
SENATE BILL 6290

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senators King and Conway

Read first time 01/22/26. Referred to Committee on Labor & Commerce.

1 AN ACT Relating to reorganizing the liquor and cannabis board
2 into separate liquor and cannabis boards and providing shared agency
3 administration; amending RCW 66.08.012 and 66.08.016; adding new
4 sections to chapter 66.08 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 69.50
5 RCW; creating new sections; and repealing RCW 66.08.014.

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

7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 66.08.012 and 2015 c 70 s 3 are each amended to read
8 as follows:

9 ~~((There shall be a board, known as the "Washington state liquor
10 and cannabis board," consisting of three members, to be appointed by
11 the governor, with the consent of the senate, who shall each be paid
12 an annual salary to be fixed by the governor in accordance with the
13 provisions of RCW 43.03.040. The governor may, in his or her
14 discretion, appoint one of the members as chair of the board, and a
15 majority of the members shall constitute a quorum of the board.)) (1)~~
16 The Washington state liquor and cannabis board is a state agency
17 composed of two separate boards:

18 (a) The Washington state liquor board; and

19 (b) The Washington state cannabis board.

20 (2) The liquor board consists of five members appointed as
21 follows:

1 (a) Two members appointed by the speaker of the house of
2 representatives;

3 (b) Two members appointed by the president of the senate;

4 (c) One member appointed by the governor.

5 (3) The cannabis board consists of five members appointed in the
6 same manner as provided in subsection (2) of this section.

7 (4) The governor may designate one member of each board as chair
8 of that board.

9 (5) A majority of the members of each board constitutes a quorum
10 for the transaction of business by that board.

11 (6) Each member shall be paid an annual salary to be fixed by the
12 governor in accordance with RCW 43.03.040.

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 66.08.016 and 1961 c 1 s 30 are each amended to read
14 as follows:

15 ~~((The board may employ such number of employees as in its~~
16 ~~judgment are required from time to time.)) The director appointed
17 under section 4 of this act, subject to the direction of the liquor
18 board and cannabis board within their respective jurisdictions, may
19 employ such number of employees as are required from time to time.~~

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 66.08
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) Members of the liquor board and cannabis board appointed
23 under RCW 66.08.012 shall be appointed for terms of six years and
24 shall hold office until their successors are appointed and qualified.
25 Of the initial members, one member must be appointed for a two-year
26 term, two members must be appointed for a four-year term, and two
27 members must be appointed for six-year terms.

28 (2) In case of a vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled by the
29 appointing authority that made the appointment for the unexpired
30 portion of the term in which the vacancy occurs.

31 (3) A vacancy in the membership of either board does not impair
32 the right of the remaining members of that board to act, except as
33 otherwise provided by law.

34 (4) The principal office of the Washington state liquor and
35 cannabis board shall be at the state capitol, and the board may
36 establish such other offices as it deems necessary.

37 (5) Any member of the liquor board or cannabis board may be
38 removed for inefficiency, malfeasance, or misfeasance in office, upon

1 specific written charges filed by the appointing authority that
2 appointed the member, who shall transmit such written charges to the
3 member accused and to the chief justice of the supreme court. The
4 chief justice shall thereupon designate a tribunal composed of three
5 judges of the superior court to hear and adjudicate the charges. The
6 tribunal shall fix the time of the hearing, which shall be public,
7 and the procedure for the hearing, and the decision of the tribunal
8 shall be final and not subject to review by the supreme court.
9 Removal of any member of the liquor board or cannabis board by the
10 tribunal shall disqualify such member for reappointment.

11 (6) Each member of the liquor board and cannabis board shall
12 devote his or her entire time to the duties of office and may not
13 hold any other public office.

14 (7) Before entering upon the duties of office, each member shall
15 enter into a surety bond executed by a surety company authorized to
16 do business in this state, payable to the state of Washington, to be
17 approved by the governor in the penal sum of \$50,000 conditioned upon
18 the faithful performance of duties, and shall take and subscribe to
19 the oath of office prescribed for elective state officers. The oath
20 and bond shall be filed with the secretary of state. The premium for
21 the bond shall be paid by the Washington state liquor and cannabis
22 board.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 66.08
24 RCW to read as follows:

25 (1) The liquor board and cannabis board, acting jointly, shall
26 employ a director to administer the Washington state liquor and
27 cannabis board.

28 (2) The director serves at the pleasure of the liquor board and
29 cannabis board acting jointly, and may be removed only upon the
30 affirmative vote of a majority of the members of each board.

31 (3) Each board has authority to set policy and priorities within
32 its jurisdiction. The director is responsible for the executive and
33 administrative functions of the agency and shall implement the lawful
34 policies and orders of each board within that board's jurisdiction.

35 (4) The director is the appointing authority for agency employees
36 and may assign employees to support one or both boards. The director
37 shall ensure each board receives staff support necessary to carry out
38 its duties, including support for meetings, public records, and rule
39 development and implementation within the board's jurisdiction.

1 (5) The director shall appoint two deputy directors:

2 (a) A deputy director for liquor, tobacco, and vapor programs,
3 responsible for staff support and program administration for matters
4 within the jurisdiction of the liquor board, including administration
5 and enforcement of this title and chapter 70.155 RCW; and

6 (b) A deputy director for cannabis programs, responsible for
7 staff support and program administration for matters within the
8 jurisdiction of the cannabis board, including administration and
9 enforcement of chapters 69.50 and 69.51A RCW to the extent they
10 relate to cannabis.

