finance of a vehicle or house that adds a new loan to the consumer's existing credit history, if evident from the consumer report; however, an insurer may consider the bill payment history of any loan, the total number of loans, or both;

(e) The consumer's use of a particular type of credit card, charge card, or debit card; or

(f) The consumer's total available line of credit; however, an insurer may consider the total amount of outstanding debt in relation to the total available line of credit.

(6) (a) If disputed credit history is used to determine eligibility for coverage and a consumer is placed with an affiliate that charges higher premiums or offers less favorable policy terms:

(i) The insurer shall reissue or rerate the policy retroactive to the effective date of the current policy term; and

(ii) The policy, as reissued or rerated, shall provide premiums and policy terms the consumer would have been eligible for if accurate credit history had been used to determine eligibility.

(b) This subsection only applies if the consumer resolves the dispute under the process set forth in the fair credit reporting act and notifies the insurer in writing that the dispute has been resolved.

(7) The commissioner may adopt rules to implement this section.

(8) This section applies to all personal insurance policies issued or renewed after January 1, 2003. [2002 c 360 § 1.]

**Captions not law—2002 c 360:** "Captions used in this act are not any part of the law." [2002 c 360 § 3.]

**RCW 48.18.547 Underwriting restrictions that apply to medical malpractice insurance—Rules.** (1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Affiliate" has the same meaning as in RCW 48.31B.005(1).

(b) "Claim" means a demand for monetary damages by a claimant.

(c) "Claimant" means a person, including a decedent's estate, who is seeking or has sought monetary damages for injury or death caused by medical malpractice.

(d) "Tier" has the same meaning as in RCW 48.18.545(1) (h).

(e) "Underwrite" or "underwriting" means the process of selecting, rejecting, or pricing a risk, and includes each of these activities:

(i) Evaluation, selection, and classification of risk, including placing a risk with an affiliate insurer that has higher rates and/or rating plan components that will result in higher premiums;

(ii) Application of classification plans, rates, rating rules, and rating tiers to an insured risk; and

(iii) Determining eligibility for:

(A) Insurance coverage provisions;

(B) Higher policy limits; or

(C) Premium payment plans.

(2) During each underwriting process, an insurer may consider the following factors only in combination with other substantive underwriting factors:

(a) An insured has inquired about the nature or scope of coverage under a medical malpractice insurance policy;

(b) An insured has notified their insurer about an incident that may be covered under the terms of their medical malpractice insurance policy, and that incident does not result in a claim; or

(c) A claim made against an insured was closed by the insurer without payment. An insurer may consider the effect of multiple claims if they have a significant effect on the insured's risk profile.

(3) If any underwriting activity related to the insured's risk profile results in higher premiums as described under subsection (1)(e)(i) and (ii) of this section or reduced coverage as described under subsection (1)(e)(iii) of this section, the insurer must provide written notice to the insured, in clear and simple language, that describes the significant risk factors which led to the underwriting action. The commissioner must adopt rules that define the components of a risk profile that require notice under this subsection. [2006 c 8 § 211.]

**Application—2006 c 8 §§ 211-213:** "Sections 211, 212, and 213 of this act apply to insurance policies issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2007." [2006 c 8 § 403.]

**Findings—Intent—Part headings and subheadings not law—Severability—2006 c 8:** See notes following RCW 5.64.010.

**RCW 48.18.550 Victims of domestic abuse—Prohibition on certain cancellations, denials, refusals to renew, and different rates—Domestic abuse defined.** (1) No insurer shall deny or refuse to accept an application for insurance, refuse to insure, refuse to renew, cancel, restrict, or otherwise terminate a policy of insurance, or charge a different rate for the same coverage on the basis that the applicant or insured person is, has been, or may be a victim of domestic abuse.

(2) Nothing in this section shall prevent an insurer from taking any of the actions set forth in subsection (1) of this section on the basis of loss history or medical condition or for any other reason not otherwise prohibited by this section, any other law, regulation, or rule.

