

**Chapter 13.50 RCW**  
**KEEPING AND RELEASE OF RECORDS BY JUVENILE JUSTICE OR CARE AGENCIES**

**Sections**

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*Office of the family and children's ombuds: Chapter 43.06A RCW.*

**RCW 13.50.010 Definitions—Conditions when filing petition or information—Duties to maintain accurate records and access—Confidential child welfare records.** (1) For purposes of this chapter:

(a) "Good faith effort to pay" means a juvenile offender has either (i) paid the principal amount in full; (ii) made at least eighty percent of the value of full monthly payments within the period from disposition or deferred disposition until the time the amount of restitution owed is under review; or (iii) can show good cause why he or she paid an amount less than eighty percent of the value of full monthly payments;

(b) "Juvenile justice or care agency" means any of the following: Police, diversion units, court, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, detention center, attorney general, the oversight board for children, youth, and families, the office of the family and children's ombuds, the department of social and health services and its contracting agencies, the department of children, youth, and families and its contracting agencies, schools; persons or public or private agencies having children committed to their custody; and any placement oversight committee created under RCW 72.05.415;

(c) "Official juvenile court file" means the legal file of the juvenile court containing the petition or information, motions, memorandums, briefs, notices of hearing or appearance, service documents, witness and exhibit lists, findings of the court and court orders, agreements, judgments, decrees, notices of appeal, as well as documents prepared by the clerk, including court minutes, letters,

warrants, waivers, affidavits, declarations, invoices, and the index to clerk papers;

(d) "Records" means the official juvenile court file, the social file, and records of any other juvenile justice or care agency in the case;

(e) "Social file" means the juvenile court file containing the records and reports of the probation counselor.

(2) Each petition or information filed with the court may include only one juvenile and each petition or information shall be filed under a separate docket number. The social file shall be filed separately from the official juvenile court file.

(3) It is the duty of any juvenile justice or care agency to maintain accurate records. To this end:

(a) The agency may never knowingly record inaccurate information. Any information in records maintained by the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families relating to a petition filed pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW that is found by the court to be false or inaccurate shall be corrected or expunged from such records by the agency;

(b) An agency shall take reasonable steps to assure the security of its records and prevent tampering with them; and

(c) An agency shall make reasonable efforts to insure the completeness of its records, including action taken by other agencies with respect to matters in its files.

(4) Each juvenile justice or care agency shall implement procedures consistent with the provisions of this chapter to facilitate inquiries concerning records.

(5) Any person who has reasonable cause to believe information concerning that person is included in the records of a juvenile justice or care agency and who has been denied access to those records by the agency may make a motion to the court for an order authorizing that person to inspect the juvenile justice or care agency record concerning that person. The court shall grant the motion to examine records unless it finds that in the interests of justice or in the best interests of the juvenile the records or parts of them should remain confidential.

(6) A juvenile, or his or her parents, or any person who has reasonable cause to believe information concerning that person is included in the records of a juvenile justice or care agency may make a motion to the court challenging the accuracy of any information concerning the moving party in the record or challenging the continued possession of the record by the agency. If the court grants the motion, it shall order the record or information to be corrected or destroyed.

(7) The person making a motion under subsection (5) or (6) of this section shall give reasonable notice of the motion to all parties to the original action and to any agency whose records will be affected by the motion.

(8) The court may permit inspection of records by, or release of information to, any clinic, hospital, or agency which has the subject person under care or treatment. The court may also permit inspection by or release to individuals or agencies, including juvenile justice advisory committees of county law and justice councils, engaged in legitimate research for educational, scientific, or public purposes. Each person granted permission to inspect juvenile justice or care agency records for research purposes shall present a notarized

statement to the court stating that the names of juveniles and parents will remain confidential.

(9) The court shall release to the caseload forecast council the records needed for its research and data-gathering functions. Access to caseload forecast data may be permitted by the council for research purposes only if the anonymity of all persons mentioned in the records or information will be preserved.

(10) Juvenile detention facilities shall release records to the caseload forecast council upon request. The commission shall not disclose the names of any juveniles or parents mentioned in the records without the named individual's written permission.

(11) Requirements in this chapter relating to the court's authority to compel disclosure shall not apply to the oversight board for children, youth, and families or the office of the family and children's ombuds.

(12) For the purpose of research only, the administrative office of the courts shall maintain an electronic research copy of all records in the judicial information system related to juveniles. Access to the research copy is restricted to the administrative office of the courts for research purposes as authorized by the supreme court or by state statute. The administrative office of the courts shall maintain the confidentiality of all confidential records and shall preserve the anonymity of all persons identified in the research copy. Data contained in the research copy may be shared with other governmental agencies as authorized by state statute, pursuant to data-sharing and research agreements, and consistent with applicable security and confidentiality requirements. The research copy may not be subject to any records retention schedule and must include records destroyed or removed from the judicial information system pursuant to RCW 13.50.270 and 13.50.100(3).

