

RCW 35.82.070 Powers of authority. An authority shall constitute a public body corporate and politic, exercising public and essential governmental functions, and having all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this chapter, including the following powers in addition to others herein granted:

(1) To sue and be sued; to have a seal and to alter the same at pleasure; to have perpetual succession; to make and execute contracts and other instruments, including but not limited to partnership agreements and joint venture agreements, necessary or convenient to the exercise of the powers of the authority; to participate in the organization or the operation of a nonprofit corporation which has as one of its purposes to provide or assist in the provision of housing for persons of low income; and to make and from time to time amend and repeal bylaws, rules and regulations, not inconsistent with this chapter, to carry into effect the powers and purposes of the authority.

(2) Within its area of operation: To prepare, carry out, acquire, lease and operate housing projects; to provide for the construction, reconstruction, improvement, alteration or repair of any housing project or any part thereof; to agree to rent or sell dwellings forming part of the projects to or for persons of low income. Where an agreement or option is made to sell a dwelling to a person of low income, the authority may convey the dwelling to the person upon fulfillment of the agreement irrespective of whether the person is at the time of the conveyance a person of low income. Leases, options, agreements, or conveyances may include such covenants as the authority deems appropriate to assure the achievement of the objectives of this chapter.

(3) To acquire, lease, rent, sell, or otherwise dispose of any commercial space located in buildings or structures containing a housing project or projects.

(4) To arrange or contract for the furnishing by any person or agency, public or private, of services, privileges, works, or facilities for, or in connection with, a housing project or the occupants thereof; and (notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this chapter or in any other provision of law) to include in any contract let in connection with a project, stipulations requiring that the contractor and any subcontractors comply with requirements as to minimum wages and maximum hours of labor, and comply with any conditions which the federal government may have attached to its financial aid of the project.

(5) To lease or rent any dwellings, houses, accommodations, lands, buildings, structures or facilities embraced in any housing project and (subject to the limitations contained in this chapter) to establish and revise the rents or charges therefor; to own or manage buildings containing a housing project or projects as well as commercial space or other dwelling units that do not constitute a housing project as that term is defined in this chapter. However, notwithstanding the provisions under subsection (1) of this section, dwelling units made available or sold to persons of low income, together with functionally related and subordinate facilities, shall occupy at least 50 percent of the interior space in the total development owned by the authority or at least 50 percent of the total number of units in the development owned by the authority, whichever produces the greater number of units for persons of low income, and for mobile home parks, the mobile home lots made available to persons

of low income shall be at least 50 percent of the total number of mobile home lots in the park owned by the authority; to own, hold, and improve real or personal property; to purchase, lease, obtain options upon, acquire by gift, grant, bequest, devise, or otherwise including financial assistance and other aid from the state or any public body, person or corporation, any real or personal property or any interest therein; to acquire by the exercise of the power of eminent domain any real property; to sell, lease, exchange, transfer, assign, pledge, or dispose of any real or personal property or any interest therein; to sell, lease, exchange, transfer, or dispose of any real or personal property or interest therein at less than fair market value to a governmental entity for any purpose when such action assists the housing authority in carrying out its powers and purposes under this chapter, to a low-income person or family for the purpose of providing housing for that person or family, or to a nonprofit corporation provided the nonprofit corporation agrees to sell the property to a low-income person or family or to use the property for the provision of housing for persons of low income for at least 20 years; to insure or provide for the insurance of any real or personal property or operations of the authority against any risks or hazards; to procure or agree to the procurement of insurance or guarantees from the federal government of the payment of any bonds or parts thereof issued by an authority, including the power to pay premiums on any such insurance.

