

**Chapter 72.64 RCW**  
**LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS**

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*Contract system barred: State Constitution Art. 2 § 29.*

*Correctional industries: Chapter 72.60 RCW.*

*Labor prescribed by the indeterminate sentence review board: RCW 9.95.090.*

**RCW 72.64.001 Definitions.** As used in this chapter: "Department" means the department of corrections; and "Secretary" means the secretary of corrections. [1981 c 136 § 108.]

**Effective date—1981 c 136:** See RCW 72.09.900.

**RCW 72.64.010 Useful employment of prisoners—Contract system barred.** The secretary shall have the power and it shall be his or her duty to provide for the useful employment of prisoners in the adult correctional institutions: PROVIDED, That no prisoners shall be employed in what is known as the contract system of labor. [2012 c 117 § 478; 1979 c 141 § 265; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.010. Prior: 1943 c 175 § 1; Rem. Supp. 1943 § 10279-1. Formerly RCW 72.08.220.]

**RCW 72.64.020 Rules and regulations.** The secretary shall make the necessary rules and regulations governing the employment of prisoners, the conduct of all such operations, and the disposal of the products thereof, under such restrictions as provided by law. [1979 c 141 § 266; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.020. Prior: 1943 c 175 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1943 § 10279-2. Formerly RCW 72.08.230.]

**RCW 72.64.030 Prisoners required to work—Private benefit of enforcement officer prohibited.** Every prisoner in a state correctional facility shall be required to work in such manner as may be prescribed by the secretary, other than for the private financial benefit of any enforcement officer. [1992 c 7 § 54; 1979 c 141 § 267; 1961 c 171 § 1; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.030. Prior: 1927 c 305 § 1; RRS § 10223-1.]

**RCW 72.64.040 Crediting of earnings—Payment.** Where a prisoner is employed at any occupation for which pay is allowed or permitted, or at any gainful occupation from which the state derives an income, the department shall credit the prisoner with the total amount of his or her earnings.

The amount of earnings credited but unpaid to a prisoner may be paid to the prisoner's spouse, children, mother, father, brother, or sister as the inmate may direct upon approval of the superintendent. Upon release, parole, or discharge, all unpaid earnings of the prisoner shall be paid to him or her. [2012 c 117 § 479; 1973 1st ex.s. c 154 § 105; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.040. Prior: 1957 c 19 § 1; 1927 c 305 § 3; RRS § 10223-3. Formerly RCW 72.08.250.]

**Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 154:** See note following RCW 2.12.030.

**RCW 72.64.050 Branch institutions—Work camps for certain purposes.** The secretary shall also have the power to establish temporary branch institutions for state correctional facilities in the form of camps for the employment of prisoners therein in farming, reforestation, wood-cutting, land clearing, processing of foods in state canneries, forest firefighting, forest fire suppression and prevention, stream clearance, watershed improvement, development of parks and recreational areas, and other work to conserve the natural resources and protect and improve the public domain and construction of water supply facilities to state institutions. [1992 c 7 § 55; 1979 c 141 § 268; 1961 c 171 § 2; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.050. Prior: 1943 c 175 § 3; Rem. Supp. 1943 § 10279-3. Formerly RCW 72.08.240.]

*Leaves of absence for inmates: RCW 72.01.365 through 72.01.380.*

**RCW 72.64.060 Labor camps authorized—Type of work permitted—Contracts.** Any department, division, bureau, commission, or other agency of the state of Washington or any agency of any political subdivision thereof or the federal government may use, or cause to be used, prisoners confined in state penal or correctional institutions to perform work necessary and proper, to be done by them at camps to

be established pursuant to the authority granted by RCW 72.64.060 through 72.64.090: PROVIDED, That such prisoners shall not be authorized to perform work on any public road, other than access roads to forestry lands. The secretary may enter into contracts for the purposes of RCW 72.64.060 through 72.64.090. [1979 c 141 § 269; 1961 c 171 § 3; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.060. Prior: 1955 c 128 § 1. Formerly RCW 43.28.500.]

**RCW 72.64.065 Industrial insurance—Application to certain inmates—Payment of premiums and assessments.** From and after July 1, 1973, any inmate working in a department of natural resources adult honor camp established and operated pursuant to RCW 72.64.050, 72.64.060, and 72.64.100 shall be eligible for the benefits provided by Title 51 RCW, as now or hereafter amended, relating to industrial insurance, with the exceptions herein provided.

No inmate as herein described, until released upon an order of parole by the state indeterminate sentence review board, or discharged from custody upon expiration of sentence, or discharged from custody by order of a court of appropriate jurisdiction, or his or her dependents or beneficiaries, shall be entitled to any payment for temporary disability or permanent total disability as provided for in RCW 51.32.090 or 51.32.060 respectively, as now or hereafter enacted, or to the benefits of chapter 51.36 RCW relating to medical aid.

Any and all premiums or assessments as may arise under this section pursuant to the provisions of Title 51 RCW shall be the obligation of and be paid by the state department of natural resources. [2012 c 117 § 480; 1972 ex.s. c 40 § 3.]

