

RCW 9.41.345 Return of privately owned firearm or concealed pistol license by law enforcement agency—Duties—Notice—Exception.

(1) Before a law enforcement agency returns a privately owned firearm, the law enforcement agency must:

(a) Confirm that the individual to whom the firearm will be returned is the individual from whom the firearm was obtained or an authorized representative of that person;

(b) Confirm that the individual to whom the firearm will be returned is eligible to possess a firearm pursuant to RCW 9.41.040;

(c) Ensure that the firearm is not otherwise required to be held in custody or otherwise prohibited from being released;

(d) Ensure that five business days have elapsed from the time the firearm was obtained by law enforcement; and

(e) If a family or household member or intimate partner has requested notification under RCW 9.41.340(1)(a)(i), or notification to an identified victim or protected person is required per RCW 9.41.340(1)(a)(ii), provide notice to the appropriate person within one business day of verifying that the requirements in (a) through (c) of this subsection have been met.

(2)(a) Once the requirements in subsections (1) and (3) of this section have been met, a law enforcement agency must release a firearm to the individual from whom it was obtained or an authorized representative of that person upon request without unnecessary delay.

(b)(i) If a firearm cannot be returned because it is required to be held in custody or is otherwise prohibited from being released, a law enforcement agency must provide written notice to the individual from whom it was obtained within five business days of the individual requesting return of the firearm and specify the reason the firearm must be held in custody.

(ii) Notification may be made via email, text message, mail service, or personal service. For methods other than personal service, service shall be considered complete once the notification is sent.

(3) If notification is required under RCW 9.41.340(1)(a)(i) or (ii), a law enforcement agency must hold the firearm in custody for five business days from the time notification has been provided or information has been entered.

(4)(a) A law enforcement agency may not return a concealed pistol license that has been surrendered to, or impounded by, the law enforcement agency for any reason to the licensee until the law enforcement agency determines the licensee is eligible to possess a firearm under state and federal law and meets the other eligibility requirements for a concealed pistol license under RCW 9.41.070.

(b) A law enforcement agency must release a concealed pistol license to the licensee without unnecessary delay, and in no case longer than five business days, after the law enforcement agency determines the requirements of (a) of this subsection have been met.

(5) The provisions of chapter 130, Laws of 2015 and subsection (4) of this section shall not apply to circumstances where a law enforcement officer has momentarily obtained a firearm or concealed pistol license from an individual and would otherwise immediately return the firearm or concealed pistol license to the individual during the same interaction. [2023 c 462 § 402; 2020 c 29 § 6; 2019 c 367 § 5; 2018 c 226 § 1; 2015 c 130 § 2.]

Effective date—2020 c 29: See note following RCW 7.77.060.

Short title—2015 c 130: See note following RCW 9.41.340.