

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5865

As of January 8, 2026

Title: An act relating to garnishment forms.

Brief Description: Concerning garnishment forms.

Sponsors: Senators Lovick and Wagoner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 1/13/26.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes statutory forms related to a writ of garnishment.
- Requires use of a form developed by the Washington Pattern Forms Committee, or a substantially equivalent form.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Tim Ford (786-7414)

Background: Garnishment is a legal process by which a judgment creditor may recover funds owed by a judgment debtor by compelling third parties to divert to the creditor certain funds owned by or owed to the debtor, such as funds held in the debtor's bank accounts or the debtor's wages held by an employer.

Garnishment Forms. Separate forms are created in statute for different purposes related to garnishment. There is an answer form for the garnishee to complete for a continuing lien on earnings. The answer requires information including, but not limited to:

- whether the garnishee is withholding the defendant's nonexempt earnings under a previously served writ for a continuing lien;
- whether the defendant was employed by the garnishee on the date the writ of

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- garnishment was issued, and the last day of employment;
- whether the defendant maintained a financial account with the garnishee;
- whether the garnishee has possession of any funds, personal property, or effects of the defendant;
- amount owed by the garnishee to the defendant at the time of service of the writ; or
- a calculation of the amount to be withheld for each pay period based on a formula of disposable earnings less any deductions—such as Social Security income or child support—or exempt amounts.

Washington Pattern Forms Committee. The Washington Pattern Forms Committee (WPFC) is the central authority for standardized court forms in the state of Washington. WPFC is a permanent committee established in 1978 by order of the Washington State Supreme Court to:

- implement the adoption of forms;
- consider requests for redrafting adopted forms; and
- oversee all necessary redrafting.

Summary of Bill: The statutory form for an answer to a writ of garnishment is removed. A garnishee is required to use a form developed by WPFC, or a substantially equivalent form.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 6, 2026.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.