

RCW 24.03A.010 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Address," unless otherwise specified, means either a physical mailing address or an electronic address.

(2) "Articles" or "articles of incorporation" means the original articles of incorporation as modified by all amendments thereof, as filed by the secretary of state. If any record filed under this chapter restates the articles in their entirety, thenceforth the articles shall not include any prior filings.

(3) "Board" or "board of directors" means the team or body of individuals ultimately responsible for the management of the activities and affairs of the nonprofit corporation, regardless of the name used to refer to the team or body.

(4) "Bylaws" means the code or codes of rules, other than the articles, adopted for the regulation and governance of the internal affairs of the nonprofit corporation, regardless of the name or names used to refer to those rules, excluding separate policies or procedures adopted by the board.

(5) "Charitable corporation" means a domestic nonprofit corporation that is operated primarily or exclusively for one or more charitable purposes.

(6) "Charitable purpose" means a purpose that:

(a) Would make a corporation organized and operated exclusively for that purpose eligible to be exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code; or

(b) Is considered charitable under applicable law other than this chapter or the internal revenue code.

(7) "Contribution" means the payment, donation, or promise, for consideration or otherwise, of any money or property of any kind or value which contribution is wholly or partly induced by a solicitation.

(8) "Corporation" means a domestic nonprofit corporation, unless otherwise specified.

(9) "Delegate" means a person elected or appointed to vote in a representative capacity for the election of directors or on other matters.

(10) "Deliver" or "delivery" of a record means delivery by hand, United States mail, private courier service, electronic transmission, or other methods of delivery used in conventional commercial practice, except that delivery to the secretary of state means actual receipt by the secretary of state.

(11) "Director" means an individual designated, elected, or appointed, by that or any other name or title, to act as a member of the board of directors, while the individual is holding that position.

(12) "Domestic," with respect to an entity, means governed as to its internal affairs by the law of this state.

(13) "Domestic corporation" or "domestic nonprofit corporation" means a domestic corporation incorporated under or subject to this chapter.

(14) "Domestic unincorporated entity" means an unincorporated entity whose internal affairs are governed by the laws of this state.

(15) "Electronic" means relating to technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities.

(16) "Electronic transmission" means an electronic communication:

(a) Not directly involving the physical transfer of a record in a tangible medium; and

(b) That may be retained, retrieved, and reviewed by the sender and the recipient thereof, and that may be directly reproduced in a tangible medium by such a sender and recipient.

(17) "Electronically transmitted" means that the sender of an electronic transmission initiated the electronic transmission.

(18) "Eligible entity" means a domestic or foreign unincorporated entity, a domestic nonprofit corporation incorporated under a corporation's statute other than this chapter or its predecessor statutes, or a domestic or foreign for-profit corporation.

(19) "Employee" does not include an individual serving as an officer or director who is not otherwise employed by the corporation.

(20) "Entitled to vote" means entitled to vote on the matter under consideration pursuant to the articles or bylaws of the nonprofit corporation or any applicable controlling provision of law.

(21) "Entity" means an organization or artificial legal person that either has a separate legal existence or has the power to acquire an estate in real property in its own name and includes, but is not limited to:

(a) A domestic or foreign for-profit corporation;

(b) A domestic or foreign nonprofit corporation;

(c) A domestic or foreign general or limited partnership;

(d) A domestic or foreign limited liability partnership;

(e) A domestic or foreign limited liability company;

(f) Any other domestic or foreign unincorporated entity;

(g) A domestic or foreign estate or trust;

(h) The federal government;

(i) A tribal government; and

(j) A state or local government, foreign government, or governmental subdivision.

(22) "Ex officio director" means an individual who becomes a member of the board of directors not through the regular elections process but by virtue of another position that he or she holds. Unless the articles or bylaws specifically state that an ex officio director does not have the right to vote, such a director has the same right to vote as any other director.

(23) "Execute" or "executed" means:

(a) Signed, with respect to a written record;

(b) Electronically transmitted along with sufficient information to determine the sender's identity and intent to execute; or

(c) With respect to a record to be filed by the secretary of state, in compliance with the standards for filing as prescribed by this chapter; chapter 23.95 RCW; or the secretary of state.

(24) "Federal government" includes a district, authority, bureau, commission, department, and any other agency of the federal government of the United States.

(25) "Filing entity" means an unincorporated entity that is created by filing a public organic record.

(26) "For-profit corporation" or "domestic for-profit corporation" means a domestic business corporation incorporated under or subject to Title 23B RCW or any successor provisions.

(27) "Foreign," with respect to an entity, means governed as to its internal affairs by the law of a jurisdiction other than this state.

