

RCW 8.25.290 Condemnation final actions—Notice required—"Final action" defined. (1) The condemnor must provide notice as required by this section before:

(a) A state agency or other entity subject to chapter 8.04 RCW takes a final action to authorize the condemnation of a specific property;

(b) A county or other entity subject to chapter 8.08 RCW takes a final action deeming a specific property to be "for county purposes" as provided in RCW 8.08.010;

(c) A city or town or other entity subject to chapter 8.12 RCW takes a final action authorizing condemnation as provided in RCW 8.12.040;

(d) A school district or other entity subject to chapter 8.16 RCW takes a final action selecting property for condemnation as provided in RCW 8.16.010;

(e) Any other corporation authorized to condemn property takes a final action to authorize condemnation as provided in RCW 8.20.010; or

(f) Any other entity subject to chapter 8.04, 8.08, 8.12, 8.16, or 8.20 RCW takes any final action to authorize the condemnation of a specific property.

(2) (a) (i) Notice of the planned final action shall be mailed by certified mail to each and every property owner of record as indicated on the tax rolls of the county to the address provided on such tax rolls, for each property potentially subject to condemnation, at least fifteen days before the final action. If no address is provided for a property on the tax rolls of the county, the potential condemnor shall conduct a diligent inquiry for the address for each and every property owner of record and send the notice to that address. In case the property sought to be appropriated is school or county land, such notice shall be mailed to the auditor of the county in which the property sought to be acquired and appropriated is situated.

(ii) The notice must contain a general description of the property such as an address, lot number, or parcel number and specify that condemnation of the property will be considered during the final action. The notice must also describe the date, time, and location of the final action at which the potential condemnor will decide whether or not to authorize the condemnation of the property.

(iii) Mailing of the certified letter to the proper addressee or addressees is deemed to be sufficient notice under this subsection (2) (a).

(b) (i) Notice of a planned final action described in subsection (1) of this section shall also be given by publication in the legal newspaper with the largest circulation in the jurisdiction where such property is located once a week for two successive weeks before the final action. A second publication must also be given in the legal newspaper routinely used by the potential condemnor, where such newspaper does not also have the largest circulation in the jurisdiction. Proof of circulation shall be established by publisher's affidavit filed with the potential condemnor. Such publication shall be deemed sufficient notice in lieu of a certified letter for each property owner of record for the property whose address is unknown and cannot be ascertained after a diligent inquiry.

(ii) The notice published under this subsection (2) (b) shall contain the same information as is required under (a) of this subsection.

(3) In a condemnation action subject to this section in which a condemnee alleges insufficient notice under this section, the court may determine whether the condemnor made a diligent attempt to provide sufficient notice and issue a finding on the sufficiency of the notice. Lack of sufficient notice under this section shall render the subsequent proceedings void as to the person improperly notified, but the subsequent proceedings shall not be void as to all persons or parties having been notified as provided in this section, either by publication or otherwise. A potential condemnor may cure insufficient notice under this section by providing an additional sufficient notice prior to taking a new final action, and filing a new petition if one was previously filed, for condemnation for the property owner of record who received insufficient notice. In such a case, RCW 8.12.530 shall not apply and a subsequent proceeding may be filed sooner than one year after discontinuance.

(4) (a) For potential condemnors subject to chapter 42.30 RCW, the open public meetings act, "final action" has the same meaning as that provided in RCW 42.30.020.

(b) For state agencies not subject to chapter 42.30 RCW, the office of the attorney general shall publish procedures that define "final action" for state agencies to ensure that property owners of record are provided with notice and opportunity for comment before the agency makes a final decision to authorize the condemnation of specific property.

(c) For all other entities subject to chapter 68, Laws of 2007, "final action" means a public meeting at which the entity informs potentially affected property owners of record about the scope and reasons for a potential condemnation action. A meeting must be held in each county where property being considered for condemnation is located. The meeting must be open to the public and conducted by a duly authorized representative of the entity. [2007 c 68 § 1.]