(3) Any form filed or filed after June 11, 1998, subject to RCW 48.18.120(1) or subject to a rule adopted under RCW 48.18.120(1) may

exclude coverage for losses caused by intentional or fraudulent acts of any insured. Such an exclusion, however, shall not apply to deny an insured's otherwise-covered property loss if the property loss is caused by an act of domestic abuse by another insured under the policy, the insured claiming property loss files a police report and cooperates with any law enforcement investigation relating to the act of domestic abuse, and the insured claiming property loss did not cooperate in, or contribute to, the creation of the property loss. Payment by the insurer to an insured may be limited to the person's insurable interest in the property less payments made to a mortgagee or other party with a legal secured interest in the property. An insurer making payment to an insured under this section has all rights of subrogation to recover against the perpetrator of the act that caused the loss.

(4) Nothing in this section prohibits an insurer from investigating a claim and complying with chapter 48.30A RCW.

(5) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Domestic abuse" means: (i) Physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, or assault between family or household members or intimate partners; (ii) sexual assault of one family or household member by another or of one intimate partner by another; (iii) stalking as defined in RCW 9A.46.110 of one family or household member by another or of one intimate partner by another; or (iv) intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing damage to property so as to intimidate or attempt to control the behavior of another family or household member or of another intimate partner.

(b) "Family or household member" has the same meaning as in RCW 10.99.020.

(c) "Intimate partner" has the same meaning as in RCW 10.99.020. [2021 c 215 § 151; 2020 c 29 § 15; 1998 c 301 § 1.]

**Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215:** See note following RCW 7.105.900.

**Effective date—2020 c 29:** See note following RCW 7.77.060.

**RCW 48.18.553 Victims of hate crime offenses—Restrictions of underwriting actions—Definitions.** (1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Insured" means a current policyholder or a person or entity that is covered under the insurance policy.

(b) "Hate crime offense" has the same meaning as RCW 9A.36.080. Under this section, the perpetrator does not have to be identified for a hate crime offense to have occurred.

(c) "Underwriting action" means an insurer:

(i) Cancels or refuses to renew an insurance policy; or  
(ii) Changes the terms or benefits in an insurance policy.

(2) This section applies to property insurance policies if the insured is:

(a) An individual;  
(b) A religious organization;  
(c) An educational organization; or

(d) Any other nonprofit organization that is organized and operated for religious, charitable, or educational purposes.

(3) An insurer may not take an underwriting action on a policy described in subsection (2) of this section because an insured has made one or more insurance claims for any loss that occurred during the preceding sixty months that is the result of a hate crime offense. An insurer may take an underwriting action due to other factors that are not prohibited by this subsection.

(4) If an insured sustains a loss that is the result of a hate crime offense, the insured must file a report with the police or other law enforcement authority within thirty days of discovery of the incident, and a law enforcement authority must determine that a crime has occurred. The report must contain sufficient information to provide an insurer with reasonable notice that the loss was the result of a hate crime offense. The insured has a duty to cooperate with any law enforcement official or insurer investigation.

(5) Annually, each insurer must report underwriting actions to the commissioner if the insurer has taken an underwriting action against any insured who has filed a claim during the preceding sixty months that was the result of a hate crime offense. The report must include the policy number, name of the insured, location of the property, and the reason for the underwriting action. [2019 c 271 § 11; 2003 c 117 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.555 Property insurance—Actions resulting from arson or malicious mischief—Definitions.** (1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Arson" has the same meaning as in chapter 9A.48 RCW.

(b) "Health care facility" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.43.005.

(c) "Health care provider" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.43.005.

(d) "Insured" means a current policyholder or a person or entity that is covered under the insurance policy.

(e) A perpetrator does not have to be identified for an act of arson or malicious mischief to have occurred.

(f) "Malicious mischief" has the same meaning as in chapter 9A.48 RCW.

(g) "Underwriting action" means an insurer:

(i) Cancels or refuses to renew an insurance policy; or

(ii) Changes the terms or benefits in an insurance policy.

(2) This section applies to property insurance policies if the insured is:

(a) A health care facility;

(b) A health care provider; or

(c) A religious organization.

(3) An insurer may not take an underwriting action on a policy described in subsection (2) of this section because an insured has made one or more insurance claims for any loss that occurred during the preceding sixty months that is the result of arson or malicious mischief. An insurer may take an underwriting action due to other factors that are not prohibited by this subsection.

