

RCW 46.55.360 Impoundment, when required—Law enforcement powers, duties, and liability immunity—Redemption, when, by whom—Operator liability immunity—Definition.

(1)(a) When a driver of a vehicle is arrested for a violation of RCW 46.61.502 or 46.61.504, or illegal racing conduct under RCW 46.61.500 or 46.61.530 or a comparable municipal ordinance, and the officer directs the impoundment of the vehicle under RCW 46.55.113(2) (e) or (l), the vehicle must be impounded and retained under the process outlined in this section. With the exception of the holds mandated under this section, the procedures for notice, redemption, storage, auction, and sale shall remain the same as for other impounded vehicles under this chapter.

(b) If the police officer directing that a vehicle be impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2) (e) or (l) has:

(i) Waited 30 minutes after the police officer contacted the police dispatcher requesting a registered tow truck operator and the tow truck responding has not arrived, or

(ii) If the police officer is presented with exigent circumstances such as being called to another incident or due to limited available resources being required to return to patrol, the police officer may place the completed impound order and inventory inside the vehicle and secure the vehicle by closing the windows and locking the doors before leaving.

(c) If a police officer has secured the vehicle and left it pursuant to (b) of this subsection, the police officer and the government or agency employing the police officer shall not be liable for any damages to or theft of the vehicle or its contents that occur between the time the officer leaves and the time that the registered tow truck operator takes custody of the vehicle, or for the actions of any person who takes or removes the vehicle before the registered tow truck operator arrives.

(2)(a) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2) (e) and the driver is a registered owner of the vehicle, the impounded vehicle may not be redeemed within a 12-hour period following the time the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log, unless there are two or more registered owners of the vehicle or there is a legal owner of the vehicle that is not the driver of the vehicle. A registered owner who is not the driver of the vehicle or a legal owner who is not the driver of the vehicle may redeem the impounded vehicle after it arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(b) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2) (e) and the driver is a registered owner of the vehicle, the police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may not be redeemed within a 12-hour period following the time the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log, unless there are two or more registered owners or there is a legal owner who is not the driver of the vehicle. The police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by either a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(c) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(1), the driver is arrested for racing, and the driver is a registered owner of the vehicle, the impounded vehicle may not be redeemed for a period of 72 hours from the time the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log, unless there are two or more registered owners of the vehicle or there is a legal owner of the vehicle that is not the driver of the vehicle. A registered owner who is not the driver of the vehicle or a legal owner who is not the driver of the vehicle may redeem the impounded vehicle after it arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(d) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(1), the driver is arrested for racing, and the driver is a registered owner of the vehicle, the police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may not be redeemed for 72 hours from the time the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log, unless there are two or more registered owners or there is a legal owner who is not the driver of the vehicle. The police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by either a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(3)(a) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(e) and the driver is not a registered owner of the vehicle, the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(b) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(e) and the driver is not a registered owner of the vehicle, the police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(c) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(1), the driver is arrested for racing, and the driver is not a registered owner of the vehicle, the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(d) When a vehicle is impounded under RCW 46.55.113(2)(1), the driver is arrested for racing, and the driver is not a registered owner of the vehicle, the police officer directing the impound shall notify the driver that the impounded vehicle may be redeemed by a registered owner or legal owner, who is not the driver of the vehicle, after the impounded vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility as noted in the registered tow truck operator's master log.

(e) If the vehicle is a commercial vehicle or farm transport vehicle and the driver of the vehicle is not the owner of the vehicle, prior to determining that no reasonable alternatives to impound exist and directing impoundment of the vehicle under RCW 46.55.113(2)(e) or

(1), the police officer must have attempted in a reasonable and timely manner to contact the owner, and release the vehicle to the owner if the owner was reasonably available, not under the influence of alcohol or any drug, and not a party to the racing conduct that subjects the vehicle to impound.

(f) The registered tow truck operator shall notify the agency that ordered that the vehicle be impounded when the vehicle arrives at the registered tow truck operator's storage facility and has been entered into the master log starting any mandatory hold period provided for in this section.

(4) A registered tow truck operator that releases an impounded vehicle pursuant to the requirements stated in this section is not liable for injuries or damages sustained by the operator of the vehicle or sustained by third parties that may result from the vehicle driver's intoxicated state or illegal conduct relating to racing.

(5) For purposes of this section "farm transport vehicle" means a motor vehicle owned by a farmer and that is being actively used in the transportation of the farmer's or another farmer's farm, orchard, aquatic farm, or dairy products, including livestock and plant or animal wastes, from point of production to market or disposal, or supplies or commodities to be used on the farm, orchard, aquatic farm, or dairy, and that has a gross vehicle weight rating of 7,258 kilograms (16,001 pounds) or more. [2023 c 283 s 7; 2020 c 117 s 3; 2011 c 167 s 3.]

Reviser's note: As to the constitutionality of this section, see *State v. Villela*, No. 96183-2 (October 17, 2019).

Effective date—2023 c 283: See note following RCW 46.04.367.

Finding—Intent—2020 c 117: See note following RCW 46.55.113.

Short title—2011 c 167: "This act shall be known and cited as Hailey's Law." [2011 c 167 s 1.]