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**HOUSE BILL 2034**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Cheney, Taylor, Leavitt, Ramos, Reed, and Reeves; by request of Administrative Office of the Courts

AN ACT Relating to requiring counties and cities to provide the administrative office of the courts with notice of court reorganizations; and amending RCW 3.50.010, 3.50.060, 3.50.805, 3.50.810, 35.20.010, and 39.34.180.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 3.50.010 and 1984 c 258 s 103 are each amended to read as follows:

Any city or town with a population of four hundred thousand or less may by ordinance provide for an inferior court to be known and designated as a municipal court, which shall be entitled "The Municipal Court of . . . . . . . . . (insert name of city or town)," hereinafter designated and referred to as "municipal court," which court shall have jurisdiction and shall exercise all powers by this chapter declared to be vested in the municipal court, together with such other powers and jurisdiction as are generally conferred upon such court in this state either by common law or by express statute. However, no municipal court established under this section shall have jurisdiction over any matter until six months after a notice of intent to create a new municipal court is sent to the administrative office of the courts.

**Sec.**  RCW 3.50.060 and 1984 c 258 s 108 are each amended to read as follows:

A city or town electing to establish a municipal court pursuant to this chapter may terminate such court by adoption of an appropriate ordinance. However no municipal court may be terminated unless the municipality has complied with RCW 3.50.805, 3.50.810, 35.22.425, 35.23.595, ((~~35.24.455~~)) 35.23.555, 35.27.515, 35.30.100, and 35A.11.200.

A city or town newly establishing a municipal court pursuant to this chapter shall do so by adoption of an appropriate ordinance ((~~on or before December 1 of any year, to take effect January 1 of the following year~~)) as provided in RCW 3.50.010.

**Sec.**  RCW 3.50.805 and 2005 c 433 s 35 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter shall not terminate that court unless a notice of intent to terminate is sent to the administrative office of the courts six months in advance of the termination and the municipality has reached an agreement with the appropriate county or another municipality under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county or municipality is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district or municipal court as a result of the termination. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county or municipality are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county or municipality have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. A municipality that has entered into agreements with other municipalities that have terminated their municipal courts may not thereafter terminate its court unless each municipality has reached an agreement with the appropriate county in accordance with this section.

(2) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter may not repeal in its entirety that portion of its municipal code defining crimes while retaining the court's authority to hear and determine traffic infractions under chapter 46.63 RCW unless the municipality has reached an agreement with the county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW.

(3) A municipality operating a municipal court under this chapter may not repeal a provision of its municipal code which defines a crime equivalent to an offense listed in RCW 46.63.020 unless the municipality has reached an agreement with the county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the repeal. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW.

**Sec.**  RCW 3.50.810 and 2001 c 68 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Any city having entered into an agreement for court services with the county must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the county legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to February 1st of the year in which all district court judges are subject to election.

(2) Any city that terminates an agreement for court services to be provided by a district court may terminate the agreement only at the end of a four-year district court judicial term.

(3) A county that wishes to terminate an agreement with a city for the provision of court services must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the city legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to the expiration of the agreement.

**Sec.**  RCW 35.20.010 and 2005 c 433 s 37 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) There is hereby created and established in each incorporated city of this state having a population of more than four hundred thousand inhabitants, as shown by the federal or state census, whichever is the later, a municipal court, which shall be styled "The Municipal Court of . . . . . . (name of city)," hereinafter designated and referred to as the municipal court, which court shall have jurisdiction and shall exercise all the powers by this chapter declared to be vested in such municipal court, together with such powers and jurisdiction as is generally conferred in this state either by common law or statute. However, no municipal court established under this section shall have jurisdiction over any matter until six months after a notice of intent to create a new municipal court is sent to the administrative office of the courts.

(2) A municipality operating a municipal court under this section may terminate that court if the municipality has reached an agreement with the county under chapter 39.34 RCW under which the county is to be paid a reasonable amount for costs associated with prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing in criminal cases filed in district court as a result of the termination. However, no municipal court may be terminated under this section unless a notice of intent to terminate is sent to the administrative office of the courts six months in advance of the termination. The agreement shall provide for periodic review and renewal of the terms of the agreement. If the municipality and the county are unable to agree on the terms for renewal of the agreement, they shall be deemed to have entered into an agreement to submit the issue to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW. Pending conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the terms of the agreement shall remain in effect. The municipality and the county have the same rights and are subject to the same duties as other parties who have agreed to submit to arbitration under chapter 7.04A RCW.

