

**RCW 10.05.180 Failure to register vehicle, aircraft, or vessel—
Deferral program—Exception—Fines.** (1) Any county may set up a deferral program for persons who receive a citation for failing to register a vehicle, aircraft, or vessel under RCW 46.16A.030, 47.68.255, or 88.02.400. Under the deferral program:

(a) If the person has received a criminal citation for failure to register a vehicle under RCW 46.16A.030, an aircraft under RCW 47.68.255, or a vessel under RCW 88.02.400, the defendant may petition the court for a deferred prosecution conditioned upon the defendant completing the criteria in (b) of this subsection within ninety days of the court granting the deferral.

(b) To be eligible for a deferred prosecution under (a) of this subsection, the court shall dismiss the charge if the court receives satisfactory proof within ninety days that the person:

(i) Has paid a five hundred dollar fine;

(ii) Has a valid Washington state driver's license; and

(iii) Has registered the vehicle, aircraft, or vessel that was the subject of the citation.

(c) Before entering an order deferring prosecution, the court shall make specific findings that: (i) The petitioner has stipulated to the admissibility and sufficiency of the facts as contained in the written police report; (ii) the petitioner has acknowledged the admissibility of the stipulated facts in any criminal hearing on the underlying offense or offenses held subsequent to revocation of the order granting deferred prosecution; (iii) the petitioner has acknowledged and waived the right to testify, the right to a speedy trial, the right to call witnesses to testify, the right to present evidence in his or her defense, and the right to a jury trial; and (iv) the petitioner's statements were made knowingly and voluntarily. Such findings shall be included in the order granting deferred prosecution.

(d) If the defendant successfully completes the conditions required under the deferred prosecution, the court shall dismiss the charges pending against the defendant.

(e) If the court finds that the defendant has not successfully completed the conditions required under the deferred prosecution, the court shall remove the defendant from deferred prosecution and enter a judgment.

(2) The deferral program described in this section does not apply to persons who have received a previous conviction or deferral for failing to register a vehicle under RCW 46.16A.030, an aircraft under RCW 47.68.255, or a vessel under RCW 88.02.400.

(3) Fines generated pursuant to the deferral program established in subsection (1) of this section shall be used by the county for the purpose of enforcement and prosecution of registration requirements under RCW 46.16A.030, 47.68.250, or 88.02.550. [2019 c 459 s 2.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 459: "(1) The legislature finds that counties that border other states and Canada experience a significant problem of residents of Washington state who evade taxes and fees by failing to register their vehicles, aircraft, and vessels in Washington state. According to a 2007 Washington State University study, the department of revenue lost eighty million dollars over the previous five years to persons avoiding taxes and fees in this manner. It was also estimated in the study that twenty thousand vehicles were illegally registered in Oregon to residents of Clark county,

Washington. The problem has undoubtedly grown worse in the decade since the study was completed resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue to state and local coffers as these new residents fail to pay their fair share for public services. Moreover, a public safety risk is created when inaccurate information is provided to law enforcement or insurance companies in the event of an accident or infraction.

(2) Current statutes contain monetarily significant penalties that are appropriate given the scope of the harm. It is the intent of the legislature that law enforcement and prosecutors proceed against violators to the fullest extent of the law. In order to give them more tools and ensure compliance with the law, it is the intent of the legislature to set up a deferral program consistent with other programs in the state that allows defendants to obtain dismissal of charges if they take certain remedial steps. It is the intent of the legislature that the punishment for those who do not comply with the deferral program remain subject to current penalties." [2019 c 459 s 1.]