HOUSE BILL 1754

State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session

By Representatives Santos, Jinkins, and Pollet

Read first time 01/30/19. Referred to Committee on Housing, Community Development & Veterans.

- AN ACT Relating to the hosting of the homeless by religious organizations; amending RCW 36.01.290, 35.21.915, and 35A.21.360; and
- 2 Organizations; amending RCW 36.01.290, 33.21.913, and 33A.21.360; and
- 3 creating a new section.
- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:
- 5 <u>NEW SECTION.</u> **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that residents in 6 temporary settings hosted by religious organizations are a
- 7 particularly vulnerable population that do not have access to the
- 8 same services as citizens with more stable housing. Residents in
- 9 these settings, including outdoor uses such as outdoor encampments,
- 10 indoor overnight shelters, temporary small houses on site, and
- 11 homeless-occupied vehicle resident safe parking, can be at increased
- 12 risk of exploitation, theft, unsanitary living conditions, and
- 13 physical harm. Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature that
- 14 local municipalities have the discretion to protect the health and
- 15 safety of residents in temporary settings that are hosted by
- 16 religious organizations. Furthermore, the legislature finds and
- 17 declares that hosted outdoor encampments, indoor overnight shelters,
- 18 temporary small houses on site, and homeless-occupied vehicle
- 19 resident safe parking serve as pathways for individuals experiencing
- 20 homelessness to receive services and achieve financial stability,
- 21 health, and permanent housing.

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Sec. 2. RCW 36.01.290 and 2010 c 175 s 2 are each amended to 2 read as follows:

- (1) A religious organization may host ((temporary encampments for)) the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization whether within buildings located on the property or elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.
- (2) A county may not enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that:
- (a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter, such as an outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking, for homeless persons on property owned or controlled by the religious organization;
- (b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; ((organge))
- (c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated with the review and approval of ((the required)) permit applications.

 Actual costs must be reasonable and not include departmental overhead. Actual permit costs are reasonable if they do not cause an undue burden to the permit applicant;
- (d) Specifically limits a religious organization's availability to host an outdoor encampment on its property or property controlled by the religious organization to fewer than six months during any calendar year. However, a county may enact an ordinance or regulation that requires a three-month separation of time between subsequent or established outdoor encampments at a particular site;
- (e) Specifically limits a religious organization's outdoor encampment hosting term to fewer than four consecutive months;
- (f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization outdoor encampment hostings within the same municipality during any given period of time. Simultaneous and adjacent hostings of outdoor encampments by religious organizations may be limited if located within one thousand feet of another outdoor encampment concurrently hosted by a religious organization;

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- (g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other congregationally sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance or memorandum of understanding between the host religious organization and the jurisdiction:
- 8 <u>(i) No less than one space may be devoted to safe parking per ten</u>
 9 on-site parking spaces;
 - (ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities, with the provision for proper disposal of waste if recreational vehicles are hosted;
 - (h) Limits a religious organization's availability to host an indoor overnight shelter in spaces with at least two accessible exits due to lack of sprinklers or other fire-related concerns. The host religious organization and county may enter into a memorandum of understanding to include local fire district inspections, an outline for appropriate emergency procedures, a determination of the most viable means to evacuate occupants from inside the host site with appropriate illuminated exit signage, panic bar exit doors, and a completed fire watch agreement indicating:
 - (i) Posted safe means of egress;

- 24 <u>(ii) Operable smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors as</u>
 25 necessary, and fire extinguishers;
 - (iii) A plan for monitors who spend the night awake and are familiar with emergency protocols, who have suitable communication devices, and who know how to contact the local fire department; or
 - (i) Limits a religious organization's ability to host temporary small houses on land owned or controlled by the religious organization, except for recommendations that are in accord with the following criteria:
- (i) A renewable one-year duration agreed to by the host religious organization and local jurisdiction via a memorandum of understanding;
- (ii) Maintaining a maximum unit square footage of one hundred
 twenty square feet, with units set at least six feet apart;
- (iii) Electricity and heat, if provided, must be inspected by the local jurisdiction;

