

RCW 69.80.031 Good samaritan food donation act—Definitions—Collecting, distributing, gleaning—Liability. (1) This section may be cited as the "good samaritan food donation act."

(2) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Apparently fit grocery product" means a grocery product that meets safety and safety-related labeling standards imposed by federal, state, and local laws and regulations even though the product may not be readily marketable due to appearance, age, freshness, grade, size, surplus, passage of a date on a date label other than a safety or safety-related labeling of a date, or other conditions.

(b) "Apparently wholesome food" means food that meets safety and safety-related labeling standards imposed by federal, state, and local laws and regulations even though the food may not be readily marketable due to appearance, age, freshness, grade, size, surplus, passage of a date on a date label other than a safety or safety-related labeling of a date, or other conditions.

(c) "Donate" means to give without requiring anything of monetary value from the recipient, except that the term shall include giving by a nonprofit organization to another nonprofit organization, notwithstanding that the donor organization has charged a nominal fee to the donee organization, if the ultimate recipient or user is not required to give anything of monetary value.

(d) "Food" means a raw, cooked, processed, or prepared edible substance, ice, beverage, or ingredient used or intended for use in whole or in part for human consumption.

(e) "Gleaner" means a person who harvests for free distribution to the needy, or for donation to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to the needy, an agricultural crop that has been donated by the owner.

(f) "Grocery product" means a nonfood grocery product, including a disposable paper or plastic product, household cleaning product, laundry detergent, cleaning product, or miscellaneous household item.

(g) "Gross negligence" means voluntary and conscious conduct by a person with knowledge, at the time of the conduct, that the conduct is likely to be harmful to the health or well-being of another person.

(h) "Intentional misconduct" means conduct by a person with knowledge, at the time of the conduct, that the conduct is harmful to the health or well-being of another person.

(i) "Nonprofit organization" means an incorporated or unincorporated entity that:

(i) Is operating for religious, charitable, or educational purposes; and

(ii) Does not provide net earnings to, or operate in any other manner that inures to the benefit of, any officer, employee, or shareholder of the entity.

(j) "Person" means an individual, corporation, partnership, organization, association, or governmental entity, including a retail grocer, wholesaler, hotel, motel, manufacturer, restaurant, caterer, farmer, and nonprofit food distributor or hospital. In the case of a corporation, partnership, organization, association, or governmental entity, the term includes an officer, director, partner, deacon, trustee, councilmember, or other elected or appointed individual responsible for the governance of the entity.

(k) "Qualified direct donor" means any person required to obtain a food establishment permit under chapter 246-215 WAC, as it existed

as of January 1, 2022, including a retail grocer, wholesaler, agricultural producer, restaurant, caterer, school food authority, or institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

(1) (i) "Safety and safety-related labeling" means a marking intended to communicate information to a consumer related to a food product's safety. "Safety and safety-related labeling" includes any marking that federal or state law requires to be affixed to a food product including, but not limited to, markings placed on infant formula consistent with 21 C.F.R. Sec. 107.20, as that regulation existed as of January 1, 2021.

(ii) "Safety and safety-related labeling" does not include a pull date required to be placed on perishable packaged food under RCW 15.130.300 or a "best by," "best if used by," "use by," or "sell by" date or similarly phrased date intended to communicate information to a consumer regarding the freshness or quality of a food product.

(3) (a) A person or gleaner is not subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals, except that this subsection does not apply to an injury to or death of an ultimate user or recipient of the food or grocery product that results from an act or omission of the donor constituting gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

(b) A qualified direct donor may donate food directly to end recipients for consumption. A qualified direct donor is not subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the qualified direct donor donates in good faith to a needy individual. The donation of nonperishable food that is fit for human consumption, but that has exceeded the labeled shelf-life date recommended by the manufacturer, is an activity covered by the exclusion from civil or criminal liability under this section.

(c) The donation of perishable food that is fit for human consumption, but that has exceeded the labeled shelf-life date recommended by the manufacturer, is an activity covered by the exclusion from civil or criminal liability under this section if the person that distributes the food to the end recipient makes a good faith evaluation that the food to be donated is wholesome.

(4) A person who allows the collection or gleaning of donations on property owned or occupied by the person by gleaners, or paid or unpaid representatives of a nonprofit organization, for ultimate distribution to needy individuals is not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises due to the injury or death of the gleaner or representative, except that this subsection does not apply to an injury or death that results from an act or omission of the person constituting gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

(5) If some or all of the donated food and grocery products do not meet safety and safety-related labeling standards imposed by federal, state, and local laws and regulations, the person or gleaner who donates the food and grocery products is not subject to civil or criminal liability in accordance with this section if the nonprofit organization or other end recipient that receives the donated food or grocery products:

(a) Is informed by the donor of the distressed or defective condition of the donated food or grocery products;

(b) Agrees to recondition the donated food or grocery products to comply with all the safety and safety-related labeling standards prior to distribution; and

(c) Is knowledgeable of the standards to properly recondition the donated food or grocery product.

(6) This section may not be construed to create liability. [2022 c 180 § 301; 1994 c 299 § 36.]

Findings—Intent—Scope of authority of chapter 180, Laws of 2022
—2022 c 180: See notes following RCW 70A.205.007.

Intent—Finding—Severability—Conflict with federal requirements
—1994 c 299: See notes following RCW 74.12.400.