

RCW 59.18.620 Definitions applicable to RCW 59.18.625 and 59.18.630. The definitions in this section apply to RCW 59.18.625 and 59.18.630 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) " Dwelling unit " has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030, and includes a manufactured/mobile home or a mobile home lot as defined in RCW 59.20.030.

(2) " Eviction moratorium " refers to the governor of the state of Washington's proclamation 20-19.6, proclaiming a moratorium on certain evictions for all counties throughout Washington state on March 18, 2021.

(3) " Landlord " has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030 and 59.20.030.

(4) " Prospective landlord " has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030.

(5) " Public health emergency " refers to the governor of the state of Washington's proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a state of emergency for all counties throughout Washington state on February 29, 2020, and any subsequent orders extending or amending such proclamation due to COVID-19 until the proclamation expires or is terminated by the governor of the state of Washington.

(6) " Rent " has the same meaning as defined in RCW 59.18.030.

(7) " Tenant " refers to any individual renting a dwelling unit or lot primarily for living purposes, including any individual with a tenancy subject to this chapter or chapter 59.20 RCW or any individual residing in transient lodging, such as a hotel or motel or camping area as their primary dwelling, for 30 days or more prior to March 1, 2020. " Tenant " does not include any individual residing in a hotel or motel or camping area as their primary dwelling for more than 30 days after March 1, 2020, if the hotel or motel or camping area has provided the individual with a seven-day eviction notice, which must include the following language: " For no-cost legal assistance, please call 2-1-1 or the Northwest Justice Project CLEAR Hotline outside King County (888) 201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., or (888) 387-7111 for seniors (age 60 and over). You may find additional resource information at <http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org>. " " Tenant " also does not include occupants of homeless mitigation sites or a person entering onto land without permission of the landowner or lessor. For purposes of this subsection, any local government provision of solid waste or hygiene services to unsanctioned encampments does not constitute permission to occupy land. [2021 c 115 § 2.]

Conflicting laws—2021 c 115 §§ 2-4: " Sections 2 through 4 of this act supersede any other provisions within chapter 59.18 or 59.12 RCW, or chapter 59.20 RCW as applicable, that conflict with sections 2 through 4 of this act. " [2021 c 115 § 20.]

Finding—Intent—2021 c 115: " The legislature finds that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a sustained global economic slowdown, and an economic downturn throughout Washington state with unprecedented numbers of layoffs and reduced work hours for a significant percentage of our workforce. Many of the state's workforce has been impacted by these layoffs and substantially reduced work hours and have suffered economic hardship, disproportionately affecting low and moderate-income workers resulting in lost wages and the inability to pay for basic household expenses, including rent. Hundreds of thousands of

tenants in Washington are unable to consistently pay their rent, reflecting the continued financial precariousness of many renters in the state. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, nonpayment of rent was the leading cause of evictions within the state. Because the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an inability for tenants to consistently pay rent, the likelihood of evictions has increased, as well as life, health, and safety risks to a significant percentage of the state's tenants. As a result, the governor has issued a temporary moratorium on evictions as of March 2020, with multiple extensions and other related actions, to reduce housing instability and enable tenants to stay in their homes.

Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature with this act to increase tenant protections during the public health emergency, provide legal representation for qualifying tenants in eviction cases, establish an eviction resolution pilot program to address nonpayment of rent eviction cases before any court filing, and ensure tenants and landlords have adequate opportunities to access state and local rental assistance programs to reimburse landlords for unpaid rent and preserve tenancies." [2021 c 115 § 1.]

Application—2021 c 115: "This act does not apply to assisted living facilities licensed under chapter 18.20 RCW, to nursing homes licensed under chapter 18.51 RCW, to adult family homes licensed under chapter 70.128 RCW, or to continuing care retirement communities registered under chapter 18.390 RCW." [2021 c 115 § 18.]

Effective date—2021 c 115: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 22, 2021]." [2021 c 115 § 21.]