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- 1 <u>(iv) Space heaters, if provided, must be approved by the local</u> 2 fire authority;
 - (v) Doors and windows must be included and be lockable, with a recommendation that the managing agency and host religious organization also possess keys;
 - (vi) Each unit must have a fire extinguisher;

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- (vii) Adequate restrooms must be provided, including restrooms solely for families if present, along with handwashing and potable running water to be available if not provided within the individual units, including accommodating black water;
- (viii) A recommendation for the host religious organization to partner with regional homeless service providers to develop pathways to permanent housing.
- (3) (a) A county may enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that requires a host religious organization and a distinct managing agency using the religious organization's property, owned or controlled by the religious organization, for hostings to include outdoor encampments, temporary small houses on site, indoor overnight shelters, or vehicle resident safe parking to enter into a memorandum of understanding to protect the public health and safety of both the residents of the particular hosting and the residents of the county.
- (b) At a minimum, the agreement must include information regarding: The right of a resident in an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor overnight shelter to seek public health and safety assistance, the resident's ability to access social services on site, and the resident's ability to directly interact with the host religious organization, including the ability to express any concerns regarding the managing agency to the religious organization; a written code of conduct agreed to by the managing agency, if any, host religious organization, and all volunteers working with residents of the outdoor encampment, temporary small house on site, indoor overnight shelter, or vehicle resident safe parking; and when a publicly funded managing agency exists, the ability for the host religious organization to interact with residents of the outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking using a release of information.
- 39 <u>(4) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an</u>
 40 <u>outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, or indoor</u>

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- overnight shelter, or the host religious organization's managing 1 agency must ensure that the county or local law enforcement agency 2 has completed sex offender checks of all adult residents and quests 3 if the hosting is supported by public funding or such checks are 4 included in a memorandum of understanding between the host religious 5 6 organization and jurisdiction, with the host religious organization retaining the authority to allow such offenders to remain on the 7 property. A host religious organization or host religious 8 organization's managing agency performing any hosting of vehicle 9 10 resident safe parking must inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and 11 provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards. 12
 - (5) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor overnight shelter, with a publicly funded managing agency, must work with the county to utilize Washington's homeless client management information system, as provided for in RCW 43.185C.180. When the religious organization does not partner with a managing agency, the religious organization is encouraged to partner with a local homeless services provider using the Washington homeless client managing information system. Any managing agency receiving any funding from local continuum of care programs must utilize the homeless client management information system. Temporary, overnight, extreme weather shelter provided in religious organization buildings does not need to meet this requirement.
 - (6) For the purposes of this section $((\tau))$:

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- (a) "Managing agency" means an organization such as a religious organization or other organized entity that has the capacity to organize and manage a homeless outdoor encampment, temporary small houses on-site, indoor overnight shelter, and a vehicle resident safe parking program.
- 32 <u>(b) "Outdoor encampment" means any temporary tent or structure</u> 33 <u>encampment, or both.</u>
- 34 <u>(c)</u> "Religious organization" means the federally protected 35 practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution 36 that owns or controls real property.
- 37 <u>(d) "Temporary" means not affixed to land permanently and not</u> 38 using underground utilities.
- 39 $((\frac{(4)}{(4)}))$ An appointed or elected public official, public 40 employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from

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- 1 civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions
- 2 for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this
- section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a 3
- result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in 4
- this section. 5