(13) The court shall release to the Washington state office of public defense records needed to implement the agency's oversight, technical assistance, and other functions as required by RCW 2.70.020. Access to the records used as a basis for oversight, technical assistance, or other agency functions is restricted to the Washington state office of public defense. The Washington state office of public defense shall maintain the confidentiality of all confidential information included in the records.

(14) The court shall release to the Washington state office of civil legal aid records needed to implement the agency's oversight, technical assistance, and other functions as required by RCW 2.53.045. Access to the records used as a basis for oversight, technical assistance, or other agency functions is restricted to the Washington state office of civil legal aid. The Washington state office of civil legal aid shall maintain the confidentiality of all confidential information included in the records, and shall, as soon as possible, destroy any retained notes or records obtained under this section that are not necessary for its functions related to RCW 2.53.045.

(15) For purposes of providing for the educational success of youth in foster care, the department of children, youth, and families may disclose only those confidential child welfare records that pertain to or may assist with meeting the educational needs of current and former foster youth to another state agency or state agency's contracted provider responsible under state law or contract for assisting current and former foster youth to attain educational success. The records retain their confidentiality pursuant to this

chapter and federal law and cannot be further disclosed except as allowed under this chapter and federal law.

(16) For the purpose of ensuring the safety and welfare of the youth who are in foster care, the department of children, youth, and families may disclose to the department of commerce and its contracted providers responsible under state law or contract for providing services to youth, only those confidential child welfare records that pertain to ensuring the safety and welfare of the youth who are in foster care who are admitted to crisis residential centers or HOPE centers under contract with the office of homeless youth prevention and protection. Records disclosed under this subsection retain their confidentiality pursuant to this chapter and federal law and may not be further disclosed except as permitted by this chapter and federal law.

(17) For purposes of investigating and preventing child abuse and neglect, and providing for the health care coordination and the well-being of children in foster care, the department of children, youth, and families may disclose only those confidential child welfare records that pertain to or may assist with investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect, or may assist with providing for the health and well-being of children in foster care to the department of social and health services, the health care authority, or their contracting agencies. For purposes of investigating and preventing child abuse and neglect, and to provide for the coordination of health care and the well-being of children in foster care, the department of social and health services and the health care authority may disclose only those confidential child welfare records that pertain to or may assist with investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect, or may assist with providing for the health care coordination and the well-being of children in foster care to the department of children, youth, and families, or its contracting agencies. The records retain their confidentiality pursuant to this chapter and federal law and cannot be further disclosed except as allowed under this chapter and federal law.

(18) For the purpose of investigating child sexual abuse, online sexual exploitation and commercial sexual exploitation of minors, and child fatality, child physical abuse, and criminal neglect cases for the well-being of the child, the department of children, youth, and families may disclose only those confidential child welfare records that pertain to or may assist with such an investigation pursuant to RCW 26.44.180 and 26.44.175. The records retain their confidentiality pursuant to this chapter and federal law and cannot be further disclosed except as allowed under this chapter and federal law. [2019 c 470 § 22; 2019 c 82 § 1; 2018 c 58 § 78; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 § 312; 2017 c 277 § 1. Prior: 2016 c 93 § 2; 2016 c 72 § 109; 2016 c 71 § 2; prior: 2015 c 265 § 2; 2015 c 262 § 1; prior: 2014 c 175 § 2; 2014 c 117 § 5; 2013 c 23 § 6; 2011 1st sp.s. c 40 § 30; 2010 c 150 § 3; 2009 c 440 § 1; 1998 c 269 § 4; prior: 1997 c 386 § 21; 1997 c 338 § 39; 1996 c 232 § 6; 1994 sp.s. c 7 § 541; 1993 c 374 § 1; 1990 c 246 § 8; 1986 c 288 § 11; 1979 c 155 § 8.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2019 c 82 § 1 and by 2019 c 470 § 22, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Effective date—2018 c 58:** See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 §§ 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822:** See note following RCW 43.216.025.

**Conflict with federal requirements—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See RCW 43.216.908.

**Finding—Intent—2016 c 72:** See note following RCW 28A.600.015.

**Intent—2016 c 71:** See note following RCW 28A.300.590.

**Finding—Intent—2015 c 265:** "The legislature finds that requiring juvenile offenders to pay all legal financial obligations before being eligible to have a juvenile record administratively sealed disproportionately affects youth based on their socioeconomic status. Juveniles who cannot afford to pay their legal financial obligations cannot seal their juvenile records once they turn eighteen and oftentimes struggle to find employment. By eliminating most nonrestitution legal financial obligations for juveniles convicted of less serious crimes, juvenile offenders will be better able to find employment and focus on making restitution payments first to the actual victim. This legislation is intended to help juveniles understand the consequences of their actions and the harm that those actions have caused others without placing insurmountable burdens on juveniles attempting to become productive members of society. Depending on the juvenile's ability to pay, and upon the consent of the victim, courts should also strongly consider ordering community restitution in lieu of paying restitution where appropriate." [2015 c 265 § 1.]

