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**SENATE BILL 5180**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Hobbs, Zeiger, Takko, Fortunato, Rolfes, Conway, Schoesler, Short, Palumbo, Hasegawa, Wagoner, and Mullet; by request of Military Department

AN ACT Relating to the armed forces exceptions for giving notice of termination of tenancy; amending RCW 59.18.200, 59.18.220, 59.20.030, and 59.20.090; and reenacting and amending RCW 59.18.030.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 59.18.030 and 2016 c 66 s 1 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Certificate of inspection" means an unsworn statement, declaration, verification, or certificate made in accordance with the requirements of RCW 9A.72.085 by a qualified inspector that states that the landlord has not failed to fulfill any substantial obligation imposed under RCW 59.18.060 that endangers or impairs the health or safety of a tenant, including (a) structural members that are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety, (b) exposure of the occupants to the weather, (c) plumbing and sanitation defects that directly expose the occupants to the risk of illness or injury, (d) not providing facilities adequate to supply heat and water and hot water as reasonably required by the tenant, (e) providing heating or ventilation systems that are not functional or are hazardous, (f) defective, hazardous, or missing electrical wiring or electrical service, (g) defective or hazardous exits that increase the risk of injury to occupants, and (h) conditions that increase the risk of fire.

(2) "Commercially reasonable manner," with respect to a sale of a deceased tenant's personal property, means a sale where every aspect of the sale, including the method, manner, time, place, and other terms, must be commercially reasonable. If commercially reasonable, a landlord may sell the tenant's property by public or private proceedings, by one or more contracts, as a unit or in parcels, and at any time and place and on any terms.

(3) "Comprehensive reusable tenant screening report" means a tenant screening report prepared by a consumer reporting agency at the direction of and paid for by the prospective tenant and made available directly to a prospective landlord at no charge, which contains all of the following: (a) A consumer credit report prepared by a consumer reporting agency within the past thirty days; (b) the prospective tenant's criminal history; (c) the prospective tenant's eviction history; (d) an employment verification; and (e) the prospective tenant's address and rental history.

(4) "Criminal history" means a report containing or summarizing (a) the prospective tenant's criminal convictions and pending cases, the final disposition of which antedates the report by no more than seven years, and (b) the results of a sex offender registry and United States department of the treasury's office of foreign assets control search, all based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(5) "Designated person" means a person designated by the tenant under RCW 59.18.590.

(6) "Distressed home" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(7) "Distressed home conveyance" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(8) "Distressed home purchaser" has the same meaning as in RCW 61.34.020.

(9) "Dwelling unit" is a structure or that part of a structure which is used as a home, residence, or sleeping place by one person or by two or more persons maintaining a common household, including but not limited to single-family residences and units of multiplexes, apartment buildings, and mobile homes.

(10) "Eviction history" means a report containing or summarizing the contents of any records of unlawful detainer actions concerning the prospective tenant that are reportable in accordance with state law, are lawful for landlords to consider, and are obtained after a search based on at least seven years of address history and alias information provided by the prospective tenant or available in the consumer credit report.

(11) "Gang" means a group that: (a) Consists of three or more persons; (b) has identifiable leadership or an identifiable name, sign, or symbol; and (c) on an ongoing basis, regularly conspires and acts in concert mainly for criminal purposes.

(12) "Gang-related activity" means any activity that occurs within the gang or advances a gang purpose.

(13) "In danger of foreclosure" means any of the following:

(a) The homeowner has defaulted on the mortgage and, under the terms of the mortgage, the mortgagee has the right to accelerate full payment of the mortgage and repossess, sell, or cause to be sold the property;

(b) The homeowner is at least thirty days delinquent on any loan that is secured by the property; or

(c) The homeowner has a good faith belief that he or she is likely to default on the mortgage within the upcoming four months due to a lack of funds, and the homeowner has reported this belief to:

(i) The mortgagee;

(ii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.134 RCW;

(iii) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 19.146 RCW;

(iv) A person licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 18.85 RCW;

(v) An attorney-at-law;

(vi) A mortgage counselor or other credit counselor licensed or certified by any federal, state, or local agency; or

(vii) Any other party to a distressed property conveyance.