(4) If an insured sustains a loss that is the result of arson or malicious mischief, the insured must file a report with the police or other law enforcement authority within thirty days of discovery of the

incident, and a law enforcement authority must determine that a crime has occurred. The report must contain sufficient information to provide an insurer with reasonable notice that the loss was the result of arson or malicious mischief. The insured has a duty to cooperate with any law enforcement official or insurer investigation.

(5) Annually, each insurer must report underwriting actions to the commissioner if the insurer has taken an underwriting action against any insured who has filed a claim during the preceding sixty months that was the result of arson or malicious mischief. The report must include the policy number, name of the insured, location of the property, and the reason for the underwriting action. [2006 c 145 § 2.]

**Finding—Intent—2006 c 145:** "The legislature finds that access to insurance can be imperiled by the response of insurers to criminal acts. Rather than allow criminals to achieve their objectives, it is the intent of the legislature that criminals, through criminal acts, should not dictate insurance underwriting decisions. It is the intent of the legislature that courts should use restitution from perpetrators of intentional property crimes to make property owners and insurers whole." [2006 c 145 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.558 Property insurers—Assistance to prevent or reduce severity of claims or losses—Prior approval of commissioner—Pilot program permitted.**

(1) With the prior approval of the commissioner, a property insurer may include the following either goods or services, or both, intended to reduce either the probability of loss, or the extent of loss, or both, from a covered event as part of a policy of property insurance:

- (a) Goods, including a water monitor;
- (b) Foundation strapping to mitigate losses due to earthquake;
- (c) Ongoing services, including home safety monitoring or brush clearing to mitigate losses due to wildfire; and
- (d) Other either goods or services, or both, as the commissioner may identify by rule.

(2) Any goods provided are owned by the insured, even if the insurance is subsequently canceled.

(3) The value of goods and services to be provided is limited to \$7,500 or ten percent of the annual policy premium, whichever is greater, in value in the aggregate in any 12-month period.

(4) In order to receive prior approval of the commissioner, and except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, the property insurer must include the following in its rate filing:

- (a) A description of either the specific goods or services, or both, to be offered;
- (b) A description of the method of delivering either the specific goods or services, or both, being offered; and
- (c) The selection criteria for insureds receiving either the specific goods or services, or both, being offered.

(5) This section does not require the commissioner to approve any particular proposed benefit. The commissioner may disapprove any proposed noninsurance benefit that the commissioner determines may tend to promote or facilitate the violation of any other section of this title. However, if the commissioner approves the inclusion of either the goods or services, or both, in a policy of property

insurance it does not constitute a violation of RCW 48.30.140 or 48.30.150.

(6) (a) A property insurer may conduct a pilot program as either a risk mitigation or prevention, or both, strategy through which the insurer offers or provides risk mitigation and/or prevention goods and/or services identified in subsection (1) of this section in connection with an insurance policy covering property risks in accordance with rules adopted by the commissioner.

(b) A property insurer offering or providing risk mitigation and/or prevention goods and/or services through a pilot program under this subsection is exempt from including information about the risk mitigation and/or prevention goods and/or services in its rate filing as is otherwise required under subsection (4) of this section and RCW 48.19.530.

(c) A property insurer's pilot program may last no longer than two years.

(7) This section does not apply to disaster or emergency response activities of a property insurer. [2023 c 446 § 1; 2018 c 239 § 2.]

**Findings—2018 c 239:** "The legislature finds that allowing property insurers to assist their insureds with risk mitigation and/or prevention goods and/or services could help prevent, or reduce the severity of claims and losses. The legislature further finds that property insurers engage in supporting insureds through disaster or emergency response activities when there is an imminent threat of damage to insured property, such as wildfire prevention defense efforts that provide fire retardants to homes in a wildfire area or send crews to combat wildfires to protect insureds' homes. The legislature further finds that assisting insureds with risk mitigation and prevention and providing disaster or emergency response activities are both useful in preventing economic loss, and should be exempt from the prohibition against inducements under RCW 48.30.140 and 48.30.150." [2018 c 239 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.559 Property insurers—Rules addressing assistance to prevent or reduce severity of claims or losses.** The commissioner may adopt rules as necessary to implement RCW 48.18.558 and 48.19.530, including but not limited to:

(1) Rules requiring a notice to insureds or potential insureds regarding their ability to opt out of receiving any risk mitigation and/or prevention goods and/or services;

(2) Rules establishing requirements for pilot programs authorized under RCW 48.18.558(6); and

(3) Rules identifying which insurer disaster or emergency response activities are exempt from RCW 48.18.558 and 48.19.530 and RCW 48.30.140 and 48.30.150. [2023 c 446 § 2; 2018 c 239 § 4.]