(6) To contract with a property management services company for purposes of operating a housing project. Rental and other project revenues collected by a property management services company from the housing project's tenants and used to pay administrative operating and ordinary maintenance costs incurred by the company under the terms of the contract with the authority shall be treated as private funds, and any resulting services as executed at the cost of the property management services company and the housing project's tenants, until the net operating revenues are distributed to the authority for its exclusive use and control. For the purposes of this subsection, "ordinary maintenance" only includes: Routine repairs related to unit turnover work; grounds and parking lot upkeep; and repairs and cleaning work needed to keep a property in a clean, safe, sanitary, and rentable condition that are customarily undertaken or administered by residential property management services companies. "Ordinary maintenance" does not include repairs that would be considered replacement capital repairs or scheduled regular maintenance work on plumbing, electrical, or HVAC/R systems or their components.

(7) To invest any funds held in reserves or sinking funds, or any funds not required for immediate disbursement, in property or securities in which savings banks may legally invest funds subject to their control; to purchase its bonds at a price not more than the principal amount thereof and accrued interest, all bonds so purchased to be canceled.

(8) Within its area of operation: To investigate into living, dwelling and housing conditions and into the means and methods of improving such conditions; to determine where slum areas exist or where there is a shortage of decent, safe and sanitary dwelling accommodations for persons of low income; to make studies and recommendations relating to the problem of clearing, replanning and reconstructing of slum areas, and the problem of providing dwelling accommodations for persons of low income, and to cooperate with the city, the county, the state or any political subdivision thereof in

action taken in connection with such problems; and to engage in research, studies and experimentation on the subject of housing.

(9) Acting through one or more commissioners or other person or persons designated by the authority: To conduct examinations and investigations and to hear testimony and take proof under oath at public or private hearings on any matter material for its information; to administer oaths, issue subpoenas requiring the attendance of witnesses or the production of books and papers and to issue commissions for the examination of witnesses who are outside of the state or unable to attend before the authority, or excused from attendance; to make available to appropriate agencies (including those charged with the duty of abating or requiring the correction of nuisances or like conditions, or of demolishing unsafe or insanitary structures within its area of operation) its findings and recommendations with regard to any building or property where conditions exist which are dangerous to the public health, morals, safety or welfare.

(10) To initiate eviction proceedings against any tenant as provided by law. Activity occurring in any housing authority unit that constitutes a violation of chapter 69.41, 69.50, or 69.52 RCW shall constitute a nuisance for the purpose of RCW 59.12.030(5).

(11) To exercise all or any part or combination of powers herein granted.

No provisions of law with respect to the acquisition, operation or disposition of property by other public bodies shall be applicable to an authority unless the legislature shall specifically so state.

(12) To agree (notwithstanding the limitation contained in RCW 35.82.210) to make such payments in lieu of taxes as the authority finds consistent with the achievement of the purposes of this chapter.

(13) Upon the request of a county or city, to exercise any powers of a community renewal agency under chapter 35.81 RCW or a public corporation, commission, or authority under chapter 35.21 RCW.

(14) To exercise the powers granted in this chapter within the boundaries of any city, town, or county not included in the area in which such housing authority is originally authorized to function: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, The governing or legislative body of such city, town, or county, as the case may be, adopts a resolution declaring that there is a need for the authority to function in such territory.

(15) To administer contracts for assistance payments to persons of low income in accordance with section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended by Title II, section 201 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, P.L. 93-383.

(16) To sell at public or private sale, with or without public bidding, for fair market value, any mortgage or other obligation held by the authority.

(17) To the extent permitted under its contract with the holders of bonds, notes, and other obligations of the authority, to consent to any modification with respect to rate of interest, time, and payment of any installment of principal or interest security, or any other term of any contract, mortgage, mortgage loan, mortgage loan commitment, contract, or agreement of any kind to which the authority is a party.

(18) To make, purchase, participate in, invest in, take assignments of, or otherwise acquire loans to persons of low income to enable them to acquire, construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate, improve, lease, or refinance their dwellings, and to take such security therefor as is deemed necessary and prudent by the authority.

