

RCW 7.68.035 Penalty assessments in addition to fine or bail forfeiture—Distribution—Establishment of crime victim and witness programs in county—Contribution required from cities and towns. (1)

Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, when any adult person is found guilty in any superior court of having committed a crime, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, there shall be imposed by the court upon such convicted person a penalty assessment. The assessment shall be in addition to any other penalty or fine imposed by law and shall be five hundred dollars for each case or cause of action that includes one or more convictions of a felony or gross misdemeanor and two hundred fifty dollars for any case or cause of action that includes convictions of only one or more misdemeanors.

(2) The assessment imposed by subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to motor vehicle crimes defined in Title 46 RCW except those defined in the following sections: RCW 46.61.520, 46.61.522, 46.61.024, 46.52.090, 46.70.140, 46.61.502, 46.61.504, 46.52.101, 46.20.410, 46.52.020, 46.10.495, 46.09.480, 46.61.5249, 46.61.525, 46.61.685, 46.61.530, 46.61.500, 46.61.015, 46.52.010, 46.44.180, 46.10.490(2), and 46.09.470(2).

(3) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, when any adult person accused of having committed a crime posts bail in superior court pursuant to the provisions of chapter 10.19 RCW and such bail is forfeited, there shall be deducted from the proceeds of such forfeited bail a penalty assessment, in addition to any other penalty or fine imposed by law, equal to the assessment which would be applicable under subsection (1) of this section if the person had been convicted of the crime.

(4) The court shall not impose the penalty assessment under this section if the court finds that the defendant, at the time of sentencing, is indigent as defined in RCW 10.01.160(3).

(5) Upon motion by a defendant, the court shall waive any crime victim penalty assessment imposed prior to July 1, 2023, if:

(a) The person was a juvenile at the time the penalty assessment was imposed; or

(b) The person does not have the ability to pay the penalty assessment. A person does not have the ability to pay if the person is indigent as defined in RCW 10.01.160(3).

(6) Such penalty assessments shall be paid by the clerk of the superior court to the county treasurer. Each county shall deposit one hundred percent of the money it receives per case or cause of action under subsection (1) of this section, not less than one and seventy-five one-hundredths percent of the remaining money it retains under RCW 10.82.070 and the money it retains under chapter 3.62 RCW, and all money it receives under subsection (9) of this section into a fund maintained exclusively for the support of comprehensive programs to encourage and facilitate testimony by the victims of crimes and witnesses to crimes. A program shall be considered "comprehensive" only after approval of the department upon application by the county prosecuting attorney. The department shall approve as comprehensive only programs which:

(a) Provide comprehensive services to victims and witnesses of all types of crime with particular emphasis on serious crimes against persons and property. It is the intent of the legislature to make funds available only to programs which do not restrict services to

victims or witnesses of a particular type or types of crime and that such funds supplement, not supplant, existing local funding levels;

(b) Are administered by the county prosecuting attorney either directly through the prosecuting attorney's office or by contract between the county and agencies providing services to victims of crime;

(c) Make a reasonable effort to inform the known victim or his or her surviving dependents of the existence of this chapter and the procedure for making application for benefits;

(d) Assist victims in the restitution and adjudication process; and

(e) Assist victims of violent crimes in the preparation and presentation of their claims to the department of labor and industries under this chapter.

Before a program in any county west of the Cascade mountains is submitted to the department for approval, it shall be submitted for review and comment to each city within the county with a population of more than one hundred fifty thousand. The department will consider if the county's proposed comprehensive plan meets the needs of crime victims in cases adjudicated in municipal, district or superior courts and of crime victims located within the city and county.

(7) Upon submission to the department of a letter of intent to adopt a comprehensive program, the prosecuting attorney shall retain the money deposited by the county under subsection (6) of this section until such time as the county prosecuting attorney has obtained approval of a program from the department. Approval of the comprehensive plan by the department must be obtained within one year of the date of the letter of intent to adopt a comprehensive program. The county prosecuting attorney shall not make any expenditures from the money deposited under subsection (6) of this section until approval of a comprehensive plan by the department. If a county prosecuting attorney has failed to obtain approval of a program from the department under subsection (6) of this section or failed to obtain approval of a comprehensive program within one year after submission of a letter of intent under this section, the county treasurer shall monthly transmit one hundred percent of the money deposited by the county under subsection (6) of this section to the state treasurer for deposit in the state general fund.

