

RCW 35.21.779 Fire protection services for state-owned facilities—Contracts with the department of commerce—Consolidation of negotiations with multiple state agencies—Arbitration.

(1) In cities or towns where the estimated value of state-owned facilities constitutes ten percent or more of the total assessed valuation, the state agency or institution owning the facilities shall contract with the city or town to pay an equitable share for fire protection services. The contract shall be negotiated as provided in subsections (2) through (6) of this section and shall provide for payment by the agency or institution to the city or town.

(2) A city or town seeking to enter into fire protection contract negotiations shall provide written notification to the department of commerce and the state agencies or institutions that own property within the jurisdiction, of its intent to contract for fire protection services. Where there are multiple state agencies located within a single jurisdiction, a city may choose to notify only the department of commerce, which in turn shall notify the agencies or institution that own property within the jurisdiction of the city's intent to contract for fire protection services. Any such notification shall be based on the valuation procedures, based on commonly accepted standards, adopted by the department of commerce in consultation with the department of enterprise services and the association of Washington cities.

(3) The department of commerce shall review any such notification to ensure that the valuation procedures and results are accurate. The department will notify each affected city or town and state agency or institution of the results of their review within thirty days of receipt of notification.

(4) The parties negotiating fire protection contracts under this section shall conduct those negotiations in good faith. Whenever there are multiple state agencies located within a single jurisdiction, every effort shall be made by the state to consolidate negotiations on behalf of all affected agencies.

(5) In the event of notification by one of the parties that an agreement cannot be reached on the terms and conditions of a fire protection contract, the director of the department of commerce shall mediate a resolution of the disagreement. In the event of a continued impasse, the director of the department of commerce shall recommend a resolution.

(6) If the parties reject the recommendation of the director and an impasse continues, the director shall direct the parties to arbitration. The parties shall agree on a neutral arbitrator, and the fees and expenses of the arbitrator shall be shared equally between the parties. The arbitration shall be a final offer, total arbitration, with the arbitrator empowered only to pick the final offer of one of the parties or the recommended resolution by the director of the department of commerce. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final, binding, and nonappealable on the parties.

(7) The provisions of this section shall not apply if a city or town and a state agency or institution have contracted pursuant to RCW 35.21.775.

(8) The provisions of this section do not apply to cities and towns not meeting the conditions in subsection (1) of this section. Cities and towns not meeting the conditions of subsection (1) of this section may enter into contracts pursuant to RCW 35.21.775. [2015 c 225 s 29; 1995 c 399 s 39; 1992 c 117 s 6.]

Findings—1992 c 117: See note following RCW 35.21.775.