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- **Sec. 3.** RCW 35.21.915 and 2010 c 175 s 3 are each amended to 6 7 read as follows:
- (1) A religious organization may host ((temporary encampments 8 for)) the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious 9 organization whether within buildings located on the property or 10 11 elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.
- (2) A city or town may not enact an ordinance or regulation or 13 take any other action that:
 - (a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter, such as an outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking, for homeless persons on property owned or controlled by the religious organization;
 - (b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; ((or))
 - (c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated with the review and approval of ((the required)) permit applications. Actual costs must be reasonable and not include departmental overhead. Actual permit costs are reasonable if they do not cause an undue burden to the permit applicant;
 - (d) Specifically limits a religious organization's availability to host an outdoor encampment on its property or property controlled by the religious organization to fewer than six months during any calendar year. However, a city or town may enact an ordinance or regulation that requires a three-month separation of time between subsequent or established outdoor encampments at a particular site;
- (e) Specifically limits a religious organization's outdoor 37 38 encampment hosting term to fewer than four consecutive months;

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- (f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization outdoor encampment hostings within the same municipality during any given period of time. Simultaneous and adjacent hostings of outdoor encampments by religious organizations may be limited if located within one thousand feet of another outdoor encampment concurrently hosted by a religious organization;
- (g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other congregationally sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance or memorandum of understanding between the host religious organization and the jurisdiction:
- 14 <u>(i) No less than one space may be devoted to safe parking per ten</u>
 15 <u>on-site parking spaces;</u>
 - (ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities, with the provision for proper disposal of waste if recreational vehicles are hosted;
 - (h) Limits a religious organization's availability to host an indoor overnight shelter in spaces with at least two accessible exits due to lack of sprinklers or other fire-related concerns. The host religious organization and city or town may enter into a memorandum of understanding to include local fire district inspections, an outline for appropriate emergency procedures, a determination of the most viable means to evacuate occupants from inside the host site with appropriate illuminated exit signage, panic bar exit doors, and a completed fire watch agreement indicating:
 - (i) Posted safe means of egress;

- 30 <u>(ii) Operable smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors as</u>
 31 necessary, and fire extinguishers;
 - (iii) A plan for monitors who spend the night awake and are familiar with emergency protocols, who have suitable communication devices, and who know how to contact the local fire department; or
- (i) Limits a religious organization's ability to host temporary

 small houses on land owned or controlled by the religious

 organization, except for recommendations that are in accord with the

 following criteria:

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- 1 <u>(i) A renewable one-year duration agreed to by the host religious</u>
 2 <u>organization and local jurisdiction via a memorandum of</u>
 3 <u>understanding;</u>
 - (ii) Maintaining a maximum unit square footage of one hundred twenty square feet, with units set at least six feet apart;
- 6 (iii) Electricity and heat, if provided, must be inspected by the local jurisdiction;
- 8 <u>(iv) Space heaters, if provided, must be approved by the local</u>
 9 <u>fire authority;</u>
- 10 <u>(v) Doors and windows must be included and be lockable, with a</u>
 11 <u>recommendation that the managing agency and host religious</u>
 12 organization also possess keys;
 - (vi) Each unit must have a fire extinguisher;

- (vii) Adequate restrooms must be provided, including restrooms
 solely for families if present, along with handwashing and potable
 running water to be available if not provided within the individual
 units, including accommodating black water;
 - (viii) A recommendation for the host religious organization to partner with regional homeless service providers to develop pathways to permanent housing.
 - (3) (a) A city or town may enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that requires a host religious organization and a distinct managing agency using the religious organization's property, owned or controlled by the religious organization, for hostings to include outdoor encampments, temporary small houses on site, indoor overnight shelters, or vehicle resident safe parking to enter into a memorandum of understanding to protect the public health and safety of both the residents of the particular hosting and the residents of the city or town.
 - (b) At a minimum, the agreement must include information regarding: The right of a resident in an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor overnight shelter to seek public health and safety assistance, the resident's ability to access social services on site, and the resident's ability to directly interact with the host religious organization, including the ability to express any concerns regarding the managing agency to the religious organization; a written code of conduct agreed to by the managing agency, if any, host religious organization, and all volunteers working with residents of the outdoor encampment, temporary small house on site, indoor overnight

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shelter, or vehicle resident safe parking; and when a publicly funded managing agency exists, the ability for the host religious organization to interact with residents of the outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking using a release of information.

