

**RCW 3.02.045 Use of collection agencies and attorneys to collect unpaid amounts—Interest to agency authorized—Credit or debit card use—Assessment of amounts paid for collection as court costs.** (1)

Courts of limited jurisdiction may use collection agencies under chapter 19.16 RCW for purposes of collecting unpaid penalties on infractions, criminal fines, costs, assessments, civil judgments, or forfeitures that have been imposed by the courts. Courts of limited jurisdiction may enter into agreements with one or more attorneys or collection agencies for collection of outstanding penalties, fines, costs, assessments, and forfeitures. These agreements may specify the scope of work, remuneration for services, and other charges deemed appropriate. Such agreements may authorize collection agencies to retain all or any portion of the interest collected on these accounts.

(2) Courts of limited jurisdiction may use credit cards or debit cards for purposes of billing and collecting unpaid penalties, fines, costs, assessments, and forfeitures so imposed. Courts of limited jurisdiction may enter into agreements with one or more financial institutions for the purpose of the collection of penalties, fines, costs, assessments, and forfeitures. The agreements may specify conditions, remuneration for services, and other charges deemed appropriate.

(3) Servicing of delinquencies by collection agencies or by collecting attorneys in which the court retains control of its delinquencies shall not constitute assignment of debt.

(4) For purposes of this section, the term debt shall include penalties, fines, costs, assessments, or forfeitures imposed by the courts.

(5) The court may assess as court costs the moneys paid for remuneration for services or charges paid to collecting attorneys, to collection agencies, or, in the case of credit cards, to financial institutions. [1995 c 291 s 1; 1995 c 38 s 1; 1994 c 301 s 1; 1987 c 266 s 1.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 1995 c 38 s 1 and by 1995 c 291 s 1, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section pursuant to RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Acts of municipal officers ratified and confirmed—1995 c 38:**

"Acts of municipal officers before July 23, 1995, that are consistent with its terms, including, but not limited to, acts consistent with chapter 301, Laws of 1994, are ratified and confirmed." [1995 c 38 s 12.]