

RCW 29A.04.260 Exemptions from disclosure—In-person inspection.

(1) In accordance with RCW 42.56.420, the following are exempt from disclosure:

(a) Voter signatures on ballot return envelopes, ballot declarations, and signature correction forms, including the original documents, copies, and electronic images; and

(b) A voter's phone number and email address contained on ballot return envelopes, ballot declarations, or signature correction forms.

(2) The secretary of state may, by rule, authorize in-person inspection of unredacted ballot return envelopes, ballot declarations, and signature correction forms. Except as provided under subsection

(3) of this section, a person may not photocopy, photograph, or otherwise reproduce an image of the ballot return envelope, ballot declaration, or signature correction form. When inspecting a ballot return envelope, ballot declaration, or signature correction form in person, a person may not carry with them any materials or devices that could be used to record any voter information found on the ballot return envelope, ballot declaration, or signature correction form.

(3) Nothing in this section or *RCW 42.56.420(7)(a)(iii) prevents disclosure of any information on ballot return envelopes, ballot declarations, or signature correction forms, other than a voter's signature, phone numbers, and email addresses. Nothing in this section prevents election officials from disclosing information listed in subsection (1) of this section for official purposes. The secretary of state may adopt rules identifying official purposes for which a voter's signature, phone numbers, and email addresses may be disclosed.

(4) For purposes of this section, "signature correction form" means any form submitted by a voter for the purpose of curing a missing or mismatched signature on a ballot declaration or otherwise updating the voter signature. [2022 c 140 § 2.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 42.56.420 was amended by 2023 c 404 § 3, deleting subsection (7).

Application—2022 c 140 §§ 1 and 2: "The exemptions in sections 1 and 2 of this act apply to any public records request made prior to March 24, 2022, for which disclosure of records has not already been completed." [2022 c 140 § 3.]

Effective date—2022 c 140: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 24, 2022]." [2022 c 140 § 4.]