

**RCW 11.98.070 Power of trustee.** A trustee, or the trustees jointly, of a trust, in addition to the authority otherwise given by law, have discretionary power to acquire, invest, reinvest, exchange, sell, convey, control, divide, partition, and manage the trust property in accordance with the standards provided by law, and in so doing may:

(1) Receive property from any source as additions to the trust or any fund of the trust to be held and administered under the provisions of the trust;

(2) Sell on credit;

(3) Grant, purchase or exercise options;

(4) Sell or exercise subscriptions to stock or other corporate securities and to exercise conversion rights;

(5) Deposit stock or other corporate securities with any protective or other similar committee;

(6) Assent to corporate sales, leases, and encumbrances;

(7) Vote trust securities in person or by proxy with power of substitution; and enter into voting trusts;

(8) Register and hold any stocks, securities, or other property in the name of a nominee or nominees without mention of the trust relationship, provided the trustee or trustees are liable for any loss occasioned by the acts of any nominee, except that this subsection shall not apply to situations covered by subsection (31) of this section;

(9) Grant leases of trust property, with or without options to purchase or renew, to begin within a reasonable period and for terms within or extending beyond the duration of the trust, for any purpose including exploration for and removal of oil, gas and other minerals; enter into community oil leases, pooling and unitization agreements;

(10) Subdivide, develop, dedicate to public use, make or obtain the vacation of public plats, adjust boundaries, partition real property, and on exchange or partition to adjust differences in valuation by giving or receiving money or money's worth;

(11) Compromise or submit claims to arbitration;

(12) Borrow money, secured or unsecured, from any source, including a corporate trustee's banking department, or from the individual trustee's own funds;

(13) Make loans, either secured or unsecured, at such interest as the trustee may determine to any person, including any beneficiary of a trust, except that no trustee who is a beneficiary of a trust may participate in decisions regarding loans to such beneficiary from the trust and then only to the extent of the loan, and also except that if a beneficiary or the grantor of a trust has the power to change a trustee of the trust, the power to loan shall be limited to loans at a reasonable rate of interest and for adequate security;

(14) Determine the hazards to be insured against and maintain insurance for them;

(15) Select any part of the trust estate in satisfaction of any partition or distribution, in kind, in money or both; make nonpro rata distributions of property in kind; allocate particular assets or portions of them or undivided interests in them to any one or more of the beneficiaries without regard to the income tax basis of specific property allocated to any beneficiary and without any obligation to make an equitable adjustment;

(16)(a) Pay an amount distributable to a beneficiary who is under a legal disability or who the trustee reasonably believes is

incapacitated, by paying it directly to the beneficiary or applying it for the beneficiary's benefit, or by:

- (i) Paying it to the beneficiary's guardian;
- (ii) Paying it to the beneficiary's custodian under chapter 11.114 RCW, and, for that purpose, creating a custodianship;
- (iii) If the trustee does not know of a guardian or custodian, paying it to an adult relative or other person having legal or physical care or custody of the beneficiary, with instructions to expend the funds on the beneficiary's behalf; or
- (iv) Managing it as a separate fund on the beneficiary's behalf, subject to the beneficiary's continuing right to withdraw the distribution.

(b) If the trustee pays any amount to a third party under (a) (i) through (iii) of this subsection, the trustee has no further obligations regarding the amounts so paid;

(17) Change the character of or abandon a trust asset or any interest in it;

(18) Mortgage, pledge the assets or the credit of the trust estate, or otherwise encumber trust property, including future income, whether an initial encumbrance or a renewal or extension of it, for a term within or extending beyond the term of the trust, in connection with the exercise of any power vested in the trustee;

(19) Make ordinary or extraordinary repairs or alterations in buildings or other trust property, demolish any improvements, raze existing structures, and make any improvements to trust property;

(20) Create restrictions, easements, including easements to public use without consideration, and other servitudes;

(21) Manage any business interest, including any farm or ranch interest, regardless of form, received by the trustee from the trustor of the trust, as a result of the death of a person, or by gratuitous transfer from any other transferor, and with respect to the business interest, have the following powers:

