

**RCW 43.30.490 Cost-reimbursement agreements.** (1) The department may enter into a written cost-reimbursement agreement with a permit or lease applicant or project proponent to recover from the applicant or proponent the reasonable costs incurred by the department in carrying out the requirements of this chapter, as well as the requirements of other relevant laws, as they relate to permit coordination, environmental review, application review, technical studies, establishment of development units and approval or establishment of pooling agreements under chapter 78.52 RCW, including necessary technical studies, permit or lease processing, and monitoring for permit compliance.

(2) The cost-reimbursement agreement shall identify the tasks and costs for work to be conducted under the agreement. The agreement must include a schedule that states:

(a) The estimated number of weeks for initial review of the permit application;

(b) The estimated number of revision cycles;

(c) The estimated number of weeks for review of subsequent revision submittals;

(d) The estimated number of billable hours of employee time;

(e) The rate per hour; and

(f) A date for revision of the agreement if necessary.

(3) The written cost-reimbursement agreement shall be negotiated with the permit or lease applicant or project proponent. Under the provisions of a cost-reimbursement agreement, funds from the applicant or proponent shall be used by the department to contract with an independent consultant to carry out the work covered by the cost-reimbursement agreement. The department may also use funds provided under a cost-reimbursement agreement to hire temporary employees, to assign current staff to review the work of the consultant, to provide necessary technical assistance when an independent consultant with comparable technical skills is unavailable, and to recover reasonable and necessary direct and indirect costs that arise from processing the permit or lease. The department shall, in developing the agreement, ensure that final decisions that involve policy matters are made by the agency and not by the consultant. The department shall make an estimate of the number of permanent staff hours to process the permits or leases, and shall contract with consultants or hire temporary employees to replace the time and functions committed by these permanent staff to the project. The billing process shall provide for accurate time and cost accounting and may include a billing cycle that provides for progress payments.

(4) The cost-reimbursement agreement must not negatively impact the processing of other permit applications. In order to maintain permit processing capacity, the agency may hire outside consultants, temporary employees, or make internal administrative changes. Consultants or temporary employees hired as part of a cost-reimbursement agreement or to maintain agency capacity are hired as agents of the state not of the permit applicant. The restrictions of chapter 42.52 RCW apply to any cost-reimbursement agreement, and to any person hired as a result of a cost-reimbursement agreement. [2009 c 97 s 9. Prior: 2007 c 188 s 1; 2007 c 94 s 11; 2003 c 70 s 2; 2000 c 251 s 3. Formerly RCW 43.30.420.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

~~Intent—Captions not law—Effective date—2000 c 251:~~ See notes following RCW 43.21A.690.