

RCW 27.44.050 Civil action by Indian tribe or member—Time for commencing action—Venue—Damages—Attorneys' fees. (1) Apart from any criminal prosecution, an Indian tribe or enrolled member thereof, shall have a civil action to secure an injunction, damages, or other appropriate relief against any person who is alleged to have violated RCW 27.44.040. The action must be brought within two years of the discovery of the violation by the plaintiff. The action may be filed in the superior or tribal court of the county in which the grave, cairn, remains, or artifacts are located, or in the superior court of the county within which the defendant resides.

(2) Any conviction pursuant to RCW 27.44.040 shall be prima facie evidence in an action brought under this section.

(3) If the plaintiff prevails:

(a) The court may award reasonable attorneys' fees to the plaintiff;

(b) The court may grant injunctive or such other equitable relief as is appropriate, including forfeiture of any artifacts or remains acquired or equipment used in the violation. The court shall order the disposition of any items forfeited as the court sees fit, including the reinterment of human remains;

(c) The plaintiff shall recover imputed damages of five hundred dollars or actual damages, whichever is greater. Actual damages include special and general damages, which include damages for emotional distress;

(d) The plaintiff may recover punitive damages upon proof that the violation was willful. Punitive damages may be recovered without proof of actual damages. All punitive damages shall be paid by the defendant to the *office of archaeology and historic preservation for the purposes of Indian historic preservation and to cover the cost of reinterment expenses by the office; and

(e) An award of imputed or punitive damages may be made only once for a particular violation by a particular person, but shall not preclude the award of such damages based on violations by other persons or on other violations.

(4) If the defendant prevails, the court may award reasonable attorneys' fees to the defendant. [1989 c 44 s 3.]

***Reviser's note:** Powers, duties, and functions of the office of archaeology and historic preservation were transferred to the department of archaeology and historic preservation pursuant to 2005 c 333 s 12.