**Effective date—1972 ex.s. c 40:** See note following RCW 72.60.100.

**RCW 72.64.070 Industrial insurance—Eligibility for employment—Procedure—Return.** The department shall determine which prisoners shall be eligible for employment under RCW 72.64.060, and shall establish and modify lists of prisoners eligible for such employment, upon the requisition of an agency mentioned in RCW 72.64.060. The secretary may send to the place, and at the time designated, the number of prisoners requisitioned, or such number thereof as have been determined to be eligible for such employment and are available. No prisoner shall be eligible or shall be released for such employment until his or her eligibility therefor has been determined by the department.

The secretary may return to prison any prisoner transferred to camp pursuant to this section, when the need for such prisoner's labor has ceased or when the prisoner is guilty of any violation of the rules and regulations of the prison or camp. [2012 c 117 § 481; 1979 c 141 § 270; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.070. Prior: 1955 c 128 § 2. Formerly RCW 43.28.510.]

**RCW 72.64.080 Industrial insurance—Duties of employing agency—Costs—Supervision.** The agency providing for prisoners under RCW 72.64.060 through 72.64.090 shall designate and supervise all work done under the provisions thereof. The agency shall provide, erect and

maintain any necessary camps, except that where no funds are available to the agency, the department may provide, erect and maintain the necessary camps. The secretary shall supervise and manage the necessary camps and commissaries. [1979 c 141 § 271; 1959 c 28 § 72.64.080. Prior: 1955 c 128 § 3. Formerly RCW 43.28.520.]

**RCW 72.64.090 Industrial insurance—Department's jurisdiction.**

The department shall have full jurisdiction at all times over the discipline and control of the prisoners performing work under RCW 72.64.060 through 72.64.090. [1959 c 28 § 72.64.090. Prior: 1955 c 128 § 4. Formerly RCW 43.28.530.]

**RCW 72.64.100 Regional jail camps—Authorized—Purposes—Rules.**

The secretary is authorized to establish and operate regional jail camps for the confinement, treatment, and care of persons sentenced to jail terms in excess of thirty days, including persons so imprisoned as a condition of probation. The secretary shall make rules and regulations governing the eligibility for commitment or transfer to such camps and rules and regulations for the government of such camps. Subject to the rules and regulations of the secretary, and if there is in effect a contract entered into pursuant to RCW 72.64.110, a county prisoner may be committed to a regional jail camp in lieu of commitment to a county jail or other county detention facility. [1979 c 141 § 272; 1961 c 171 § 4.]

**RCW 72.64.110 Contracts to furnish county prisoners confinement, care, and employment—Reimbursement by county—Sheriff's order—Return of prisoner.** (1) The secretary may enter into a contract with any county of the state, upon the request of the sheriff thereof, wherein the secretary agrees to furnish confinement, care, treatment, and employment of county prisoners. The county shall reimburse the state for the cost of such services. Each county shall pay to the state treasurer the amounts found to be due.

(2) The secretary shall accept such county prisoner if he or she believes that the prisoner can be materially benefited by such confinement, care, treatment, and employment, and if adequate facilities to provide such care are available. No such person shall be transported to any facility under the jurisdiction of the secretary until the secretary has notified the referring court of the place to which said person is to be transmitted and the time at which he or she can be received.

(3) The sheriff of the county in which such an order is made placing a misdemeanor in a jail camp pursuant to this chapter, or any other peace officer designated by the court, shall execute an order placing such county prisoner in the jail camp or returning him or her therefrom to the court.

(4) The secretary may return to the committing authority, or to confinement according to his or her sentence, any person committed or transferred to a regional jail camp pursuant to this chapter when there is no suitable employment or when such person is guilty of any violation of rules and regulations of the regional jail camp. [2012 c 117 § 482; 1980 c 17 § 1. Prior: 1979 c 147 § 1; 1979 c 141 § 273; 1961 c 171 § 5.]

**RCW 72.64.150 Interstate forest fire suppression compact.** The Interstate Forest Fire Suppression Compact as set forth in this section is hereby enacted into law and entered into on behalf of this state with any and all other states legally joining therein in a form substantially as follows:

INTERSTATE FOREST FIRE SUPPRESSION  
COMPACT

ARTICLE I—Purpose

The purpose of this compact is to provide for the development and execution of programs to facilitate the use of offenders in the forest fire suppression efforts of the party states for the ultimate protection of life, property, and natural resources in the party states. The purpose of this compact is also to, in emergent situations, allow a sending state to cross state lines with an inmate when, due to weather or road conditions, it is necessary to cross state lines to facilitate the transport of an inmate.

