

RCW 43.70.540 Data collection—Finding—Intent. The legislature recognizes that the state patrol, the administrative office of the courts, the sheriffs' and police chiefs' association, the department of social and health services, the department of commerce, the sentencing guidelines commission, the department of corrections, and the superintendent of public instruction each have comprehensive data and analysis capabilities that have contributed greatly to our current understanding of crime and violence, and their causes.

The legislature finds, however, that a single health-oriented agency must be designated to provide consistent guidelines to all these groups regarding the way in which their data systems collect this important data. It is not the intent of the legislature by RCW 43.70.545 to transfer data collection requirements from existing agencies or to require the addition of major new data systems. It is rather the intent to make only the minimum required changes in existing data systems to increase compatibility and comparability, reduce duplication, and to increase the usefulness of data collected by these agencies in developing more accurate descriptions of violence. [2023 c 470 § 2057; 2005 c 282 § 45; 1995 c 399 § 76; 1994 sp.s. c 7 § 201.]

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Legislative finding and intent—1994 sp.s. c 7: "The legislature finds that the increasing violence in our society causes great concern for the immediate health and safety of our citizens and our social institutions. Youth violence is increasing at an alarming rate and young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four are at the highest risk of being perpetrators and victims of violence. Additionally, random violence, including homicide and the use of firearms, has dramatically increased over the last decade.

The legislature finds that violence is abhorrent to the aims of a free society and that it cannot be tolerated. State efforts at reducing violence must include changes in criminal penalties, reducing the unlawful use of and access to firearms, increasing educational efforts to encourage nonviolent means for resolving conflicts, and allowing communities to design their prevention efforts.

The legislature finds that the problem of violence can be addressed with many of the same approaches that public health programs have used to control other problems such as infectious disease, tobacco use, and traffic fatalities.

Addressing the problem of violence requires the concerted effort of all communities and all parts of state and local governments. It is the immediate purpose of chapter 7, Laws of 1994 sp. sess. to: (1) Prevent acts of violence by encouraging change in social norms and individual behaviors that have been shown to increase the risk of violence; (2) reduce the rate of at-risk children and youth, as defined in *RCW 70.190.010; (3) increase the severity and certainty of punishment for youth and adults who commit violent acts; (4) reduce the severity of harm to individuals when violence occurs; (5) empower communities to focus their concerns and allow them to control the funds dedicated to empirically supported preventive efforts in their region; and (6) reduce the fiscal and social impact of violence on our society." [1994 sp.s. c 7 § 101.]

***Reviser's note:** The governor vetoed 1994 sp.s. c 7 § 302, which amended RCW 70.190.010 to define "at-risk children and youth." RCW 70.190.010 was subsequently amended by 1996 c 132 § 2, which now includes a definition for "at-risk children." RCW 70.190.010 was subsequently repealed by 2011 1st sp.s. c 32 § 13, effective June 30, 2012.

Severability—1994 sp.s. c 7: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1994 sp.s. c 7 § 913.]

Effective dates—Contingent expiration date—1994 sp.s. c 7: "(1) Sections 201 through 204, 302, 323, 411, 412, 417, and 418 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [April 6, 1994].

(2) Sections 904 through 908 of this act shall take effect July 1, 1995.

* (3) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, if sections 901 through 909 of this act are referred to the voters at the next succeeding general election and sections 901 through 909 of this act are rejected by the voters, then the amendments by sections 510 through 512, 519, 521, 525, and 527 of this act shall expire on July 1, 1995." [1994 sp.s. c 7 § 915 (Referendum Bill No. 43, subsection (3) approved November 8, 1994).]

***Reviser's note:** Sections 901 through 909, chapter 7, Laws of 1994 sp. sess. were approved and ratified by the voters on November 8, 1994, in Referendum Bill No. 43. Therefore, the amendments to sections 510 through 512, 519, 521, 525, and 527, chapter 7, Laws of 1994 sp. sess. do not expire on July 1, 1995.