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**HOUSE BILL 1961**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Peterson and Ramel

AN ACT Relating to the authority of the courts to waive auditor's fees for filing and recording name change orders; amending RCW 4.24.130 and 36.18.010; and providing an effective date.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 4.24.130 and 2021 c 215 s 90 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Any person desiring a change of his or her name or that of his or her child or ward, may apply therefor to the district court of the judicial district in which he or she resides, by petition setting forth the reasons for such change; thereupon such court in its discretion may order a change of the name and thenceforth the new name shall be in place of the former.

(2) An offender under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections who applies to change his or her name under subsection (1) of this section shall submit a copy of the application to the department of corrections not fewer than five days before the entry of an order granting the name change. No offender under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections at the time of application shall be granted an order changing his or her name if the court finds that doing so will interfere with legitimate penological interests, except that no order shall be denied when the name change is requested for religious or legitimate cultural reasons or in recognition of marriage or dissolution of marriage. An offender under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections who receives an order changing his or her name shall submit a copy of the order to the department of corrections within five days of the entry of the order. Violation of this subsection is a misdemeanor.

(3) A sex offender subject to registration under RCW 9A.44.130 who applies to change his or her name under subsection (1) of this section shall follow the procedures set forth in RCW 9A.44.130(7).

(4) The district court shall collect the fees authorized by RCW 36.18.010 for filing and recording a name change order, and transmit the fee and the order to the county auditor. The court may collect a reasonable fee to cover the cost of transmitting the order to the county auditor. Upon affidavit by the person seeking the name change that the person is unable to pay the fees due to financial hardship, the court may waive the fees authorized by RCW 36.18.010 for filing and recording a name change order and direct the county auditor or recording officer to process the name change order at no expense to the person.

(5) Name change petitions may be filed and shall be heard in superior court when the person desiring a change of his or her name or that of his or her child or ward is a victim of domestic violence as defined in RCW 7.105.010 and the person seeks to have the name change file sealed due to reasonable fear for his or her safety or that of his or her child or ward. Upon granting the name change, the superior court shall seal the file if the court finds that the safety of the person seeking the name change or his or her child or ward warrants sealing the file. In all cases filed under this subsection, whether or not the name change petition is granted, there shall be no public access to any court record of the name change filing, proceeding, or order, unless the name change is granted but the file is not sealed.

**Sec.**  RCW 36.18.010 and 2019 c 448 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

((~~County~~)) Except as otherwise ordered by the court pursuant to RCW 4.24.130, county auditors or recording officers shall collect the following fees for their official services:

(1) For recording instruments, for the first page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, five dollars; for each additional page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, one dollar. The fee for recording multiple transactions contained in one instrument will be calculated for each transaction requiring separate indexing as required under RCW 65.04.050 as follows: The fee for each title or transaction is the same fee as the first page of any additional recorded document; the fee for additional pages is the same fee as for any additional pages for any recorded document; the fee for the additional pages may be collected only once and may not be collected for each title or transaction;

(2) For preparing and certifying copies, for the first page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, three dollars; for each additional page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, one dollar;

(3) For preparing noncertified copies, for each page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, one dollar;

(4) For administering an oath or taking an affidavit, with or without seal, two dollars;

(5) For issuing a marriage license, eight dollars, (this fee includes taking necessary affidavits, filing returns, indexing, and transmittal of a record of the marriage to the state registrar of vital statistics) plus an additional five dollar fee for use and support of the prevention of child abuse and neglect activities to be transmitted monthly to the state treasurer and deposited in the state general fund plus an additional ten dollar fee to be transmitted monthly to the state treasurer and deposited in the state general fund. The legislature intends to appropriate an amount at least equal to the revenue generated by this fee for the purposes of the displaced homemaker act, chapter 28B.04 RCW;

(6) For searching records per hour, eight dollars;

(7) For recording plats, fifty cents for each lot except cemetery plats for which the charge shall be twenty-five cents per lot; also one dollar for each acknowledgment, dedication, and description: PROVIDED, That there shall be a minimum fee of twenty-five dollars per plat;

(8) For recording of miscellaneous records not listed above, for the first page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, five dollars; for each additional page eight and one-half by fourteen inches or less, one dollar;

(9) For modernization and improvement of the recording and indexing system, a surcharge as provided in RCW 36.22.170;

(10) For recording an emergency nonstandard document as provided in RCW 65.04.047, fifty dollars, in addition to all other applicable recording fees;

(11) For recording instruments, a three dollar surcharge to be deposited into the Washington state library operations account created in RCW 43.07.129;

(12) For recording instruments, a two dollar surcharge to be deposited into the Washington state library-archives building account created in RCW 43.07.410 until the financing contract entered into by the secretary of state for the Washington state library-archives building is paid in full;

(13) For recording instruments, a surcharge as provided in RCW 36.22.178; and

(14) For recording instruments, except for documents recording a birth, marriage, divorce, or death or any documents otherwise exempted from a recording fee under state law, a surcharge as provided in RCW 36.22.179.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act takes effect July 1, 2022.

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