

**RCW 9A.56.010 Definitions.** The following definitions are applicable in this chapter unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Access device" means any card, plate, code, account number, or other means of account access that can be used alone or in conjunction with another access device to obtain money, goods, services, or anything else of value, or that can be used to initiate a transfer of funds, other than a transfer originated solely by paper instrument;

(2) "Appropriate lost or misdelivered property or services" means obtaining or exerting control over the property or services of another which the actor knows to have been lost or mislaid, or to have been delivered under a mistake as to identity of the recipient or as to the nature or amount of the property;

(3) "Beverage crate" means a plastic or metal box-like container used by a manufacturer or distributor in the transportation or distribution of individually packaged beverages to retail outlets, and affixed with language stating "property of . . . . .," "owned by . . . . .," or other markings or words identifying ownership;

(4) "By color or aid of deception" means that the deception operated to bring about the obtaining of the property or services; it is not necessary that deception be the sole means of obtaining the property or services;

(5) "Deception" occurs when an actor knowingly:

(a) Creates or confirms another's false impression which the actor knows to be false; or

(b) Fails to correct another's impression which the actor previously has created or confirmed; or

(c) Prevents another from acquiring information material to the disposition of the property involved; or

(d) Transfers or encumbers property without disclosing a lien, adverse claim, or other legal impediment to the enjoyment of the property, whether that impediment is or is not valid, or is or is not a matter of official record; or

(e) Promises performance which the actor does not intend to perform or knows will not be performed;

(6) "Deprive" in addition to its common meaning means to make unauthorized use or an unauthorized copy of records, information, data, trade secrets, or computer programs;

(7) "Mail," in addition to its common meaning, means any letter, postal card, package, bag, or other item that is addressed to a specific address for delivery by the United States postal service or any commercial carrier performing the function of delivering similar items to residences or businesses, provided the mail:

(a) (i) Is addressed with a specific person's name, family name, or company, business, or corporation name on the outside of the item of mail or on the contents inside; and

(ii) Is not addressed to a generic unnamed occupant or resident of the address without an identifiable person, family, or company, business, or corporation name on the outside of the item of mail or on the contents inside; and

(b) Has been left for collection or delivery in any letter box, mailbox, mail receptacle, or other authorized depository for mail, or given to a mail carrier, or left with any private business that provides mailboxes or mail addresses for customers or when left in a similar location for collection or delivery by any commercial carrier; or

(c) Is in transit with a postal service, mail carrier, letter carrier, commercial carrier, or that is at or in a postal vehicle, postal station, mailbox, postal airplane, transit station, or similar location of a commercial carrier; or

(d) Has been delivered to the intended address, but has not been received by the intended addressee.

Mail, for purposes of chapter 164, Laws of 2011, does not include magazines, catalogs, direct mail inserts, newsletters, advertising circulars, or any mail that is considered third-class mail by the United States postal service;

(8) "Mailbox," in addition to its common meaning, means any authorized depository or receptacle of mail for the United States postal service or authorized depository for a commercial carrier that provides services to the general public, including any address to which mail is or can be addressed, or a place where the United States postal service or equivalent commercial carrier delivers mail to its addressee;

(9) "Merchandise pallet" means a wood or plastic carrier designed and manufactured as an item on which products can be placed before or during transport to retail outlets, manufacturers, or contractors, and affixed with language stating "property of . . .," "owned by . . .," or other markings or words identifying ownership;

(10) "Obtain control over" in addition to its common meaning, means:

(a) In relation to property, to bring about a transfer or purported transfer to the obtainer or another of a legally recognized interest in the property; or

(b) In relation to labor or service, to secure performance thereof for the benefits of the obtainer or another;

(11) "Owner" means a person, other than the actor, who has possession of or any other interest in the property or services involved, and without whose consent the actor has no authority to exert control over the property or services;

(12) "Parking area" means a parking lot or other property provided by retailers for use by a customer for parking an automobile or other vehicle;

(13) "Receive" includes, but is not limited to, acquiring title, possession, control, or a security interest, or any other interest in the property;

(14) "Received by the intended addressee" means that the addressee, owner of the delivery mailbox, or authorized agent has removed the delivered mail from its delivery mailbox;

(15) "Services" includes, but is not limited to, labor, professional services, transportation services, electronic computer services, the supplying of hotel accommodations, restaurant services, entertainment, the supplying of equipment for use, and the supplying of commodities of a public utility nature such as gas, electricity, steam, and water;

(16) "Shopping cart" means a basket mounted on wheels or similar container generally used in a retail establishment by a customer for the purpose of transporting goods of any kind;

(17) "Stolen" means obtained by theft, robbery, or extortion;