- (4) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, or indoor overnight shelter, or the host religious organization's managing agency must ensure that the city or town or local law enforcement agency has completed sex offender checks of all adult residents and guests if the hosting is supported by public funding or such checks are included in a memorandum of understanding between the host religious organization and jurisdiction, with the host religious organization retaining the authority to allow such offenders to remain on the property. A host religious organization or host religious organization's managing agency performing any hosting of vehicle resident safe parking must inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards.
 - (5) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor overnight shelter, with a publicly funded managing agency, must work with the city or town to utilize Washington's homeless client management information system, as provided for in RCW 43.185C.180. When the religious organization does not partner with a managing agency, the religious organization is encouraged to partner with a local homeless services provider using the Washington homeless client managing information system. Any managing agency receiving any funding from local continuum of care programs must utilize the homeless client management information system. Temporary, overnight, extreme weather shelter provided in religious organization buildings does not need to meet this requirement.
 - (6) For the purposes of this section((τ)):
 - (a) "Managing agency" means an organization such as a religious organization or other organized entity that has the capacity to organize and manage a homeless outdoor encampment, temporary small houses on-site, indoor overnight shelter, and a vehicle resident safe parking program.

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1 (b) "Outdoor encampment" means any temporary tent or structure 2 encampment, or both.

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- (c) "Religious organization" means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.
- (d) "Temporary" means not affixed to land permanently and not using underground utilities.
- 8 ((\(\frac{(4+)}{4+}\)) (7) An appointed or elected public official, public 9 employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions 11 for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this 12 section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a 13 result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section.
- 15 **Sec. 4.** RCW 35A.21.360 and 2010 c 175 s 4 are each amended to 16 read as follows:
 - (1) A religious organization may host ((temporary encampments for)) the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization whether within buildings located on the property or elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.
- 21 (2) A code city may not enact an ordinance or regulation or take 22 any other action that:
 - (a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter, such as an outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking, for homeless persons on property owned or controlled by the religious organization;
 - (b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; $((\Theta r))$
- 35 (c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated
 36 with the review and approval of ((the required)) permit applications.
 37 Actual costs must be reasonable and not include departmental
 38 overhead. Actual permit costs are reasonable if they do not cause an
 39 undue burden to the permit applicant;

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(d) Specifically limits a religious organization's availability to host an outdoor encampment on its property or property controlled by the religious organization to fewer than six months during any calendar year. However, a code city may enact an ordinance or regulation that requires a three-month separation of time between subsequent or established outdoor encampments at a particular site;

- (e) Specifically limits a religious organization's outdoor encampment hosting term to fewer than four consecutive months;
- (f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization outdoor encampment hostings within the same municipality during any given period of time. Simultaneous and adjacent hostings of outdoor encampments by religious organizations may be limited if located within one thousand feet of another outdoor encampment concurrently hosted by a religious organization;
- (g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other congregationally sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance or memorandum of understanding between the host religious organization and the jurisdiction:
- 22 <u>(i) No less than one space may be devoted to safe parking per ten</u>
 23 on-site parking spaces;
 - (ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities, with the provision for proper disposal of waste if recreational vehicles are hosted;
 - (h) Limits a religious organization's availability to host an indoor overnight shelter in spaces with at least two accessible exits due to lack of sprinklers or other fire-related concerns. The host religious organization and code city may enter into a memorandum of understanding to include local fire district inspections, an outline for appropriate emergency procedures, a determination of the most viable means to evacuate occupants from inside the host site with appropriate illuminated exit signage, panic bar exit doors, and a completed fire watch agreement indicating:
 - (i) Posted safe means of egress;
- (ii) Operable smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors as necessary, and fire extinguishers;

