

RCW 90.03.620 Water rights adjudication—Disqualification of judge. (1) A judge in a water right adjudication filed under this chapter may be partially or fully disqualified from hearing the adjudication. Partial disqualification means disqualification from hearing specified claims. Full disqualification means disqualification from hearing any aspect of the adjudication.

(a) A judge is partially disqualified when the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned and the apparent or actual partiality is limited to specified claims.

(b) A judge is fully disqualified when the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned and the apparent or actual partiality extends beyond limited claims such that the judge should not hear any part of the adjudication.

(2) A judge may recuse himself or herself under this section or a party may file a motion for disqualification. A motion for disqualification must state whether the remedy being sought is full or partial disqualification.

(3) (a) For parties who are named in the original pleadings, a motion for disqualification is timely if it is filed before the judge issues a discretionary order or ruling in the adjudication.

(b) For a party who is joined in the adjudication after the original pleadings have been filed, a motion for disqualification is timely if it is filed within the earliest of either (i) thirty days of being joined in the adjudication; or (ii) after the joinder of the party, before the judge issues a discretionary order or ruling relating to the joined party.

(c) When a motion for disqualification is untimely filed under this subsection (3), the motion will be granted only when necessary to correct a substantial injustice.

(d) For purposes of this section, "discretionary order or ruling" has the same meaning as "order or ruling involving discretion" in RCW 4.12.050.

(4) A party filing a motion for disqualification under this section has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the judge should be disqualified under the standards of subsection (1) of this section.

(5) The motion for disqualification may not be heard by the judge against whom the motion is filed. Subject to this limitation, the court may assign the disqualification motion to any superior court judge of the judicial district in which the adjudication was filed or to a visiting superior court judge under RCW 2.56.040.

(6) The standards set forth in RCW 2.28.030, which govern the disqualification of judicial officers generally, may be grounds for disqualification under this section. [2009 c 332 § 3.]

Application—2009 c 332: See note following RCW 90.03.110.