**Findings—Intent—2014 c 175:** "The legislature finds that:

(1) The primary goal of the Washington state juvenile justice system is the rehabilitation and reintegration of former juvenile offenders. The public has a compelling interest in the rehabilitation of former juvenile offenders and their successful reintegration into society as active, law-abiding, and contributing members of their communities. When juvenile court records are publicly available, former juvenile offenders face substantial barriers to reintegration, as they are denied housing, employment, and education opportunities on the basis of these records.

(2) The legislature declares it is the policy of the state of Washington that the interest in juvenile rehabilitation and reintegration constitutes compelling circumstances that outweigh the public interest in continued availability of juvenile court records. The legislature intends that juvenile court proceedings be openly administered but, except in limited circumstances, the records of these proceedings be closed when the juvenile has reached the age of eighteen and completed the terms of disposition." [2014 c 175 § 1.]

**Application—Recalculation of community custody terms—2011 1st sp.s. c 40:** See note following RCW 9.94A.501.

**Alphabetization—1998 c 269:** "The code reviser shall alphabetize the definitions in RCW 13.50.010 and 74.15.020 and correct any references." [1998 c 269 § 18.]

**Intent—Finding—Effective date—1998 c 269:** See notes following RCW 72.05.020.

**Application—1997 c 386:** "Sections 8 through 14 and 17 through 34 of this act apply only to incidents occurring on or after January 1, 1998." [1997 c 386 § 67.]

**Effective date—1997 c 386:** "Sections 8 through 13 and 21 through 34 of this act take effect January 1, 1998." [1997 c 386 § 68.]

**Finding—Evaluation—Report—1997 c 338:** See note following RCW 13.40.0357.

**Severability—Effective dates—1997 c 338:** See notes following RCW 5.60.060.

**Effective dates—1996 c 232:** See note following RCW 13.40.030.

**Application—1994 sp.s. c 7 §§ 540-545:** "Sections 540 through 545 of this act shall apply to offenses committed on or after July 1, 1994." [1994 sp.s. c 7 § 917.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—1994 sp.s. c 7:** See notes following RCW 43.70.540.

**Severability—1990 c 246:** See note following RCW 13.34.060.

**Severability—1986 c 288:** See note following RCW 43.185C.260.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**RCW 13.50.050 Records relating to commission of juvenile offenses—Maintenance of, access to, and destruction.** (1) This section and RCW 13.50.260 and 13.50.270 govern records relating to the commission of juvenile offenses, including records relating to diversions.

(2) The official juvenile court file of any alleged or proven juvenile offender shall be open to public inspection, unless sealed pursuant to RCW 13.50.260.

(3) All records other than the official juvenile court file are confidential and may be released only as provided in this chapter, RCW 13.40.215 and 4.24.550.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, records retained or produced by any juvenile justice or care agency may be released to other participants in the juvenile justice or care system only when an investigation or case involving the juvenile in question is being pursued by the other participant or when that other participant is assigned the responsibility for supervising the juvenile.

(5) Except as provided in RCW 4.24.550, information not in an official juvenile court file concerning a juvenile or a juvenile's family may be released to the public only when that information could not reasonably be expected to identify the juvenile or the juvenile's family.

(6) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the release, to the juvenile or his or her attorney, of law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys' records pertaining to investigation, diversion, and prosecution of juvenile offenses shall be governed by the rules of discovery and other rules of law applicable in adult criminal investigations and prosecutions.

(7) Upon the decision to arrest or the arrest, law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys may cooperate with schools in releasing information to a school pertaining to the investigation, diversion, and prosecution of a juvenile attending the school. Upon the decision to arrest or the arrest, incident reports may be released unless releasing the records would jeopardize the investigation or prosecution or endanger witnesses. If release of incident reports would jeopardize the investigation or prosecution or endanger witnesses, law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys may release information to the maximum extent possible to assist schools in protecting other students, staff, and school property.

(8) The juvenile court and the prosecutor may set up and maintain a central recordkeeping system which may receive information on all alleged juvenile offenders against whom a complaint has been filed pursuant to RCW 13.40.070 whether or not their cases are currently pending before the court. The central recordkeeping system may be computerized. If a complaint has been referred to a diversion unit, the diversion unit shall promptly report to the juvenile court or the prosecuting attorney when the juvenile has agreed to diversion. An offense shall not be reported as criminal history in any central recordkeeping system without notification by the diversion unit of the date on which the offender agreed to diversion.

(9) Upon request of the victim of a crime or the victim's immediate family, the identity of an alleged or proven juvenile offender alleged or found to have committed a crime against the victim and the identity of the alleged or proven juvenile offender's parent, guardian, or custodian and the circumstance of the alleged or proven crime shall be released to the victim of the crime or the victim's immediate family.

(10) Subject to the rules of discovery applicable in adult criminal prosecutions, the juvenile offense records of an adult criminal defendant or witness in an adult criminal proceeding shall be released upon request to prosecution and defense counsel after a charge has actually been filed. The juvenile offense records of any adult convicted of a crime and placed under the supervision of the adult corrections system shall be released upon request to the adult corrections system.