(18) "Subscription television service" means cable or encrypted video and related audio and data services intended for viewing on a home television by authorized members of the public only, who have agreed to pay a fee for the service. Subscription services include but are not limited to those video services presently delivered by coaxial

cable, fiber optic cable, terrestrial microwave, television broadcast, and satellite transmission;

(19) "Telecommunication device" means (a) any type of instrument, device, machine, or equipment that is capable of transmitting or receiving telephonic or electronic communications; or (b) any part of such an instrument, device, machine, or equipment, or any computer circuit, computer chip, electronic mechanism, or other component, that is capable of facilitating the transmission or reception of telephonic or electronic communications;

(20) "Telecommunication service" includes any service other than subscription television service provided for a charge or compensation to facilitate the transmission, transfer, or reception of a telephonic communication or an electronic communication;

(21) Value. (a) "Value" means the market value of the property or services at the time and in the approximate area of the criminal act.

(b) Whether or not they have been issued or delivered, written instruments, except those having a readily ascertained market value, shall be evaluated as follows:

(i) The value of an instrument constituting an evidence of debt, such as a check, draft, or promissory note, shall be deemed the amount due or collectible thereon or thereby, that figure ordinarily being the face amount of the indebtedness less any portion thereof which has been satisfied;

(ii) The value of a ticket or equivalent instrument which evidences a right to receive transportation, entertainment, or other service shall be deemed the price stated thereon, if any; and if no price is stated thereon, the value shall be deemed the price of such ticket or equivalent instrument which the issuer charged the general public;

(iii) The value of any other instrument that creates, releases, discharges, or otherwise affects any valuable legal right, privilege, or obligation shall be deemed the greatest amount of economic loss which the owner of the instrument might reasonably suffer by virtue of the loss of the instrument.

(c) Except as provided in RCW 9A.56.340(4) and 9A.56.350(4), whenever any series of transactions which constitute theft, would, when considered separately, constitute theft in the third degree because of value, and said series of transactions are a part of a criminal episode or a common scheme or plan, then the transactions may be aggregated in one count and the sum of the value of all said transactions shall be the value considered in determining the degree of theft involved.

For purposes of this subsection, "criminal episode" means a series of thefts committed by the same person from one or more mercantile establishments on three or more occasions within a five-day period.

(d) Whenever any person is charged with possessing stolen property and such person has unlawfully in his possession at the same time the stolen property of more than one person, then the stolen property possessed may be aggregated in one count and the sum of the value of all said stolen property shall be the value considered in determining the degree of theft involved. Thefts committed by the same person in different counties that have been aggregated in one county may be prosecuted in any county in which one of the thefts occurred.

(e) Property or services having value that cannot be ascertained pursuant to the standards set forth above shall be deemed to be of a value not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars;

(22) "Vulnerable adult" includes a person eighteen years of age or older who:

(a) Is functionally, mentally, or physically unable to care for himself or herself; or

(b) Is suffering from a cognitive impairment other than voluntary intoxication;

(23) "Wrongfully obtains" or "exerts unauthorized control" means:

(a) To take the property or services of another;

(b) Having any property or services in one's possession, custody or control as bailee, factor, lessee, pledgee, renter, servant, attorney, agent, employee, trustee, executor, administrator, guardian, or officer of any person, estate, association, or corporation, or as a public officer, or person authorized by agreement or competent authority to take or hold such possession, custody, or control, to secrete, withhold, or appropriate the same to his or her own use or to the use of any person other than the true owner or person entitled thereto; or

(c) Having any property or services in one's possession, custody, or control as partner, to secrete, withhold, or appropriate the same to his or her use or to the use of any person other than the true owner or person entitled thereto, where the use is unauthorized by the partnership agreement. [2017 c 266 § 7; 2011 c 164 § 2; 2006 c 277 § 4; 2002 c 97 § 1; 1999 c 143 § 36; 1998 c 236 § 1; 1997 c 346 § 2; 1995 c 92 § 1; 1987 c 140 § 1; 1986 c 257 § 2; 1985 c 382 § 1; 1984 c 273 § 6; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38 § 8; 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.56.010.]

**Finding—Intent—2017 c 266:** See note following RCW 9A.42.020.

**Intent—2011 c 164:** "It is important to the citizens of this state to have confidence in the security of the mail. Mail contains personal information, medical records, and financial documents. Theft of mail has become a serious problem in our state because mail is a key source of information for identity thieves. Currently, there is no law that adequately addresses the seriousness of this crime. This act is intended to accurately recognize the seriousness of taking personal, medical, or financial identifying information and compromising the integrity of our mail system." [2011 c 164 § 1.]

**Severability—1986 c 257:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1986 c 257 § 37.]

**Severability—1985 c 382:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1985 c 382 § 3.]

**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 38:** See notes following RCW 9A.08.020.