(19) To make, purchase, participate in, invest in, take assignments of, or otherwise acquire loans for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, improvement, leasing, or refinancing of land, buildings, or developments for housing for persons of low income. For purposes of this subsection, development shall include either land or buildings or both.

(a) Any development financed under this subsection shall be subject to an agreement that for at least 20 years the dwelling units made available to persons of low income together with functionally related and subordinate facilities shall occupy at least 50 percent of the interior space in the total development or at least 50 percent of the total number of units in the development, whichever produces the greater number of units for persons of low income. For mobile home parks, the mobile home lots made available to persons of low income shall be at least 50 percent of the total number of mobile home lots in the park. During the term of the agreement, the owner shall use its best efforts in good faith to maintain the dwelling units or mobile home lots required to be made available to persons of low income at rents affordable to persons of low income. The 20-year requirement under this subsection (19) (a) shall not apply when an authority finances the development by nonprofit corporations or governmental units of dwellings or mobile home lots intended for sale to persons of low and moderate income, and shall not apply to construction or other short-term financing provided to nonprofit corporations or governmental units when the financing has a repayment term of one year or less.

(b) In addition, if the development is owned by a for-profit entity, the dwelling units or mobile home lots required to be made available to persons of low income shall be rented to persons whose incomes do not exceed 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size, and shall have unit or lot rents that do not exceed 15 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, unless rent subsidies are provided to make them affordable to persons of low income.

For purposes of this subsection (19) (b), if the development is owned directly or through a partnership by a governmental entity or a nonprofit organization, which nonprofit organization is itself not controlled by a for-profit entity or affiliated with any for-profit entity that a nonprofit organization itself does not control, it shall not be treated as being owned by a for-profit entity when the governmental entity or nonprofit organization exercises legal control of the ownership entity and in addition, (i) the dwelling units or mobile home lots required to be made available to persons of low income are rented to persons whose incomes do not exceed 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size, and (ii) the development is subject to an agreement that transfers ownership to the governmental entity or nonprofit organization or extends an irrevocable right of first refusal to purchase the development under a formula for setting the acquisition price that is specified in the agreement.

(c) Commercial space in any building financed under this subsection that exceeds four stories in height shall not constitute more than 20 percent of the interior area of the building. Before financing any development under this subsection the authority shall make a written finding that financing is important for project feasibility or necessary to enable the authority to carry out its powers and purposes under this chapter.

(20) To contract with a public authority or corporation, created by a county, city, or town under RCW 35.21.730 through 35.21.755, to act as the developer for new housing projects or improvement of existing housing projects. [2023 c 133 s 1; 2022 c 273 s 2; 2002 c 218 s 22; 1993 c 478 s 17; 1991 c 167 s 1; 1989 c 363 s 2; 1985 c 386 s 1; 1983 c 225 s 2; 1977 ex.s. c 274 s 2; 1965 c 7 s 35.82.070. Prior: 1945 c 43 s 1; 1939 c 23 s 8; Rem. Supp. 1945 s 6889-8. Formerly RCW 74.24.070.]

Findings—2022 c 273: "The legislature recognizes the important role housing authorities play in providing much needed affordable housing to more than 35,000 households through their inventory of rental housing, including through workforce housing programs where housing authorities keep rents as low as possible and operate on very thin margins.

The legislature finds that for nearly 30 years without issue, objection, or complaint, housing authorities have been contracting with property management services companies for site operations at unsubsidized workforce housing properties. The legislature further finds that it is critical to continue efforts to preserve and expand naturally occurring workforce housing units statewide. Therefore, the legislature recognizes that, at unsubsidized housing authority properties, tenant rents and deposits paid to property management companies and used to pay for regular maintenance and operations are private funds and such maintenance work is not a public work." [2022 c 273 s 1.]

Severability—Savings—Construction—2002 c 218: See notes following RCW 35.81.005.

Severability—1983 c 225: See note following RCW 35.82.020.