(11) Any juvenile to whom the provisions of this section or RCW 13.50.260 or 13.50.270 may apply shall be given written notice of his or her rights under this section at the time of his or her disposition hearing or during the diversion process.

(12) Nothing in this section or RCW 13.50.260 or 13.50.270 may be construed to prevent a crime victim or a member of the victim's family from divulging the identity of the alleged or proven juvenile offender or his or her family when necessary in a civil proceeding.

(13) Except as provided in RCW 13.50.270(2), no identifying information held by the Washington state patrol in accordance with chapter 43.43 RCW is subject to destruction or sealing under this section. For the purposes of this subsection, identifying information includes photographs, fingerprints, palmprints, soleprints, toeprints and any other data that identifies a person by physical

characteristics, name, birthdate or address, but does not include information regarding criminal activity, arrest, charging, diversion, conviction or other information about a person's treatment by the criminal justice system or about the person's behavior.

(14) Information identifying child victims under age eighteen who are victims of sexual assaults by juvenile offenders is confidential and not subject to release to the press or public without the permission of the child victim or the child's legal guardian. Identifying information includes the child victim's name, addresses, location, photographs, and in cases in which the child victim is a relative of the alleged perpetrator, identification of the relationship between the child and the alleged perpetrator. Information identifying a child victim of sexual assault may be released to law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, defense attorneys, or private or governmental agencies that provide services to the child victim of sexual assault. [2014 c 175 § 3; 2012 c 177 § 2. Prior: 2011 c 338 § 4; 2011 c 333 § 4; 2010 c 150 § 2; 2008 c 221 § 1; 2004 c 42 § 1; prior: 2001 c 175 § 1; 2001 c 174 § 1; 2001 c 49 § 2; 1999 c 198 § 4; 1997 c 338 § 40; 1992 c 188 § 7; 1990 c 3 § 125; 1987 c 450 § 8; 1986 c 257 § 33; 1984 c 43 § 1; 1983 c 191 § 19; 1981 c 299 § 19; 1979 c 155 § 9.]

**Rules of court:** Superior Court Criminal Rules (CrR), generally.  
*Discovery:* CrR 4.7.

**Findings—Intent—2014 c 175:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

**Application—2011 c 333:** "RCW 13.50.050 (14) (b) and (17) (b) apply to all records of a full and unconditional pardon and should be applied retroactively as well as prospectively." [2011 c 333 § 5.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 c 333:** See note following RCW 19.182.040.

**Intent—2001 c 49:** "The legislature intends to change the results of the holding of *State v. T. K.*, 139 Wn. 2d 320 (1999), and have any motion made after July 1, 1997, to seal juvenile records be determined by the provisions of RCW 13.50.050 in effect after July 1, 1997." [2001 c 49 § 1.]

**Finding—Evaluation—Report—1997 c 338:** See note following RCW 13.40.0357.

**Severability—Effective dates—1997 c 338:** See notes following RCW 5.60.060.

**Findings—Intent—Severability—1992 c 188:** See notes following RCW 7.69A.020.

**Severability—1986 c 257:** See note following RCW 9A.56.010.

**Effective date—1986 c 257 §§ 17-35:** See note following RCW 9.94A.030.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**RCW 13.50.100 Records not relating to commission of juvenile offenses—Maintenance and access—Release of information for child custody hearings—Disclosure of unfounded allegations prohibited.** (1) This section governs records not covered by RCW 13.50.050, 13.50.260, and 13.50.270.

(2) Records covered by this section shall be confidential and shall be released only pursuant to this section and RCW 13.50.010.

(3) Records retained or produced by any juvenile justice or care agency may be released to other participants in the juvenile justice or care system only when an investigation or case involving the juvenile in question is being pursued by the other participant or when that other participant is assigned the responsibility of supervising the juvenile. Records covered under this section and maintained by the juvenile courts which relate to the official actions of the agency may be entered in the statewide judicial information system. However, truancy records associated with a juvenile who has no other case history, and records of a juvenile's parents who have no other case history, shall be removed from the judicial information system when the juvenile is no longer subject to the compulsory attendance laws in chapter 28A.225 RCW. A county clerk is not liable for unauthorized release of this data by persons or agencies not in his or her employ or otherwise subject to his or her control, nor is the county clerk liable for inaccurate or incomplete information collected from litigants or other persons required to provide identifying data pursuant to this section.

(4) Subject to (a) of this subsection, the department of children, youth, and families may release information retained in the course of conducting child protective services investigations to a family or juvenile court hearing a petition for custody of a minor under chapter 11.130 RCW.

(a) Information that may be released shall be limited to information regarding investigations in which: (i) The juvenile was an alleged victim of abandonment or abuse or neglect; or (ii) the petitioner for custody of the juvenile, or any individual aged sixteen or older residing in the petitioner's household, is the subject of a founded or currently pending child protective services investigation made by the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families subsequent to October 1, 1998.

