

RCW 46.61.145 Following too closely—Vulnerable users of a public way—Fine. (Effective until January 1, 2025.)

(1) The driver of a motor vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard for the speed of such vehicles and the traffic upon and the condition of the highway.

(2) The driver of any motor truck or motor vehicle drawing another vehicle when traveling upon a roadway outside of a business or residence district and which is following another motor truck or motor vehicle drawing another vehicle shall, whenever conditions permit, leave sufficient space so that an overtaking vehicle may enter and occupy such space without danger, except that this shall not prevent a motor truck or motor vehicle drawing another vehicle from overtaking and passing any like vehicle or other vehicle.

(3) Motor vehicles being driven upon any roadway outside of a business or residence district in a caravan or motorcade whether or not towing other vehicles shall be so operated as to allow sufficient space between each such vehicle or combination of vehicles so as to enable any other vehicle to enter and occupy such space without danger. This provision shall not apply to funeral processions.

(4) (a) When the vehicle being followed is a vulnerable user of a public way, a driver of a motor vehicle found to be in violation of this section must be assessed an additional fine equal to the base penalty assessed under RCW 46.63.110(3). This fine may not be waived, reduced, or suspended, unless the court finds the offender to be indigent, and is not subject to the additional fees and assessments that the base penalty for this violation is subject to under RCW 2.68.040, 3.62.090, and 46.63.110.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "vulnerable user of a public way" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 46.61.526(11)(c).

(5) The additional fine imposed under subsection (4) of this section must be deposited into the vulnerable roadway user education account created in subsection (6) of this section.

(6) The vulnerable roadway user education account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from the additional fine in subsection (4) of this section must be deposited into the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only by the Washington traffic safety commission solely to:

(a) Support programs dedicated to increasing awareness by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges of opportunities for the enforcement of traffic infractions and offenses committed against vulnerable roadway users; and

(b) With any funds remaining once the program support specified in (a) of this subsection has been provided, support programs dedicated to increasing awareness by the public of the risks and penalties associated with traffic infractions and offenses committed against vulnerable roadway users. [2019 c 403 s 4; 1965 ex.s. c 155 s 24.]

Rules of court: Monetary penalty schedule—IRLJ 6.2.

Finding—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 403: See notes following RCW 46.04.071.

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(4) (a) When the vehicle being followed is a vulnerable user of a public way, a driver of a motor vehicle found to be in violation of this section must be assessed an additional fine equal to the base penalty assessed under RCW 46.63.110(3). This fine may not be waived, reduced, or suspended, unless the court finds the offender to be indigent, and is not subject to the additional fees and assessments that the base penalty for this violation is subject to under RCW 2.68.040, 3.62.090, and 46.63.110.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "vulnerable user of a public way" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 46.61.5259.

(5) The additional fine imposed under subsection (4) of this section must be deposited into the vulnerable roadway user education account created in subsection (6) of this section.

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(a) Support programs dedicated to increasing awareness by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges of opportunities for the enforcement of traffic infractions and offenses committed against vulnerable roadway users; and

(b) With any funds remaining once the program support specified in (a) of this subsection has been provided, support programs dedicated to increasing awareness by the public of the risks and penalties associated with traffic infractions and offenses committed against vulnerable roadway users. [2023 c 471 s 5; 2019 c 403 s 4; 1965 ex.s. c 155 s 24.]

Rules of court: Monetary penalty schedule—IRLJ 6.2.

Effective date—2023 c 471: See note following RCW 46.61.5259.

Finding—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 403: See notes following RCW 46.04.071.