(14) "Landlord" means the owner, lessor, or sublessor of the dwelling unit or the property of which it is a part, and in addition means any person designated as representative of the owner, lessor, or sublessor including, but not limited to, an agent, a resident manager, or a designated property manager.

(15) "Mortgage" is used in the general sense and includes all instruments, including deeds of trust, that are used to secure an obligation by an interest in real property.

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

(a) All or any part of the legal title to property; or

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

(17) "Person" means an individual, group of individuals, corporation, government, or governmental agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, or association, two or more persons having a joint or common interest, or any other legal or commercial entity.

(18) "Premises" means a dwelling unit, appurtenances thereto, grounds, and facilities held out for the use of tenants generally and any other area or facility which is held out for use by the tenant.

(19) "Property" or "rental property" means all dwelling units on a contiguous quantity of land managed by the same landlord as a single, rental complex.

(20) "Prospective landlord" means a landlord or a person who advertises, solicits, offers, or otherwise holds a dwelling unit out as available for rent.

(21) "Prospective tenant" means a tenant or a person who has applied for residential housing that is governed under this chapter.

(22) "Qualified inspector" means a United States department of housing and urban development certified inspector; a Washington state licensed home inspector; an American society of home inspectors certified inspector; a private inspector certified by the national association of housing and redevelopment officials, the American association of code enforcement, or other comparable professional association as approved by the local municipality; a municipal code enforcement officer; a Washington licensed structural engineer; or a Washington licensed architect.

(23) "Reasonable attorneys' fees," where authorized in this chapter, means an amount to be determined including the following factors: The time and labor required, the novelty and difficulty of the questions involved, the skill requisite to perform the legal service properly, the fee customarily charged in the locality for similar legal services, the amount involved and the results obtained, and the experience, reputation and ability of the lawyer or lawyers performing the services.

(24) "Reasonable manner," with respect to disposing of a deceased tenant's personal property, means to dispose of the property by donation to a not-for-profit charitable organization, by removal of the property by a trash hauler or recycler, or by any other method that is reasonable under the circumstances.

(25) "Rental agreement" means all agreements which establish or modify the terms, conditions, rules, regulations, or any other provisions concerning the use and occupancy of a dwelling unit.

(26) A "single-family residence" is a structure maintained and used as a single dwelling unit. Notwithstanding that a dwelling unit shares one or more walls with another dwelling unit, it shall be deemed a single-family residence if it has direct access to a street and shares neither heating facilities nor hot water equipment, nor any other essential facility or service, with any other dwelling unit.

(27) A "tenant" is any person who is entitled to occupy a dwelling unit primarily for living or dwelling purposes under a rental agreement.

(28) "Tenant representative" means:

(a) A personal representative of a deceased tenant's estate if known to the landlord;

(b) If the landlord has no knowledge that a personal representative has been appointed for the deceased tenant's estate, a person claiming to be a successor of the deceased tenant who has provided the landlord with proof of death and an affidavit made by the person that meets the requirements of RCW 11.62.010(2);

(c) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection or a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, a designated person; or

(d) In the absence of a personal representative under (a) of this subsection, a person claiming to be a successor under (b) of this subsection, or a designated person under (c) of this subsection, any person who provides the landlord with reasonable evidence that he or she is a successor of the deceased tenant as defined in RCW 11.62.005. The landlord has no obligation to identify all of the deceased tenant's successors.

(29) "Tenant screening" means using a consumer report or other information about a prospective tenant in deciding whether to make or accept an offer for residential rental property to or from a prospective tenant.

(30) "Tenant screening report" means a consumer report as defined in RCW 19.182.010 and any other information collected by a tenant screening service.

(31) "Active duty" means service authorized by the president of the United States, the secretary of defense, or the governor for a period of more than thirty consecutive days.

(32) "Orders" means written official military orders, or any written notification, certification, or verification from the service member's commanding officer, with respect to the service member's current or future military status.

(33) "Permanent change of station" means: (a) Transfer to a unit located at another port or duty station; (b) change in a unit's home port or permanent duty station; (c) call to active duty for a period not less than ninety days; (d) separation; or (e) retirement.