(b) Additional information may only be released with the written consent of the subject of the investigation and the juvenile alleged to be the victim of abandonment or abuse and neglect, or the parent, custodian, guardian, or personal representative of the juvenile, or by court order obtained with notice to all interested parties.

(5) Any disclosure of records or information by the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families, pursuant to this section shall not be deemed a waiver of any confidentiality or privilege attached to the records or information by operation of any state or federal statute or regulation, and any recipient of such records or information shall maintain it in such a manner as to comply with such state and federal statutes and regulations and to protect against unauthorized disclosure.

(6) A contracting agency or service provider of the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families, that provides counseling, psychological, psychiatric, or medical services may release to the office of the family and children's ombuds information or records relating to services provided

to a juvenile who is dependent under chapter 13.34 RCW without the consent of the parent or guardian of the juvenile, or of the juvenile if the juvenile is under the age of thirteen years, unless such release is otherwise specifically prohibited by law.

(7) A juvenile, his or her parents, the juvenile's attorney, and the juvenile's parent's attorney, shall, upon request, be given access to all records and information collected or retained by a juvenile justice or care agency which pertain to the juvenile except:

(a) If it is determined by the agency that release of this information is likely to cause severe psychological or physical harm to the juvenile or his or her parents the agency may withhold the information subject to other order of the court: PROVIDED, That if the court determines that limited release of the information is appropriate, the court may specify terms and conditions for the release of the information; or

(b) If the information or record has been obtained by a juvenile justice or care agency in connection with the provision of counseling, psychological, psychiatric, or medical services to the juvenile, when the services have been sought voluntarily by the juvenile, and the juvenile has a legal right to receive those services without the consent of any person or agency, then the information or record may not be disclosed to the juvenile's parents without the informed consent of the juvenile unless otherwise authorized by law; or

(c) That the department of children, youth, and families or the department of social and health services may delete the name and identifying information regarding persons or organizations who have reported alleged child abuse or neglect.

(8) A juvenile or his or her parent denied access to any records following an agency determination under subsection (7) of this section may file a motion in juvenile court requesting access to the records. The court shall grant the motion unless it finds access may not be permitted according to the standards found in subsection (7)(a) and (b) of this section.

(9) The person making a motion under subsection (8) of this section shall give reasonable notice of the motion to all parties to the original action and to any agency whose records will be affected by the motion.

(10) Subject to the rules of discovery in civil cases, any party to a proceeding seeking a declaration of dependency or a termination of the parent-child relationship and any party's counsel and the guardian ad litem of any party, shall have access to the records of any natural or adoptive child of the parent, subject to the limitations in subsection (7) of this section. A party denied access to records may request judicial review of the denial. If the party prevails, he or she shall be awarded attorneys' fees, costs, and an amount not less than five dollars and not more than one hundred dollars for each day the records were wrongfully denied.

(11) No unfounded allegation of child abuse or neglect as defined in RCW 26.44.020(1) may be disclosed to a child-placing agency, private adoption agency, or any other licensed provider. [2020 c 312 § 121; 2019 c 470 § 21; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 § 313; 2014 c 175 § 8; 2013 c 23 § 7; 2003 c 105 § 2; 2001 c 162 § 2; 2000 c 162 § 18; 1999 c 390 § 3; 1997 c 386 § 22; 1995 c 311 § 16; 1990 c 246 § 9; 1983 c 191 § 20; 1979 c 155 § 10.]

**Effective date—2020 c 312:** See note following RCW 11.130.915.

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 §§ 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822:** See note following RCW 43.216.025.

**Conflict with federal requirements—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See RCW 43.216.908.

**Findings—Intent—2014 c 175:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

**Application—Effective date—1997 c 386:** See notes following RCW 13.50.010.

**Severability—1990 c 246:** See note following RCW 13.34.060.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**RCW 13.50.140 Disclosure of privileged information to office of the family and children's ombuds—Privilege not waived as to others.** Any communication or advice privileged under RCW 5.60.060 that is disclosed by the office of the attorney general, the department of children, youth, and families, or the department of social and health services to the office of the family and children's ombuds may not be deemed to be a waiver of the privilege as to others. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 § 314; 2013 c 23 § 8; 1999 c 390 § 8.]

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 §§ 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822:** See note following RCW 43.216.025.

**Conflict with federal requirements—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See RCW 43.216.908.

**RCW 13.50.150 Confidential records—Expungement to protect due process rights.** Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the expungement of any juvenile record ordered expunged by a court to preserve the due process rights of its subject. [1977 ex.s. c 291 § 13. Formerly RCW 13.04.276, see 1979 c 155 § 12.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**Effective date—Severability—1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW 13.04.005.

**RCW 13.50.160 Disposition records—Provision to schools.** Records of disposition for a juvenile offense must be provided to schools as provided in RCW 13.04.155. [1997 c 266 § 8.]

