

RCW 41.80.090 Failure to reach agreement—Third party involvement—Expiration of agreements during negotiation. Should the parties fail to reach agreement in negotiating a collective bargaining agreement, either party may request of the commission the assistance of an impartial third party to mediate the negotiations.

If a collective bargaining agreement previously negotiated under this chapter should expire while negotiations are underway, the terms and conditions specified in the collective bargaining agreement shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed one year from the expiration date stated in the agreement. Thereafter, the employer may unilaterally implement according to law.

If resolution is not reached through mediation by one hundred days beyond the expiration date of a contract previously negotiated under this chapter, or one hundred days from the initiation of mediated negotiations if no such contract exists, an independent fact finder shall be appointed by the commission.

The fact finder shall meet with the parties or their representatives, or both, and make inquiries and investigations, hold hearings, and take such other steps as may be appropriate. If the dispute is not settled, the fact finder shall make findings of fact and recommend terms of settlement within thirty days.

Such recommendations, together with the findings of fact, shall be submitted in writing to the parties and the commission privately before they are made public. The commission, the fact finder, the employer, or the exclusive bargaining representative may make such findings and recommendations public if the dispute is not settled within ten working days after their receipt from the fact finder.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employer and an exclusive bargaining representative from agreeing to substitute, at their own expense, their own procedure for resolving impasses in collective bargaining for that provided in this section or from agreeing to utilize for the purposes of this section any other governmental or other agency or person in lieu of the commission.

Costs for mediator services shall be borne by the commission, and costs for fact-finding shall be borne equally by the negotiating parties. [2002 c 354 § 310.]