

**Chapter 77.130 RCW**  
**DISPOSITION OF UNCLAIMED PROPERTY**

**Sections**

77.130.010	Unclaimed personal property—Disposition—Firearms.
77.130.020	Notice of sale.
77.130.030	Use of money from sales under this chapter.
77.130.040	Property owner entitled to receive money.
77.130.050	Application of chapters 63.24 and 63.29 RCW.
77.130.060	Donation of unclaimed personal property.

**RCW 77.130.010 Unclaimed personal property—Disposition—Firearms.** Whenever any personal property comes into the possession of the officers of the department in connection with the official performance of their duties and the personal property remains unclaimed or not taken away for a period of sixty days from the date of written notice to the owner thereof, if known, which notice shall inform the owner of the disposition that may be made of the property under this section and the time that the owner has to claim the property and in all other cases for a period of sixty days from the time the property came into the possession of the department, unless the property has been held as evidence in any court, then, in that event, after sixty days from date when the case has been finally disposed of and the property released as evidence by order of the court, the department may:

(1) At any time thereafter sell the personal property at public auction to the highest and best bidder for cash in the manner hereinafter provided;

(2) Retain the property for the use of the department subject to giving notice in the manner prescribed in RCW 63.35.030 and the right of the owner, or the owner's legal representative, to reclaim the property within one year after receipt of notice, without compensation for ordinary wear and tear if, in the opinion of the director, the property consists of firearms or other items specifically usable in law enforcement work. At the end of each calendar year during which there has been such a retention, the department shall provide the office of financial management and retain for public inspection a list of such retained items and an estimation of each item's replacement value;

(3) Destroy an item of personal property at the discretion of the director if the director determines that the following circumstances have occurred:

(a) The property has no substantial commercial value or the probable cost of sale exceeds the value of the property;

(b) The item has been unclaimed by any person after notice procedures have been met, as prescribed in this section; and

(c) The director has determined that the item is illegal to possess or sell or unsafe and unable to be made safe for use by any member of the general public;

(4) If the item is not unsafe or illegal to possess or sell, such item, after satisfying the notice requirements as prescribed in this section may be offered by the director to bona fide dealers, in trade for law enforcement equipment, which equipment must be treated as retained property for the purpose of annual listing requirements of subsection (2) of this section; or

(5) At the end of one year, any unclaimed firearm must be disposed of pursuant to RCW 9.41.098(2). Any other item that is not unsafe or illegal to possess or sell, but has been, or may be used, in the judgment of the director, in a manner that is illegal, may be destroyed. [2009 c 333 § 44.]

**RCW 77.130.020 Notice of sale.** Before the personal property shall be sold, a notice of such a sale fixing the time and place thereof which shall be at a suitable place, which will be noted in the advertisement for sale, and containing a description of the property to be sold must be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the property is to be sold at least ten days prior to the date fixed for the auction. The notice must be signed by the director. If the owner fails to reclaim the property prior to the time fixed for the sale in such a notice, the director shall conduct the sale and sell the property described in the notice at public auction to the highest and best bidder for cash, and upon payment of the amount of the bid shall deliver the property to the bidder. [2009 c 333 § 45.]

**RCW 77.130.030 Use of money from sales under this chapter.** The moneys arising from sales under the provisions of this chapter must be first applied to the payment of the costs and expenses of the sale and then to the payment of lawful charges and expenses for the keep of the personal property and the balance, if any, must be forwarded to the state treasurer to be deposited into the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account under RCW 77.15.425. [2009 c 333 § 46.]

**RCW 77.130.040 Property owner entitled to receive money.** If the owner of the personal property so sold, or the owner's legal representative, shall, at any time within three years after the money has been deposited in the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account, furnish satisfactory evidence to the state treasurer of the ownership of the personal property, the owner or the owner's legal representative is entitled to receive from the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account the amount so deposited, with interest. [2009 c 333 § 47.]

**RCW 77.130.050 Application of chapters 63.24 and 63.29 RCW.** (1) Chapter 63.24 RCW, unclaimed property in hands of bailee, does not apply to personal property in the possession of the department.  
(2) The uniform unclaimed property act, \*chapter 63.29 RCW, does not apply to personal property in the possession of the department. [2009 c 333 § 48.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 63.29 RCW was repealed in its entirety by 2022 c 225 § 1505, effective January 1, 2023. For later enactment, see chapter 63.30 RCW.

**RCW 77.130.060 Donation of unclaimed personal property.** In addition to any other method of disposition of unclaimed property provided under this chapter, the department may donate unclaimed

personal property to nonprofit charitable organizations. A nonprofit charitable organization receiving personal property donated under this section must use the property, or its proceeds, to benefit needy persons. The charitable organization must qualify for tax-exempt status under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) of the federal internal revenue code. [2009 c 333 § 49.]