(28) "Foreign for-profit corporation" means a foreign corporation that would be a for-profit corporation if incorporated under the law of this state.

(29) "Foreign corporation" or "foreign nonprofit corporation" means a foreign corporation that would be a nonprofit corporation if incorporated under the law of this state.

(30) "Foreign unincorporated entity" means an unincorporated entity whose internal affairs are governed by an organic law of a jurisdiction other than this state.

(31) "Fundamental transaction" means an amendment of the articles or bylaws, merger, sale of all or substantially all of the assets, domestication, conversion, or dissolution of a nonprofit corporation.

(32) "Gift instrument" means a record or records under which property is donated to, transferred to, granted to, or held by the corporation. A solicitation constitutes a gift instrument with respect to a donation, transfer, or grant of property made in response to the solicitation only if:

(a) The solicitation was in the form of a record, including[,] but not limited to, invitations made by electronic transmission or in electronic media, or was documented in the form of a record created no later than ninety days after the solicitation was made; and

(b) The donation, transfer, or grant of property was made within one year of the solicitation.

(33) "Governmental subdivision" includes an authority, county, district, and municipality formed or authorized by any federal, state, or local government.

(34) "Includes" denotes a partial definition.

(35) "Individual" means a natural person.

(36) "Interest" means either or both of the following rights under the organic law of an unincorporated entity:

(a) The right to receive distributions from the entity either in the ordinary course or upon liquidation; or

(b) The right to receive notice or vote on issues involving its internal affairs, other than as an agent, assignee, proxy, or person responsible for managing its business, activities, or affairs.

(37) "Interest holder" means a person who holds of record an interest.

(38) "Interest holder liability" means personal liability for a debt, obligation, or liability of a domestic or foreign for-profit or nonprofit corporation or unincorporated entity that is imposed on a person:

(a) Solely by reason of the person's status as a shareholder, interest holder, or member; or

(b) By the articles, bylaws, or an organic record pursuant to a provision of the organic law authorizing the articles, bylaws, or an organic record to make one or more specified shareholders, interest holders, or members liable in their capacity as shareholders, interest holders, or members for all or specified debts, obligations, or liabilities of the entity.

(39) "Internal revenue code" means Title 26 U.S.C., the federal internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, or any successor statute.

(40) "Jurisdiction," when used to refer to a political entity, means the United States, a state, a foreign country, or a political subdivision of a foreign country.

(41) "Jurisdiction of formation" means the jurisdiction whose law includes the organic law of an entity.

(42) "Material interest" means an actual or potential benefit or detriment, other than one that would devolve on the nonprofit corporation or the members generally, that would reasonably be expected to impair the objectivity of an individual's judgment when participating in the action to be taken.

(43) "Material relationship" means a familial, financial, professional, employment, or other relationship that would reasonably be expected to impair the objectivity of an individual's judgment when participating in the action to be taken.

(44) "Means" denotes an exhaustive definition.

(45) "Member" means:

(a) Where the articles state that the corporation has members, a person who has a right set forth in the articles or bylaws, not as a delegate, to select or vote for the election of directors or delegates or to vote on at least one type of fundamental transaction.

(b) For a corporation formed before January 1, 2022, the articles of which do not state that the corporation has members, a person who:

(i) Is defined as a member in the bylaws; and

(ii) Has a right provided in the bylaws, not as a delegate, to select or vote for the election of directors or delegates or to vote on at least one type of fundamental transaction.

(c) A delegate or group of delegates, to the extent:

(i) The powers, functions, or authority of the members have been vested in, or are exercised by, such a delegate or group of delegates; and

(ii) The provision of this chapter in which the term appears is relevant to the discharge by the delegate or group of delegates of its powers, functions, or authority.

(46) "Membership" means the rights and any obligations of a member in a nonprofit corporation.

(47) "Membership corporation" means a nonprofit corporation whose articles provide that it has members, or that has members as defined in subsection (45) of this section.

(48) "Nonfiling entity" means an unincorporated entity that is not created by filing a public organic record.

(49) "Nonmembership corporation" means a nonprofit corporation whose articles do not provide that it has members and that does not have members as defined in subsection (45)(b) of this section.

(50) "Nonprofit corporation" means a domestic nonprofit corporation, unless otherwise specified.

(51) "Notice" has the same meaning as described in RCW 24.03A.015.

(52) "Notify" means to provide notice as defined in RCW 24.03A.015.

(53) "Officer" includes:

(a) A person who is an officer as defined in RCW 24.03A.585; and

(b) If a nonprofit corporation is in the hands of a custodian, receiver, trustee, or other court-appointed fiduciary, that fiduciary or any person appointed by that fiduciary to act as an officer for any purpose under this chapter.