(a) To hold, retain, and continue to operate that business interest solely at the risk of the trust, without need to diversify and without liability on the part of the trustee for any resulting losses;

(b) To enlarge or diminish the scope or nature or the activities of any business;

(c) To authorize the participation and contribution by the business to any employee benefit plan, whether or not qualified as being tax deductible, as may be desirable from time to time;

(d) To use the general assets of the trust for the purpose of the business and to invest additional capital in or make loans to such business;

(e) To endorse or guarantee on behalf of the trust any loan made to the business and to secure the loan by the trust's interest in the business or any other property of the trust;

(f) To leave to the discretion of the trustee the manner and degree of the trustee's active participation in the management of the business, and the trustee is authorized to delegate all or any part of the trustee's power to supervise, manage, or operate to such persons as the trustee may select, including any partner, associate, director, officer, or employee of the business; and also including electing or employing directors, officers, or employees of the trustee to take part in the management of the business as directors or officers or otherwise, and to pay that person reasonable compensation for services without regard to the fees payable to the trustee;

(g) To engage, compensate, and discharge or to vote for the engaging, compensating, and discharging of managers, employees, agents, lawyers, accountants, consultants, or other representatives, including anyone who may be a beneficiary of the trust or any trustee;

(h) To cause or agree that surplus be accumulated or that dividends be paid;

(i) To accept as correct financial or other statements rendered by any accountant for any sole proprietorship or by any partnership or corporation as to matters pertaining to the business except upon actual notice to the contrary;

(j) To treat the business as an entity separate from the trust, and in any accounting by the trustee it is sufficient if the trustee reports the earning and condition of the business in a manner conforming to standard business accounting practice;

(k) To exercise with respect to the retention, continuance, or disposition of any such business all the rights and powers that the trustor of the trust would have if alive at the time of the exercise, including all powers as are conferred on the trustee by law or as are necessary to enable the trustee to administer the trust in accordance with the instrument governing the trust, subject to any limitations provided for in the instrument; and

(l) To satisfy contractual and tort liabilities arising out of an unincorporated business, including any partnership, first out of the business and second out of the estate or trust, but in no event may there be a liability of the trustee, except as provided in RCW 11.98.110 (2) and (4), and if the trustee is liable, the trustee is entitled to indemnification from the business and the trust, respectively;

(22) Participate in the establishment of, and thereafter in the operation of, any business or other enterprise according to subsection (21) of this section except that the trustee shall not be relieved of the duty to diversify;

(23) Cause or participate in, directly or indirectly, the formation, reorganization, merger, consolidation, dissolution, or other change in the form of any corporate or other business undertaking where trust property may be affected and retain any property received pursuant to the change;

(24) Limit participation in the management of any partnership and act as a limited or general partner;

(25) Charge profits and losses of any business operation, including farm or ranch operation, to the trust estate as a whole and not to the trustee; make available to or invest in any business or farm operation additional moneys from the trust estate or other sources;

(26) Pay reasonable compensation to the trustee or co-trustees considering all circumstances including the time, effort, skill, and responsibility involved in the performance of services by the trustee and reimburse the trustee, with interest as appropriate, for expenses that were properly incurred in the administration of the trust;

(27) Engage persons, including lawyers, accountants, investment advisors, or agents, even if they are associated with the trustee, to advise or assist the trustee in the performance of the trustee's duties or to perform any act, subject to RCW 11.98.071;

(28) Appoint an ancillary trustee or agent to facilitate management of assets located in another state or foreign country;

(29) Retain and store such items of tangible personal property as the trustee selects and pay reasonable storage charges thereon from the trust estate;

(30) Issue proxies to any adult beneficiary of a trust for the purpose of voting stock of a corporation acting as the trustee of the trust;

