

RCW 47.04.310 Rental car company fees—Child restraint system availability. (1) A rental car company may include separately stated surcharges, fees, or charges in a rental agreement, which may include, but may not be in any way limited to, vehicle license cost recovery fees, child restraint system rental fees, airport-related recovery fees, all applicable taxes, and government surcharges.

(2) If a rental car company includes a vehicle license cost recovery fee as a separately stated charge in a rental transaction, the amount of the fee must represent the rental car company's good faith estimate of the rental car company's average daily charge as calculated by the rental car company to recover its actual total annual rental car titling, registration, plating, and inspection costs in the state of Washington.

(3) If the total amount of the vehicle license cost recovery fees collected by a rental car company under this section in any calendar year exceeds the rental car company's actual costs in the state of Washington to license, title, register, and plate rental cars and to have such rental cars inspected for that calendar year, the rental car company shall do both of the following:

(a) Retain the excess amount; and

(b) Adjust the estimated average per vehicle titling, licensing, plating, inspecting, and registration charge for the following calendar year by a corresponding amount.

(4) Nothing in this section prevents a rental car company from making adjustments to the vehicle license cost recovery fee during the calendar year.

(5) The following definitions apply to this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Child restraint system rental fee" means a charge that may be separately stated and charged on the rental contract in a car rental transaction originating in Washington state to recover the costs associated with providing child restraint systems;

(b) "Rental car" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.115.005;

(c) "Rental car company" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 48.115.005; and

(d) "Vehicle license cost recovery fee" means a charge that may be separately stated and charged on the rental contract for a rental car transaction originating in Washington state to recover costs incurred in the state of Washington by a rental car company to license, title, register, plate, and inspect rental cars.

(6) (a) If a rental car company includes a child restraint system rental fee as a separately stated charge in a rental transaction, the amount of the fee must represent no more than the rental car company's good faith estimate of the rental car company's costs to provide a child restraint system.

(b) If a rental car customer pays a child restraint system rental fee and the child restraint system is not available in a timely manner, as determined by the rental car customer, but in no case less than one hour after the arrival of the customer at the location where the customer receives the vehicle or vehicles, (i) the customer may cancel any reservation or other agreement for the rental of the vehicle or vehicles, (ii) any costs or penalties associated with the cancellation are void, and (iii) the customer is entitled to a full refund of any costs associated with the rental of the vehicle or vehicles. [2016 c 18 § 1. Prior: 2009 c 346 § 2.]

Finding—Intent—2009 c 346: "The legislature finds that there are car rental agreements entered into between car rental companies and their customers that include fees in addition to the rental rate and taxes. It is the intent of the legislature that such fees be clearly and separately stated in such agreements." [2009 c 346 § 1.]