(54) "Organic law" means the law of an entity's jurisdiction of formation governing the internal affairs of the entity.

(55) "Organic record" means a public organic record or the private organic rules.

(56) "Person" includes an individual or an entity.

(57) "Principal office" means the office designated in the annual report required under RCW 23.95.255 as the location of the principal

executive office of a domestic or foreign nonprofit corporation, whether or not in this state.

(58) "Private organic rules" means the rules, whether or not in a record, that govern the internal affairs of an unincorporated entity, are binding on all of its interest holders, and are not part of its public organic record, if any.

(59) "Proceeding" means any civil suit or criminal, administrative, or investigatory action.

(60) "Property" means all property, whether real, personal, or mixed or tangible or intangible, including cash, securities, or real property, or any right or interest therein.

(61) "Property held for charitable purposes" is as defined in RCW 24.03A.165.

(62) "Public organic record" means the record, if any, that is filed as a public record to create an unincorporated entity and any amendment to or restatement of that record.

(63) "Record" means information inscribed on a tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in perceivable form. An electronic transmission not directly involving the physical transfer of a record in a tangible medium is a record only if:

(a) It may be retained, retrieved, and reviewed by the sender and the recipient thereof; and

(b) It may be directly reproduced in a tangible medium by the sender and the recipient thereof.

(64) "Record date" means the date established under RCW 24.03A.420 on which a nonprofit corporation determines the identity of its members and the membership rights they hold for purposes of this chapter. The determinations shall be made as of 12:01 a.m. on the record date unless another time for doing so is specified when the record date is fixed.

(65) "Registered foreign nonprofit corporation" means a foreign nonprofit corporation registered to do business in this state.

(66) "Religious corporation" means a charitable corporation including, but not limited to, a church, mosque, synagogue, temple, nondenominational ministry, interdenominational or ecumenical organization, or faith-based social service agency, that is:

(a) Organized primarily for religious purposes;

(b) Operated primarily, in good faith, to carry out religious purposes;

(c) Held out to the public as carrying out religious purposes; and

(d) Not engaged primarily or substantially in the exchange of goods or services for consideration, unless the consideration does not exceed nominal amounts.

(67) "Shareholder" means the person in whose name shares are registered in the records of a domestic or foreign for-profit corporation or the beneficial owner of shares to the extent of the rights granted by a nominee certificate on file with such a corporation.

(68) "Shares" means the units into which the proprietary interests in a domestic or foreign for-profit corporation, or a nonprofit corporation incorporated under organic law other than this chapter that permits proprietary interests in such a corporation, are divided.

(69) "Solicitation" means any oral or written request for a contribution, including an offer or attempt by the solicitor to sell

any property, rights, services, or other thing, in connection with which:

(a) Any appeal is made for any charitable purpose;

(b) The name of any charitable corporation, or any foreign nonprofit corporation that would be a charitable corporation if it were incorporated under this chapter, is used as an inducement for making the contribution or consummating the sale; or

(c) Any statement is made that implies that the whole or any part of the contribution or the proceeds from the sale will be applied toward any charitable purpose or donated to any entity organized or operated for charitable purposes.

(70) "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and any agency or governmental subdivision of any of the foregoing.

(71) "Tangible medium" means a writing, copy of a writing, facsimile, or a physical reproduction, each on paper or on other tangible material.

(72) "Unincorporated entity" means an entity that is not any of the following: A domestic or foreign for-profit or nonprofit corporation, an estate, a trust, a governmental subdivision, the federal government, a tribal government, a state or local government, a municipal corporation, a foreign government, or a governmental subdivision. The term includes a general partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, cooperative association, limited cooperative association, business or statutory trust, joint stock association, and unincorporated nonprofit association.

(73) "Vote," "voting," or "casting a vote" includes voting occurring at a meeting; voting of members by ballot or proxy; and the giving of consent in the form of a record without a meeting by a person entitled to vote. Whether or not the person entitled to vote characterizes such conduct as voting or casting a vote, the term does not include either recording the fact of abstention or failing to vote for:

(a) A candidate; or

(b) Approval or disapproval of a matter.

(74) "Voting group" means one or more classes of members that under the articles, bylaws, or this chapter are entitled to vote and be counted together collectively on a matter at a meeting of members. All members entitled by the articles, bylaws, or this chapter to vote generally on that matter are for that purpose a single voting group.

(75) "Voting power" means the current power to vote in the election of directors or delegates, or to vote on approval of any type of fundamental transaction. [2021 c 176 § 1102.]

Effective date—2021 c 176: See note following RCW 24.03A.005.