(31) Place all or any part of the securities at any time held by the trustee in the care and custody of any bank, trust company, or member firm of the New York Stock Exchange with no obligation while the securities are so deposited to inspect or verify the same and with no responsibility for any loss or misapplication by the bank, trust company, or firm, so long as the bank, trust company, or firm was selected and retained with reasonable care, and have all stocks and registered securities placed in the name of the bank, trust company, or firm, or in the name of its nominee, and to appoint such bank, trust company, or firm agent as attorney to collect, receive, receipt for, and disburse any income, and generally may perform, but is under no requirement to perform, the duties and services incident to a so-called "custodian" account;

(32) Determine at any time that the corpus of any trust is insufficient to implement the intent of the trust, and upon this determination by the trustee, terminate the trust by distribution of the trust to the current income beneficiary or beneficiaries of the trust or their legal representatives, except that this determination may only be made by the trustee if the trustee is neither the grantor nor the beneficiary of the trust, and if the trust has no charitable beneficiary;

(33) Continue to be a party to any existing voting trust agreement or enter into any new voting trust agreement or renew an existing voting trust agreement with respect to any assets contained in trust;

(34) (a) Donate a qualified conservation easement, as defined by 26 U.S.C. Sec. 2031(c) of the federal internal revenue code, on any real property, or consent to the donation of a qualified conservation easement on any real property by a personal representative of an estate of which the trustee is a devisee, to obtain the benefit of the estate tax exclusion allowed under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 2031(c) of the federal internal revenue code or the deduction allowed under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 2055(f) of the federal internal revenue code as long as:

(i) (A) The governing instrument authorizes the donation of a qualified conservation easement on the real property; or

(B) Each beneficiary that may be affected by the qualified conservation easement consents to the donation under the provisions of chapter 11.96A RCW; and

(ii) The donation of a qualified conservation easement will not result in the insolvency of the decedent's estate.

(b) The authority granted under this subsection includes the authority to amend a previously donated qualified conservation easement, as defined under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 2031(c)(8)(B) of the federal internal revenue code, and to amend a previously donated unqualified conservation easement for the purpose of making the easement a qualified conservation easement under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 2031(c)(8)(B);

(35) Pay or contest any claim, settle a claim by or against the trust, and release, in whole or in part, a claim belonging to the trust;

(36) Exercise elections with respect to federal, state, and local taxes;

(37) Prosecute or defend an action, claim, or judicial proceeding in any jurisdiction to protect trust property and the trustee in the performance of the trustee's duties;

(38) On termination of the trust, exercise the powers appropriate to wind up the administration of the trust and distribute the trust property to the persons entitled to it; and

(39) Select a mode of payment under any employee benefit or retirement plan, annuity, or life insurance payable to the trustee, exercise rights thereunder, including exercise of the right to indemnification for expenses and against liabilities, and take appropriate action to collect the proceeds. [2015 c 115 s 2; 2011 c 327 s 26; 2010 c 8 s 2091; 2002 c 66 s 1; 1997 c 252 s 75; 1989 c 40 s 7; 1985 c 30 s 50. Prior: 1984 c 149 s 80; 1959 c 124 s 7. Formerly RCW 30.99.070.]

**Application—Effective date—2011 c 327:** See notes following RCW 11.103.020.

**Construction—1989 c 40:** "(1) The amendments made in this act with respect to the excise tax imposed under section 4980A(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, are to be effective as to excise tax imposed by reason of a decedent's death occurring after April 18, 1989.

(2) The amendments made in this act regarding apportionment of the tax with respect to qualified real property, and regarding extensions to pay tax, shall be effective with respect to the tax attributable to deaths occurring after April 18, 1989.

(3) The amendment to RCW 11.98.070(13) shall be effective with respect to loans described in RCW 83.110.020(2) made or committed to be made after April 18, 1989." [1989 c 40 s 8.]

**Severability—1989 c 40:** "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." [1989 c 40 s 9.]

**Short title—Application—Purpose—Severability—1985 c 30:** See RCW 11.02.900 through 11.02.903.

**Severability—Effective dates—1984 c 149:** See notes following RCW 11.02.005.