11 (6) The director shall provide shared administrative services and
12 centralized support functions for both boards, including budget,
13 human resources, information technology, finance, contracting, and
14 public records.

15 (7) The director shall develop and submit a single agency budget
16 request. The director shall maintain internal accounting that
17 identifies revenues and expenditures attributable to each board's
18 programs and to shared services, and shall allocate staff and other
19 resources, including shared services costs, among the boards and
20 shared services after consultation with each board.

21 (8) Beginning with the first enacted operating budget for the
22 Washington state liquor and cannabis board after the effective date
23 of this section, the director must establish a baseline internal
24 allocation of the agency's operating expenditures and spending
25 authority between: (a) Programs and activities within the
26 jurisdiction of the liquor board; and (b) programs and activities
27 within the jurisdiction of the cannabis board. The baseline
28 allocation must be calculated using the most recent enacted operating
29 budget and allotment data as the baseline, and must reflect, as a
30 percentage of total agency operating expenditures, the proportion of
31 operating expenditures that were budgeted and allotted for programs,
32 activities, and program support corresponding to each board's
33 jurisdiction. The director must use the baseline allocation for
34 internal budgeting, allotment, and cost allocation purposes,
35 including allocation of shared services costs, unless otherwise
36 provided in the enacted operating budget. Nothing in this subsection
37 creates a separate appropriation or modifies amounts appropriated by
38 the legislature.

39 (9) When direction from the boards conflicts on a matter that
40 materially affects both boards, the director shall request joint

1 direction from the boards. Until joint direction is provided, the
2 director may take actions necessary to maintain continuity of
3 operations and to protect public health and safety. Nothing in this
4 subsection limits a board's authority over matters within its
5 jurisdiction.

6 (10) For contested cases and other adjudicative proceedings, the
7 director shall ensure appropriate separation between staff engaged in
8 investigation or prosecution of an alleged violation and staff
9 providing decision support to a board. Nothing in this subsection
10 affects procedures under chapter 34.05 RCW.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 69.50
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) The Washington state cannabis board is the successor to the
14 Washington state liquor and cannabis board for all powers, duties,
15 and functions that relate to cannabis under this chapter and chapter
16 69.51A RCW.

17 (2) The Washington state liquor board is the successor to the
18 Washington state liquor and cannabis board for all other powers,
19 duties, and functions of the Washington state liquor and cannabis
20 board, including powers, duties, and functions relating to tobacco
21 products and vapor products under chapter 70.155 RCW, unless
22 specifically assigned to the cannabis board by law.

23 (3) Existing rules, orders, contracts, and licenses issued by the
24 Washington state liquor and cannabis board remain in effect and are
25 not affected by the division of authority under this section.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) All rules adopted by the Washington
27 state liquor and cannabis board in existence on the effective date of
28 this section remain in effect until amended, repealed, or superseded
29 by the successor board with jurisdiction over the subject matter.

30 (2) All proceedings pending before the Washington state liquor
31 and cannabis board on the effective date of this section, including
32 adjudicative proceedings under chapter 34.05 RCW, must be continued
33 and completed by the successor board with jurisdiction over the
34 subject matter, without prejudice to the parties.

35 (3) All documents and records of the Washington state liquor and
36 cannabis board relating primarily to cannabis must be available to
37 the cannabis board, and all other documents and records, including
38 those relating to tobacco products and vapor products, must be

1 available to the liquor board. The director shall administer the
2 custody and access to records and shall provide for efficient shared
3 access.

4 (4) All employees of the Washington state liquor and cannabis
5 board remain employees of the Washington state liquor and cannabis
6 board, and their employment is not interrupted by this act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) Except as otherwise provided in this
8 section, all references in the Revised Code of Washington to the
9 Washington state liquor and cannabis board, the Washington state
10 liquor control board, or a substantially similar term, must be
11 construed as referring to the Washington state liquor board or the
12 Washington state cannabis board, as applicable.

13 (2) In its next technical corrections bill, the office of the
14 code reviser must prepare legislation that: (a) Changes statutory
15 references consistent with subsection (3) of this section; and (b)
16 makes other conforming changes.

17 (3) To assist the office of the code reviser in drafting
18 legislation under subsection (2) of this section, statutory
19 references must be construed as follows unless the context clearly
20 requires otherwise:

21 (a) References that occur in, or primarily relate to, subject
22 matter governed by, Title 66 RCW or chapter 70.155 RCW must be
23 construed as referring to the Washington state liquor board;

24 (b) References that occur in, or primarily relate to, subject
25 matter governed by chapter 69.50 or 69.51A RCW, to the extent the
26 provisions relate to cannabis, must be construed as referring to the
27 Washington state cannabis board; and

28 (c) If a provision relates to both liquor and cannabis, or if the
29 appropriate board is not clear from context, the reference must be
30 construed as referring to both boards jointly. In making
31 determinations under this section, the office of the code reviser may
32 consult with the director appointed under section 4 of this act, the
33 house of representatives' office of program research staff, and
34 senate committee services staff.

35 (4) The office of the code reviser shall note, wherever the
36 predecessor board or its duties are used or referred to in statute,
37 that the agency's governance has changed as a result of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** RCW 66.08.014 (Terms of members—Vacancies
2 —Principal office—Removal—Devotion of time to duties—Bond—Oath)
3 and 2012 c 117 s 266, 1986 c 105 s 1, 1949 c 5 s 9, 1947 c 113 s 1,
4 1945 c 208 s 2, & 1933 ex.s. c 62 s 64 are each repealed.

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