(3) A city that has entered into an agreement for court services with the county must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the county legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to February 1st of the year in which all district court judges are subject to election. A city that terminates an agreement for court services to be provided by a district court may terminate the agreement only at the end of a four-year district court judicial term.

(4) A county that wishes to terminate an agreement with a city for the provision of court services must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement to the city legislative authority and to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to the expiration of the agreement.

**Sec.**  RCW 39.34.180 and 2021 c 41 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each county, city, and town is responsible for the prosecution, adjudication, sentencing, and incarceration of misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor offenses committed by adults in their respective jurisdictions, and referred from their respective law enforcement agencies, whether filed under state law or city ordinance, and must carry out these responsibilities through the use of their own courts, staff, and facilities, or by entering into contracts or interlocal agreements under this chapter to provide these services. Nothing in this section is intended to alter the statutory responsibilities of each county for the prosecution, adjudication, sentencing, and incarceration for not more than one year of felony offenders, nor shall this section apply to any offense initially filed by the prosecuting attorney as a felony offense or an attempt to commit a felony offense. The court of any county, city, or town that wishes to offer probation supervision services may enter into interlocal agreements under subsection (6) of this section to provide those services.

(2) The following principles must be followed in negotiating interlocal agreements or contracts: Cities and counties must consider (a) anticipated costs of services; and (b) anticipated and potential revenues to fund the services, including fines and fees, criminal justice funding, and state-authorized sales tax funding levied for criminal justice purposes.

(3) If an agreement as to the levels of compensation within an interlocal agreement or contract for gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor services cannot be reached between a city and county, then either party may invoke binding arbitration on the compensation issued by notice to the other party. In the case of establishing initial compensation, the notice shall request arbitration within thirty days. In the case of nonrenewal of an existing contract or interlocal agreement, the notice must be given one hundred twenty days prior to the expiration of the existing contract or agreement and the existing contract or agreement remains in effect until a new agreement is reached or until an arbitration award on the matter of fees is made. The city and county each select one arbitrator, and the initial two arbitrators pick a third arbitrator. This subsection does not apply to the extent that the interlocal agreement is for probation supervision services.

(4) A city or county that wishes to terminate an agreement for the provision of court services must provide written notice of the intent to terminate the agreement in accordance with RCW 3.50.810 and 35.20.010. This subsection does not apply to the extent that the interlocal agreement is for probation supervision services. The city or county shall provide a copy of the written notice to terminate an agreement for the provision of court services to the administrative office of the courts not less than one year prior to the expiration of the agreement.

(5) For cities or towns that have not adopted, in whole or in part, criminal code or ordinance provisions related to misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor crimes as defined by state law, this section shall have no application until July 1, 1998.

(6) Municipal courts or district courts may enter into interlocal agreements for pretrial and/or postjudgment probation supervision services pursuant to ARLJ 11. Such agreements shall not affect the jurisdiction of the court that imposes probation supervision, need not require the referral of all supervised cases by a jurisdiction, and may limit the referral for probation supervision services to a single case. An agreement for probation supervision services is not valid unless approved by the presiding judge of each participating court. The interlocal agreement may not require approval of the local executive and legislative bodies unless the interlocal agreement requires the expenditure of additional funds by the jurisdiction. If the jurisdiction providing probation supervision services is found liable for inadequate supervision, as provided in RCW 4.24.760(1), or is impacted by increased costs pursuant to the interlocal agreement, the presiding judge of the jurisdiction imposing probation supervision shall consult with the executive authority of the jurisdiction imposing probation supervision and determine whether to terminate the interlocal agreement for probation supervision services. All proceedings to grant, modify, or revoke probation must be held in the court that imposes probation supervision. Jail costs and the cost of other sanctions remain with the jurisdiction that imposes probation supervision.

The administrative office of the courts, in cooperation with the district and municipal court judges association and the Washington association of prosecuting attorneys, shall develop a model interlocal agreement.

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