**Findings—Intent—Severability—1997 c 266:** See notes following RCW 28A.600.455.

**RCW 13.50.200 Records of motor vehicle operation violation forwarded.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, whenever a child is arrested for a violation of any law, including municipal ordinances, regulating the operation of vehicles on the public highways, a copy of the traffic citation and a record of the action taken by the court shall be forwarded by the juvenile court to the department of licensing in the same manner as provided in RCW 46.20.270. [1979 c 155 § 13; 1977 ex.s. c 291 § 14. Formerly RCW 13.04.278.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**Effective date—Severability—1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW 13.04.005.

**RCW 13.50.250 Records chapter applicable to.** This chapter applies to all juvenile justice or care agency records created on or after July 1, 1978. [1979 c 155 § 11.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.

**RCW 13.50.260 Sealing hearings—Sealing of records.** (1) (a) The court shall hold regular sealing hearings. During these regular sealing hearings, the court shall administratively seal an individual's juvenile record pursuant to the requirements of this subsection. Although the juvenile record shall be sealed, the social file may be available to any juvenile justice or care agency when an investigation or case involving the juvenile subject of the records is being prosecuted by the juvenile justice or care agency or when the juvenile justice or care agency is assigned the responsibility of supervising the juvenile. The juvenile respondent's presence is not required at any administrative sealing hearing.

(b) At the disposition hearing of a juvenile offender, the court shall schedule an administrative sealing hearing to take place during the first regularly scheduled sealing hearing after the latest of the following events that apply:

(i) The respondent's eighteenth birthday;

(ii) Anticipated end date of a respondent's probation, if ordered;

(iii) Anticipated release from confinement at the juvenile rehabilitation administration, or the completion of parole, if the respondent is transferred to the juvenile rehabilitation administration.

(c) The court shall not schedule an administrative sealing hearing at the disposition and no administrative sealing hearing shall occur if one of the offenses for which the court has entered a disposition is at the time of commission of the offense:

(i) A most serious offense, as defined in RCW 9.94A.030;

(ii) A sex offense under chapter 9A.44 RCW; or

(iii) A drug offense, as defined in RCW 9.94A.030.

(d) At the time of the scheduled administrative sealing hearing, the court shall enter a written order sealing the respondent's

juvenile court record pursuant to this subsection if the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the respondent is no longer on supervision for the case being considered for sealing and has paid the full amount of restitution owing to the individual victim named in the restitution order, excluding restitution owed to any public or private entity providing insurance coverage or health care coverage. In determining whether the respondent is on supervision or owes restitution, the court shall take judicial notice of court records, including records of the county clerk, and, if necessary, sworn testimony from a representative of the juvenile department.

(e) At the time of the administrative sealing hearing, if the court finds the respondent remains on supervision for the case being considered for sealing, then the court shall continue the administrative sealing hearing to a date within thirty days following the anticipated end date of the respondent's supervision. At the next administrative sealing hearing, the court shall again determine the respondent's eligibility for sealing his or her juvenile court record pursuant to (d) of this subsection, and, if necessary, continue the hearing again as provided in this subsection.

(f) (i) During the administrative sealing hearing, if the court finds the respondent is no longer on supervision for the case being considered for sealing, but the respondent has not paid the full amount of restitution owing to the individual victim named in the restitution order, excluding any public or private entity providing insurance coverage or health care coverage, the court shall deny sealing the juvenile court record in a written order that: (A) Specifies the amount of restitution that remains unpaid to the original victim, excluding any public or private entity providing insurance coverage or health care coverage; and (B) provides direction to the respondent on how to pursue the sealing of records associated with this cause of action.

(ii) Within five business days of the entry of the written order denying the request to seal a juvenile court record, the juvenile court department staff shall notify the respondent of the denial by providing a copy of the order of denial to the respondent in person or in writing mailed to the respondent's last known address in the department of licensing database or the respondent's address provided to the court, whichever is more recent.

(iii) At any time following entry of the written order denying the request to seal a juvenile court record, the respondent may contact the juvenile court department, provide proof of payment of the remaining unpaid restitution to the original victim, excluding any public or private entity providing insurance coverage or health care coverage, and request an administrative sealing hearing. Upon verification of the satisfaction of the restitution payment, the juvenile court department staff shall circulate for signature an order sealing the file, and file the signed order with the clerk's office, who shall seal the record.

(iv) The administrative office of the courts must ensure that sealed juvenile records remain private in case of an appeal and are either not posted or redacted from any clerks papers that are posted online with the appellate record, as well as taking any other prudent steps necessary to avoid exposing sealed juvenile records to the public.

(2) Except for dismissal of a deferred disposition under RCW 13.40.127, the court shall enter a written order immediately sealing the official juvenile court record upon the acquittal after a fact

finding or upon the dismissal of charges with prejudice, subject to the state's right, if any, to appeal the dismissal.

(3) If a juvenile court record has not already been sealed pursuant to this section, in any case in which information has been filed pursuant to RCW 13.40.100 or a complaint has been filed with the prosecutor and referred for diversion pursuant to RCW 13.40.070, the person who is the subject of the information or complaint may file a motion with the court to have the court vacate its order and findings, if any; resolve the status of any debts owing; and, subject to RCW 13.50.050(13), order the sealing of the official juvenile court record, the social file, and records of the court and of any other agency in the case, with the exception of identifying information under RCW 13.50.050(13).