(34) "Service member" means an active member of the United States armed forces, a member of a military reserve component, or a member of the national guard who is either stationed in or a resident of Washington state.

**Sec.**  RCW 59.18.200 and 2008 c 113 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) When premises are rented for an indefinite time, with monthly or other periodic rent reserved, such tenancy shall be construed to be a tenancy from month to month, or from period to period on which rent is payable, and shall be terminated by written notice of twenty days or more, preceding the end of any of the months or periods of tenancy, given by either party to the other.

(b) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may terminate a rental agreement with less than twenty days' written notice if the tenant receives ((~~reassignment~~)) permanent change of station or deployment orders that do not allow a twenty-day written notice.

(2)(a) Whenever a landlord plans to change to a policy of excluding children, the landlord shall give a written notice to a tenant at least ninety days before termination of the tenancy to effectuate such change in policy. Such ninety-day notice shall be in lieu of the notice required by subsection (1) of this section. However, if after giving the ninety-day notice the change in policy is delayed, the notice requirements of subsection (1) of this section shall apply unless waived by the tenant.

(b) Whenever a landlord plans to change any apartment or apartments to a condominium form of ownership, the landlord shall provide a written notice to a tenant at least one hundred twenty days before termination of the tenancy, in compliance with RCW 64.34.440(1), to effectuate such change. The one hundred twenty-day notice is in lieu of the notice required in subsection (1) of this section. However, if after providing the one hundred twenty-day notice the change to a condominium form of ownership is delayed, the notice requirements in subsection (1) of this section apply unless waived by the tenant.

**Sec.**  RCW 59.18.220 and 2003 c 7 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) In all cases where premises are rented for a specified time, by express or implied contract, the tenancy shall be deemed terminated at the end of such specified time.

(2) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may terminate a tenancy for a specified time if the tenant receives ((~~reassignment~~)) permanent change of station or deployment orders. ((~~The tenant shall provide notice of the reassignment or deployment order to the landlord no later than seven days after receipt~~)) The tenancy shall be terminated by written notice of twenty days or more to the landlord, which notice shall include a copy of the official military orders or a signed letter from the service member's commanding officer confirming any of the following criteria are met:

(a) The service member is required, pursuant to a permanent change of station orders, to move thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises;

(b) The service member is prematurely or involuntarily discharged or released from active duty;

(c) The service member is released from active duty after having leased the rental premises while on active duty status and the rental premises is thirty-five miles or more from the service member's home of record prior to entering active duty;

(d) After entering into a rental agreement, the commanding officer directs the service member to move into government provided housing or the service member becomes eligible to live in and opts to move into government provided housing;

(e) The service member receives temporary duty orders, temporary change of station orders, or active duty orders to an area thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises, provided such orders are for a period not less than ninety days; or

(f) The service member has leased the property, but prior to taking possession of the rental premises, receives change of station orders to an area that is thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises.

**Sec.**  RCW 59.20.030 and 2008 c 116 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

For purposes of this chapter:

(1) "Abandoned" as it relates to a mobile home, manufactured home, or park model owned by a tenant in a mobile home park, mobile home park cooperative, or mobile home park subdivision or tenancy in a mobile home lot means the tenant has defaulted in rent and by absence and by words or actions reasonably indicates the intention not to continue tenancy;

(2) "Eligible organization" includes local governments, local housing authorities, nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes in the state of Washington, and regional or statewide nonprofit housing assistance organizations;

(3) "Housing authority" or "authority" means any of the public body corporate and politic created in RCW 35.82.030;

(4) "Landlord" means the owner of a mobile home park and includes the agents of a landlord;

(5) "Local government" means a town government, city government, code city government, or county government in the state of Washington;

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

(7) "Manufactured/mobile home" means either a manufactured home or a mobile home;

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

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

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

(11) "Mobile home park cooperative" or "manufactured housing cooperative" means real property consisting of common areas and two or more lots held out for placement of mobile homes, manufactured homes, or park models in which both the individual lots and the common areas are owned by an association of shareholders which leases or otherwise extends the right to occupy individual lots to its own members;