ARTICLE II—Definitions

As used in this compact, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

- (a) "Sending state" means a state party to this compact from which a fire suppression unit is traveling.
- (b) "Receiving state" means a state party to this compact to which a fire suppression unit is traveling.
- (c) "Inmate" means a male or female offender who is under sentence to or confined in a prison or other correctional institution.
- (d) "Institution" means any prison, reformatory, honor camp, or other correctional facility, except facilities for persons suffering from mental illness or persons with disabilities, in which inmates may lawfully be confined.
- (e) "Fire suppression unit" means a group of inmates selected by the sending states, corrections personnel, and any other persons deemed necessary for the transportation, supervision, care, security, and discipline of inmates to be used in forest fire suppression efforts in the receiving state.
- (f) "Forest fire" means any fire burning in any land designated by a party state or federal land management agencies as forestland.

ARTICLE III—Contracts

Each party state may make one or more contracts with any one or more of the other party states for the assistance of one or more fire suppression units in forest fire suppression efforts. Any such contract shall provide for matters as may be necessary and appropriate to fix the obligations, responsibilities, and rights of the sending and receiving state.

The terms and provisions of this compact shall be part of any contract entered into by the authority of, or pursuant to, this compact. Nothing in any such contract may be inconsistent with this compact.

ARTICLE IV—Procedures and Rights

- (a) Each party state shall appoint a liaison for the coordination and deployment of the fire suppression units of each party state.
- (b) Whenever the duly constituted judicial or administrative authorities in a state party to this compact that has entered into a

contract pursuant to this compact decides that the assistance of a fire suppression unit of a party state is required for forest fire suppression efforts, such authorities may request the assistance of one or more fire suppression units of any state party to this compact through an appointed liaison.

(c) Inmates who are members of a fire suppression unit shall at all times be subject to the jurisdiction of the sending state, and at all times shall be under the ultimate custody of corrections officers duly accredited by the sending state.

(d) The receiving state shall make adequate arrangements for the confinement of inmates who are members of a fire suppression unit of a sending state in the event corrections officers duly accredited by the sending state make a discretionary determination that an inmate requires institutional confinement.

(e) Cooperative efforts shall be made by corrections officers and personnel of the receiving state located at a fire camp with the corrections officers and other personnel of the sending state in the establishment and maintenance of fire suppression unit base camps.

(f) All inmates who are members of a fire suppression unit of a sending state shall be cared for and treated equally with such similar inmates of the receiving state.

(g) Further, in emergent situations a sending state shall be granted authority and all the protections of this compact to cross state lines with an inmate when, due to weather or road conditions, it is necessary to facilitate the transport of an inmate.

#### ARTICLE V—Acts Not Reviewable in Receiving State; Extradition

(a) If while located within the territory of a receiving state there occurs against the inmate within such state any criminal charge or if the inmate is suspected of committing within such state a criminal offense, the inmate shall not be returned without the consent of the receiving state until discharged from prosecution or other form of proceeding, imprisonment, or detention for such offense. The duly accredited officers of the sending state shall be permitted to transport inmates pursuant to this compact through any and all states party to this compact without interference.

(b) An inmate member of a fire suppression unit of the sending state who is deemed to have escaped by a duly accredited corrections officer of a sending state shall be under the jurisdiction of both the sending state and the receiving state. Nothing contained in this compact shall be construed to prevent or affect the activities of officers and guards of any jurisdiction directed toward the apprehension and return of an escapee.

#### ARTICLE VI—Entry into Force

This compact shall enter into force and become effective and binding upon the states so acting when it has been enacted into law by any two states from among the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

#### ARTICLE VII—Withdrawal and Termination

This compact shall continue in force and remain binding upon a party state until it has enacted a statute repealing the same and providing for the sending of formal written notice of withdrawal from the compact to the appropriate officials of all other party states.

#### ARTICLE VIII—Other Arrangements Unaffected

Nothing contained in this compact may be construed to abrogate or impair any agreement that a party state may have with a nonparty state for the confinement, rehabilitation, or treatment of inmates nor to repeal any other laws of a party state authorizing the making of cooperative institutional arrangements.

#### ARTICLE IX—Construction and Severability

The provisions of this compact shall be liberally construed and shall be severable. If any phrase, clause, sentence, or provision of this compact is declared to be contrary to the constitution of any participating state or of the United States or the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this compact and the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance shall not be affected thereby. If this compact shall be held contrary to the constitution of any state participating therein, the compact shall remain in full force and effect as to the remaining states and in full force and effect as to the state affected as to all severable matters. [2020 c 274 § 57; 1991 c 131 § 1.]

**Severability—1991 c 131:** "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." [1991 c 131 § 3.]

#### **RCW 72.64.160 Inmate forest fire suppression crews—**

**Classification—Gratuity/wage.** (1) For the purposes of RCW 72.64.150, inmate forest fire suppression crews may be considered a class I free venture industry, as defined in RCW 72.09.100, when fighting fires on federal lands.

(2) For the purposes of RCW 72.64.050, inmate forest fire suppression and support crews when fighting fires must receive a gratuity no less than the minimum wage per hour paid in the locality in which the industry is located. [2021 c 298 § 9; 1991 c 131 § 2.]

**Short title—2021 c 298:** See note following RCW 76.04.505.

**Severability—1991 c 131:** See note following RCW 72.64.150.

**RCW 72.64.900 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.** For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral,

and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 § 170.]