(8) County prosecuting attorneys are responsible to make every reasonable effort to insure that the penalty assessments of this chapter are imposed and collected.

(9) Every city and town shall transmit monthly one and seventy-five one-hundredths percent of all money, other than money received for parking infractions, retained under RCW 3.50.100 and 35.20.220 to the county treasurer for deposit as provided in subsection (6) of this section. [2023 c 449 § 1; 2018 c 269 § 19; 2015 c 265 § 8; 2011 c 336 § 246; 2011 c 171 § 3; 2009 c 479 § 8; 2000 c 71 § 3; 1999 c 86 § 1; 1997 c 66 § 9; 1996 c 122 § 2; 1991 c 293 § 1; 1989 c 252 § 29; 1987 c 281 § 1; 1985 c 443 § 13; 1984 c 258 § 311; 1983 c 239 § 1; 1982 1st ex.s. c 8 § 1; 1977 ex.s. c 302 § 10.]

Effective date—2023 c 449: See note following RCW 13.40.058.

Construction—2018 c 269: See note following RCW 10.82.090.

Finding—Intent—2015 c 265: See note following RCW 13.50.010.

Intent—Effective date—2011 c 171: See notes following RCW 4.24.210.

Effective date—2009 c 479: See note following RCW 2.56.030.

Effective date—2000 c 71: See note following RCW 13.40.300.

Findings—Intent—1996 c 122: "The legislature finds that current funding for county victim-witness advocacy programs is inadequate. Also, the state crime victims compensation program should be enhanced to provide for increased benefits to families of victims who are killed as a result of a criminal act. It is the intent of the legislature to provide increased financial support for the county and state crime victim and witness programs by requiring offenders to pay increased penalty assessments upon conviction of a gross misdemeanor or felony crime. The increased financial support is intended to allow county victim/witness programs to more fully assist victims and witnesses through the criminal justice processes. On the state level, the increased funds will allow the remedial intent of the crime victims compensation program to be more fully served. Specifically, the increased funds from offender penalty assessments will allow more appropriate compensation for families of victims who are killed as a result of a criminal act, including reasonable burial benefits." [1996 c 122 § 1.]

Purpose—Prospective application—Effective dates—Severability—1989 c 252: See notes following RCW 9.94A.030.

Effective date—1987 c 281: See note following RCW 7.68.020.

Severability—Effective date—1985 c 443: See notes following RCW 7.69.010.

Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258: See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

Intent—1984 c 258: See note following RCW 3.34.130.

Effective dates—1982 1st ex.s. c 8: "Chapter 8, Laws of 1982 1st ex. sess. is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [March 27, 1982], except sections 2, 3, and 6 of chapter 8, Laws of 1982 1st ex. sess. shall take effect on January 1, 1983." [1982 1st ex.s. c 47 § 29; 1982 1st ex.s. c 8 § 9.]

Intent—Reports—1982 1st ex.s. c 8: "The intent of the legislature is that the victim of crime program will be self-funded. Toward that end, the department of labor and industries shall not pay benefits beyond the resources of the account. The department of labor and industries and the administrator for the courts shall cooperatively prepare a report on the collection of penalty assessments and the level of expenditures, and recommend adjustments to the revenue collection mechanism to the legislature before January 1, 1983. It is further the intent of the legislature that the percentage of funds devoted to comprehensive programs for victim

assistance, as provided in RCW 7.68.035, be reexamined to ensure that it does not unreasonably conflict with the higher priority of compensating victims. To that end, the county prosecuting attorneys shall report to the legislature no later than January 1, 1984, either individually or as a group, on their experience and costs associated with such programs, describing the nature and extent of the victim assistance provided." [1982 1st ex.s. c 8 § 10.]