(4) (a) The court shall grant any motion to seal records for class A offenses made pursuant to subsection (3) of this section if:

(i) Since the last date of release from confinement, including full-time residential treatment, if any, or entry of disposition, the person has spent five consecutive years in the community without committing any offense or crime that subsequently results in an adjudication or conviction;

(ii) No proceeding is pending against the moving party seeking the conviction of a juvenile offense or a criminal offense;

(iii) No proceeding is pending seeking the formation of a diversion agreement with that person;

(iv) The person is no longer required to register as a sex offender under RCW 9A.44.130 or has been relieved of the duty to register under RCW 9A.44.143 if the person was convicted of a sex offense;

(v) The person has not been convicted of rape in the first degree, rape in the second degree, or indecent liberties that was actually committed with forcible compulsion; and

(vi) The person has paid the full amount of restitution owing to the individual victim named in the restitution order, excluding restitution owed to any public or private entity providing insurance coverage or health care coverage.

(b) The court shall grant any motion to seal records for class B, class C, gross misdemeanor, and misdemeanor offenses and diversions made under subsection (3) of this section if:

(i) Since the date of last release from confinement, including full-time residential treatment, if any, entry of disposition, or completion of the diversion agreement, the person has spent two consecutive years in the community without being convicted of any offense or crime;

(ii) No proceeding is pending against the moving party seeking the conviction of a juvenile offense or a criminal offense;

(iii) No proceeding is pending seeking the formation of a diversion agreement with that person;

(iv) The person is no longer required to register as a sex offender under RCW 9A.44.130 or has been relieved of the duty to register under RCW 9A.44.143 if the person was convicted of a sex offense; and

(v) The person has paid the full amount of restitution owing to the individual victim named in the restitution order, excluding restitution owed to any insurance provider authorized under Title 48 RCW.

(c) Notwithstanding the requirements in (a) or (b) of this subsection, the court shall grant any motion to seal records of any

deferred disposition vacated under RCW 13.40.127(9) prior to June 7, 2012, if restitution has been paid and the person is eighteen years of age or older at the time of the motion.

(5) The person making a motion pursuant to subsection (3) of this section shall give reasonable notice of the motion to the prosecution and to any person or agency whose records are sought to be sealed.

(6) (a) If the court enters a written order sealing the juvenile court record pursuant to this section, it shall, subject to RCW 13.50.050(13), order sealed the official juvenile court record, the social file, and other records relating to the case as are named in the order. Thereafter, the proceedings in the case shall be treated as if they never occurred, and the subject of the records may reply accordingly to any inquiry about the events, records of which are sealed. Any agency shall reply to any inquiry concerning confidential or sealed records that records are confidential, and no information can be given about the existence or nonexistence of records concerning an individual.

(b) In the event the subject of the juvenile records receives a full and unconditional pardon, the proceedings in the matter upon which the pardon has been granted shall be treated as if they never occurred, and the subject of the records may reply accordingly to any inquiry about the events upon which the pardon was received. Any agency shall reply to any inquiry concerning the records pertaining to the events for which the subject received a pardon that records are confidential, and no information can be given about the existence or nonexistence of records concerning an individual.

(c) Effective July 1, 2019, the department of licensing may release information related to records the court has ordered sealed only to the extent necessary to comply with federal law and regulation.

(7) Inspection of the files and records included in the order to seal may thereafter be permitted only by order of the court upon motion made by the person who is the subject of the information or complaint, except as otherwise provided in RCW 13.50.010(8) and 13.50.050(13).

(8) (a) Any adjudication of a juvenile offense or a crime subsequent to sealing has the effect of nullifying a sealing order; however, the court may order the juvenile court record resealed upon disposition of the subsequent matter if the case meets the sealing criteria under this section and the court record has not previously been resealed.

(b) Any charging of an adult felony subsequent to the sealing has the effect of nullifying the sealing order.

(c) The administrative office of the courts shall ensure that the superior court judicial information system provides prosecutors access to information on the existence of sealed juvenile records.

(d) The Washington state patrol shall ensure that the Washington state identification system provides Washington state criminal justice agencies access to sealed juvenile records information.

(e) The Washington state patrol shall ensure that the Washington state identification system provides non-Washington criminal justice agencies access to sealed juvenile records only for the purposes of processing and purchasing firearms, concealed pistol licenses, or alien firearms licenses, or releasing of firearms from evidence.

(f) Non-Washington criminal justice agencies that access sealed juvenile records pursuant to this subsection shall not knowingly disseminate the accessed records or any information derived therefrom

to any third party. Dissemination of such records or such information shall subject the disseminating agency to the jurisdiction of the courts of Washington and a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 per violation.

(9) If the juvenile court record has been sealed pursuant to this section, the record of an employee is not admissible in an action for liability against the employer based on the former juvenile offender's conduct to show that the employer knew or should have known of the juvenile record of the employee. The record may be admissible, however, if a background check conducted or authorized by the employer contained the information in the sealed record.