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- 1 (iii) A plan for monitors who spend the night awake and are
 2 familiar with emergency protocols, who have suitable communication
 3 devices, and who know how to contact the local fire department; or
 - (i) Limits a religious organization's ability to host temporary small houses on land owned or controlled by the religious organization, except for recommendations that are in accord with the following criteria:
- 8 <u>(i) A renewable one-year duration agreed to by the host religious</u>
 9 <u>organization and local jurisdiction via a memorandum of</u>
 10 understanding;
 - (ii) Maintaining a maximum unit square footage of one hundred twenty square feet, with units set at least six feet apart;
- (iii) Electricity and heat, if provided, must be inspected by the local jurisdiction;
- 15 <u>(iv) Space heaters, if provided, must be approved by the local</u> 16 fire authority;
- 17 <u>(v) Doors and windows must be included and be lockable, with a</u>
 18 <u>recommendation that the managing agency and host religious</u>
 19 organization also possess keys;
 - (vi) Each unit must have a fire extinguisher;

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- (vii) Adequate restrooms must be provided, including restrooms solely for families if present, along with handwashing and potable running water to be available if not provided within the individual units, including accommodating black water;
- (viii) A recommendation for the host religious organization to partner with regional homeless service providers to develop pathways to permanent housing.
- (3) (a) A code city may enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that requires a host religious organization and a distinct managing agency using the religious organization's property, owned or controlled by the religious organization, for hostings to include outdoor encampments, temporary small houses on site, indoor overnight shelters, or vehicle resident safe parking to enter into a memorandum of understanding to protect the public health and safety of both the residents of the particular hosting and the residents of the code city.
- 37 <u>(b) At a minimum, the agreement must include information</u>
 38 <u>regarding: The right of a resident in an outdoor encampment, vehicle</u>
 39 <u>resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor</u>
 40 <u>overnight shelter to seek public health and safety assistance, the</u>

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resident's ability to access social services on site, and the resident's ability to directly interact with the host religious organization, including the ability to express any concerns regarding the managing agency to the religious organization; a written code of conduct agreed to by the managing agency, if any, host religious organization, and all volunteers working with residents of the outdoor encampment, temporary small house on site, indoor overnight shelter, or vehicle resident safe parking; and when a publicly funded managing agency exists, the ability for the host religious organization to interact with residents of the outdoor encampment, indoor overnight shelter, temporary small house on site, or vehicle resident safe parking using a release of information.

- (4) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, or indoor overnight shelter, or the host religious organization's managing agency must ensure that the code city or local law enforcement agency has completed sex offender checks of all adult residents and guests if the hosting is supported by public funding or such checks are included in a memorandum of understanding between the host religious organization and jurisdiction, with the host religious organization retaining the authority to allow such offenders to remain on the property. A host religious organization or host religious organization's managing agency performing any hosting of vehicle resident safe parking must inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards.
- (5) Any host religious organization performing any hosting of an outdoor encampment, vehicle resident safe parking, temporary small house on site, or indoor overnight shelter, with a publicly funded managing agency, must work with the code city to utilize Washington's homeless client management information system, as provided for in RCW 43.185C.180. When the religious organization does not partner with a managing agency, the religious organization is encouraged to partner with a local homeless services provider using the Washington homeless client managing information system. Any managing agency receiving any funding from local continuum of care programs must utilize the homeless client management information system. Temporary, overnight, extreme weather shelter provided in religious organization buildings does not need to meet this requirement.
 - (6) For the purposes of this section $((\tau))$:

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(a) "Managing agency" means an organization such as a religious organization or other organized entity that has the capacity to organize and manage a homeless outdoor encampment, temporary small houses on-site, indoor overnight shelter, and a vehicle resident safe parking program.

- (b) "Outdoor encampment" means any temporary tent or structure encampment, or both.
- (c) "Religious organization" means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.
- (d) "Temporary" means not affixed to land permanently and not using underground utilities.
- (((4))) <u>(7)</u> An appointed or elected public official, public employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section.

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