

RCW 38.52.430 Emergency response caused by person's intoxication

—Recovery of costs from convicted person. A person whose intoxication causes an incident resulting in an appropriate emergency response, and who, in connection with the incident, has been found guilty of or has had their prosecution deferred for (1) driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug, RCW 46.61.502; (2) physical control of a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug, RCW 46.61.504; (3) operating an aircraft under the influence of intoxicants or drugs, RCW 47.68.220; (4) use of a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, RCW 79A.60.040; (5) vehicular homicide while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug, RCW 46.61.520(1)(a); or (6) vehicular assault while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug, RCW 46.61.522(1)(b), is liable for the expense of an emergency response by a public agency to the incident.

The expense of an emergency response is a charge against the person liable for expenses under this section. The charge constitutes a debt of that person and is collectible by the public agency incurring those costs in the same manner as in the case of an obligation under a contract, expressed or implied. Following a conviction of an offense listed in this section, and prior to sentencing, the prosecution may present to the court information setting forth the expenses incurred by the public agency for its emergency response to the incident. Upon a finding by the court that the expenses are reasonable, the court shall order the defendant to reimburse the public agency. The cost reimbursement shall be included in the sentencing order as an additional monetary obligation of the defendant and may not be substituted for any other fine or cost required or allowed by statute. The court may establish a payment schedule for the payment of the cost reimbursement, separate from any payment schedule imposed for other fines and costs. All payments for the cost reimbursement must be remitted directly to the public agency or agencies that incurred the cost associated with the emergency response.

In no event shall a person's liability under this section for the expense of an emergency response exceed two thousand five hundred dollars for a particular incident.

If more than one public agency makes a claim for payment from an individual for an emergency response to a single incident under the provisions of this section, and the sum of the claims exceeds the amount recovered, the division of the amount recovered shall be determined by an interlocal agreement consistent with the requirements of chapter 39.34 RCW. [2020 c 330 § 4; 2012 c 183 § 6; 1993 c 251 § 2.]

Effective date—2012 c 183: See note following RCW 9.94A.475.

Finding—Intent—1993 c 251: "The legislature finds that a public agency incurs expenses in an emergency response. It is the intent of the legislature to allow a public agency to recover the expenses of an emergency response to an incident involving persons who operate a motor vehicle, boat or vessel, or a civil aircraft while under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or a drug, or the combined influence of an alcoholic beverage and a drug. It is the intent of the legislature that the recovery of expenses of an emergency response under this act shall supplement and shall not supplant other

provisions of law relating to the recovery of those expenses." [1993 c
251 § 1.]