(12) "Mobile home park subdivision" or "manufactured housing subdivision" means real property, whether it is called a subdivision, condominium, or planned unit development, consisting of common areas and two or more lots held for placement of mobile homes, manufactured homes, or park models in which there is private ownership of the individual lots and common, undivided ownership of the common areas by owners of the individual lots;

(13) "Notice of sale" means a notice required under RCW 59.20.300 to be delivered to all tenants of a manufactured/mobile home community and other specified parties within fourteen days after the date on which any advertisement, multiple listing, or public notice advertises that a manufactured/mobile home community is for sale;

(14) "Park model" means a recreational vehicle intended for permanent or semi-permanent installation and is used as a primary residence;

(15) "Qualified sale of manufactured/mobile home community" means the sale, as defined in RCW 82.45.010, of land and improvements comprising a manufactured/mobile home community that is transferred in a single purchase to a qualified tenant organization or to an eligible organization for the purpose of preserving the property as a manufactured/mobile home community;

(16) "Qualified tenant organization" means a formal organization of tenants within a manufactured/mobile home community, with the only requirement for membership consisting of being a tenant;

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

(18) "Tenant" means any person, except a transient, who rents a mobile home lot;

(19) "Transient" means a person who rents a mobile home lot for a period of less than one month for purposes other than as a primary residence;

(20) "Occupant" means any person, including a live-in care provider, other than a tenant, who occupies a mobile home, manufactured home, or park model and mobile home lot;

(21) "Active duty" means service authorized by the president of the United States, the secretary of defense, or the governor for a period of more than thirty consecutive days.

(22) "Orders" means written official military orders, or any written notification, certification, or verification from the service member's commanding officer, with respect to the service member's current or future military status;

(23) "Permanent change of station" means: (a) Transfer to a unit located at another port or duty station; (b) change of a unit's home port or permanent duty station; (c) call to active duty for a period not less than ninety days; (d) separation; or (e) retirement.

(24) "Service member" means an active member of the United States armed forces, a member of a military reserve component, or a member of the national guard who is either stationed in or a resident of Washington state.

**Sec.**  RCW 59.20.090 and 2010 c 8 s 19034 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Unless otherwise agreed rental agreements shall be for a term of one year. Any rental agreement of whatever duration shall be automatically renewed for the term of the original rental agreement, unless a different specified term is agreed upon.

(2) A landlord seeking to increase the rent upon expiration of the term of a rental agreement of any duration shall notify the tenant in writing three months prior to the effective date of any increase in rent.

(3) A tenant shall notify the landlord in writing one month prior to the expiration of a rental agreement of an intention not to renew.

(4)(a) The tenant may terminate the rental agreement upon thirty days written notice whenever a change in the location of the tenant's employment requires a change in his or her residence, and shall not be liable for rental following such termination unless after due diligence and reasonable effort the landlord is not able to rent the mobile home lot at a fair rental. If the landlord is not able to rent the lot, the tenant shall remain liable for the rental specified in the rental agreement until the lot is rented or the original term ends.

(b) Any tenant who is a member of the armed forces, including the national guard and armed forces reserves, or that tenant's spouse or dependent, may terminate a rental agreement with less than thirty days notice if the tenant receives ((~~reassignment~~)) permanent change of station or deployment orders which do not allow greater notice. The ((~~tenant~~)) service member shall provide ((~~notice of the reassignment or deployment order to~~)) the landlord ((~~no later than seven days after receipt~~)) a copy of the official military orders or a signed letter from the service member's commanding officer confirming any of the following criteria are met:

(i) The service member is required, pursuant to permanent change of station orders, to move thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises;

(ii) The service member is prematurely or involuntarily discharged or released from active duty;

(iii) The service member is released from active duty after having leased the rental premises while on active duty status and the rental premises is thirty-five miles or more from the service member's home of record prior to entering active duty;

(iv) After entering into a rental agreement, the commanding officer directs the service member to move into government provided housing or the service member becomes eligible to live in and opts to move into government provided housing;

(v) The service member receives temporary duty orders, temporary change of station orders, or state active duty orders to an area thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises, provided such orders are for a period not less than ninety days; or

(vi) The service member has leased the property, but prior to taking possession of the rental premises, receives change of station orders to an area that is thirty-five miles or more from the location of the rental premises.

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