(10) County clerks may interact or correspond with the respondent, his or her parents, restitution recipients, and any holders of potential assets or wages of the respondent for the purposes of collecting an outstanding legal financial obligation after juvenile court records have been sealed pursuant to this section.

(11) Persons and agencies that obtain sealed juvenile records information pursuant to this section may communicate about this information with the respondent, but may not disseminate or be compelled to release the information to any person or agency not specifically granted access to sealed juvenile records in this section.

(12) All criminal justice agencies must not disclose confidential information or sealed records accessed through the Washington state identification system or other means, and no information can be given to third parties, other than criminal justice agencies, about the existence or nonexistence of confidential or sealed records concerning an individual. [2023 c 180 § 1; 2020 c 184 § 1; 2015 c 265 § 3; 2014 c 175 § 4.]

**Retroactive application—2020 c 184:** "This act applies to all juvenile record sealing hearings commenced on or after January 1, 2021, regardless of when the underlying hearing was scheduled or the underlying record was created. To this extent, this act applies retroactively, but in all other respects it applies prospectively." [2020 c 184 § 4.]

**Effective date—2020 c 184:** "Sections 1, 2, and 4 of this act take effect January 1, 2021." [2020 c 184 § 5.]

**Finding—Intent—2015 c 265:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

**Findings—Intent—2014 c 175:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

**RCW 13.50.270 Destruction of records.** (1)(a) Subject to RCW 13.50.050(13), all records maintained by any court or law enforcement agency, including the juvenile court, local law enforcement, the Washington state patrol, and the prosecutor's office, shall be automatically destroyed within ninety days of becoming eligible for destruction. Juvenile records are eligible for destruction when:

(i) The person who is the subject of the information or complaint is at least eighteen years of age;

(ii) The records in question consist of successfully completed diversion agreements and counsel and release agreements, or both, which were completed on or after June 7, 2018; and

(iii) There is no restitution owing in the case.

(b) Notwithstanding this subsection (1), records of successfully completed diversion agreements and counsel and release agreements remain subject to destruction under the terms set forth in subsections (2) through (4) of this section, as well as sealing under RCW 13.50.260.

(c) No less than quarterly, the administrative office of the courts shall provide a report to the juvenile courts of those individuals whose records may be eligible for destruction. The juvenile court shall verify eligibility and notify the Washington state patrol and the appropriate local law enforcement agency and prosecutor's office of the records to be destroyed. The requirement to destroy records under this subsection is not dependent on a court hearing or the issuance of a court order to destroy records.

(d) The state and local governments and their officers and employees are not liable for civil damages for the failure to destroy records pursuant to this section.

(2) All records maintained by any court or law enforcement agency, including the juvenile court, local law enforcement, the Washington state patrol, and the prosecutor's office, shall be automatically destroyed within thirty days of being notified by the governor's office that the subject of those records received a full and unconditional pardon by the governor.

(3) (a) A person may request that the court order the records in his or her case destroyed as follows:

(i) A person eighteen years of age or older whose criminal history consists entirely of one diversion agreement or counsel and release entered prior to June 12, 2008. The request shall be granted if the court finds that two years have elapsed since completion of the agreement or counsel and release.

(ii) A person twenty-three years of age or older whose criminal history consists of only referrals for diversion. The request shall be granted if the court finds that all diversion agreements have been successfully completed and no proceeding is pending against the person seeking the conviction of a criminal offense.

(b) If the court grants the motion to destroy records made pursuant to this subsection, it shall, subject to RCW 13.50.050(13), order the official juvenile court record, the social file, and any other records named in the order to be destroyed.

(c) The person making the motion pursuant to this subsection must give reasonable notice of the motion to the prosecuting attorney and to any agency whose records are sought to be destroyed.

(4) Any juvenile justice or care agency may, subject to the limitations in RCW 13.50.050(13) and this section, develop procedures for the routine destruction of records relating to juvenile offenses and diversions.

(a) Records may be routinely destroyed only when the person the subject of the information or complaint has attained twenty-three years of age or older or pursuant to subsection (1) of this section.

(b) The court may not routinely destroy the official juvenile court record or recordings or transcripts of any proceedings. [2018 c 82 § 5; 2014 c 175 § 5.]

**Findings—Intent—2014 c 175:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.

**RCW 13.50.280 Court and judicial agency records—Use for research or data gathering purposes.** (1) Courts and judicial agencies that maintain a database of juvenile records may provide those records, whether sealed or not, to government agencies for the purpose of carrying out research or data gathering functions. This data may also be linked with records from other agencies or research organizations, provided that any agency receiving or using records under this subsection maintain strict confidentiality of the identity of the juveniles who are the subjects of such records.

(2) Juvenile records, whether sealed or not, can be provided without personal identifiers to researchers conducting legitimate research for educational, scientific, or public purposes, so long as the data is not used by the recipients of the records to identify an individual with a juvenile record. [2015 c 265 § 9.]

**Finding—Intent—2015 c 265:** See note following RCW 13.50.010.