**Findings—2018 c 239:** See note following RCW 48.18.558.

**RCW 48.18.565 Homeowner's insurance—Foster parent.** An insurer licensed to write homeowner's insurance in this state shall not deny an application for a homeowner's insurance policy, or cancel, refuse to renew, or modify an existing homeowner's insurance policy for the

principal reason that the applicant or insured is a foster parent licensed under chapter 74.15 RCW. [2004 c 84 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.570 Life insurance—Lawful travel destinations.** (1)

No life insurer may deny or refuse to accept an application for insurance, or refuse to insure, refuse to renew, cancel, restrict, or otherwise terminate a policy of insurance, or charge a different rate for the same coverage, based upon the applicant's or insured person's past or future lawful travel destinations.

(2) Nothing in this section prohibits a life insurer from excluding or limiting coverage of specific lawful travel, or charging a differential rate for such coverage, when bona fide statistical differences in risk or exposure have been substantiated. [2005 c 441 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.580 Employer-owned life insurance—Requirements.** (1)

"Employer-owned life insurance policy" as used in this section and RCW 48.18.583 means an insurance policy purchased by an employer on the life of an employee, for the benefit of a person other than the employee or the employee's personal representative.

(2) An employer-owned life insurance policy may not be made or take effect unless at the time the contract is made the individual insured consents to the contract in writing.

(3) An employer may not retaliate in any manner against an employee for providing written notice that he or she does not want to be insured under an employer-owned life insurance policy.

(4) No later than thirty days after the date on which an employer purchases an employer-owned life insurance policy on the life of an employee, the employer must provide to the employee a written notice that contains the following information:

(a) A statement that the employer carries an employer-owned life insurance policy on the life of the employee;

(b) The identity of the insurance carrier of the policy;

(c) The maximum face amount of the policy at issue; and

(d) The identity of the beneficiary of the policy. [2005 c 337 § 4.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** See note following RCW 48.18.030.

**RCW 48.18.583 Employer-owned life insurance—Application to policies.** With respect to employer-owned life insurance policies, chapter 337, Laws of 2005 shall apply only to policies issued and delivered after July 24, 2005. [2005 c 337 § 6.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** See note following RCW 48.18.030.

**RCW 48.18.586 Employer-owned life insurance—Rules.** The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement RCW 48.18.010, 48.18.030, 48.18.060, 48.18.580, and 48.18.583. [2005 c 337 § 7.]

**Finding—Intent—2005 c 337:** See note following RCW 48.18.030.

**RCW 48.18.600 Usage-based insurance—Restrictions on information collected.** (1) For the purposes of this section, "usage-based insurance" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.19.040.

(2) Location data may not be collected without:

(a) Disclosure to the insured that such information is being collected as required by RCW 46.35.020; and

(b) The insured's consent.

(3) Individually identifiable usage information retrieved from a recording device may only be used and/or retained:

(a) For purposes of determining premiums; or

(b) As allowed by law in RCW 46.35.030.

(4) Individually identifiable usage information retrieved from a recording device may not be disclosed to any third party except as allowed by RCW 46.35.030. [2012 c 222 § 3.]

**RCW 48.18.610 Customer satisfaction benefits.** (1) An insurer may include contractual benefits based on customer satisfaction as part of an insurance policy. The insurer must file the policy or endorsement for approval as required by RCW 48.18.100. The contractual benefits may include sums of money provided or credited to a policyholder if the policyholder is dissatisfied with the service provided by their insurer. A sum that is provided to or credited to a policyholder as part of an approved contractual benefit based on customer satisfaction is not "premium" for the purposes of RCW 48.18.170. A policy premium reduced by such a credit will be taxed on the full cost of the premium before application of the customer satisfaction credit.

(2) This section applies only to personal insurance as defined in RCW 48.18.545(1)(g). [2016 c 121 § 1.]

**RCW 48.18.900 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 § 114.]