

**Chapter 3.30 RCW  
DISTRICT COURTS**

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**Rules of court:** See *Rules for Appeal of Decisions of Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (RALJ)*.

**RCW 3.30.010 Definitions.** As used in this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

"City" means an incorporated city or town.

"Department" means an administrative unit of a district court established for the orderly and efficient administration of business and may include, without being limited in scope thereby, a unit or units for determining traffic cases, violations of city ordinances, violations of state law, criminal cases, civil cases, or jury cases. [2008 c 13 § 1; 1984 c 258 § 3; 1979 c 151 § 1; 1967 ex.s. c 42 § 1; 1961 c 299 § 1.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—1984 c 258:** "(1) Sections 1 through 210, 511, 601 through 808, and 901 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 1984.

(2) Sections 501 through 510 and 512 through 524 of this act shall take effect on January 1, 1985.

(3) Sections 301 through 405 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 1985." [1984 c 258 § 902.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Severability—1984 c 258:** "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." [1984 c 258 § 903.]

**Short title—1984 c 258:** "This act may be known and cited as the court improvement act of 1984." [1984 c 258 § 1.]

**Savings—1967 ex.s. c 42:** "All matters relating to functions transferred under the provisions of this 1967 amendatory act which at the time of transfer have not been completed may be undertaken and completed by the director of the planning and community affairs agency, who is authorized, empowered, and directed to promulgate any and all orders, rules and regulations necessary to accomplish this purpose." [1967 ex.s. c 42 § 4.] The planning and community affairs agency has been redesignated the department of community, trade, and

economic development. See RCW 43.330.020. The department of community, trade, and economic development has been renamed the department of commerce by 2009 c 565.

**Effective date—1967 ex.s. c 42:** "This 1967 amendatory act shall take effect on July 1, 1967." [1967 ex.s. c 42 § 5.]

*Population determinations, office of financial management: Chapter 43.62 RCW.*

**RCW 3.30.015 Construction of "justices of the peace," "justice courts," "justice of the peace courts."** All references to justices of the peace in other titles of the Revised Code of Washington shall be construed as meaning district judges. All references to justice courts or justice of the peace courts in other titles of the Revised Code of Washington shall be construed as meaning district courts. [1984 c 258 § 90.]

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

**RCW 3.30.020 Application of chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW.** The provisions of chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW shall apply to each county with a population of two hundred ten thousand or more: PROVIDED, That any city having a population of more than four hundred thousand may by resolution of its legislative body elect to continue to operate a municipal court pursuant to the provisions of chapter 35.20 RCW, as if chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW had never been enacted: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if a city elects to continue its municipal court pursuant to this section, the number of district judges allocated to the county in RCW 3.34.010 shall be reduced by two and the number of full time district judges allocated by RCW 3.34.020 to the district in which the city is situated shall also be reduced by two. The provisions of chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW may be made applicable to any county with a population of less than two hundred ten thousand upon a majority vote of its county legislative authority. [1991 c 363 § 4; 1987 c 202 § 110; 1961 c 299 § 2.]

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**Intent—1987 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.04.190.

*Municipal courts in cities of over four hundred thousand: Chapter 35.20 RCW.*

**RCW 3.30.030 Nomenclature for judges and courts.** The judges of each district court district shall be the justices of the peace of the district elected or appointed as provided in chapters 3.30 through 3.74 RCW. Such courts shall alternately be referred to as district courts and the judges thereof as district judges. [1984 c 258 § 4; 1971 c 73 § 1; 1961 c 299 § 3.]

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

**RCW 3.30.040 Sessions.** The district courts shall be open except on nonjudicial days. Sessions of the court shall be held at such places as shall be provided by the district court districting plan. The court shall sit as often as business requires in each city of the district which provides suitable courtroom facilities, to hear causes in which such city is the plaintiff. [1984 c 258 § 5; 1961 c 299 § 4.]

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

**RCW 3.30.050 Departments.** Each court may be organized in a manner consistent with the departments created by the districting plan. [1984 c 258 § 6; 1971 c 73 § 2; 1961 c 299 § 5.]

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

**RCW 3.30.060 Adjournments.** Adjournments from day to day, or from time to time, are to be construed as recesses in the sessions, and shall not prevent the court from sitting at any time. [1961 c 299 § 6.]

**RCW 3.30.070 Records.** The clerk of each district court shall keep uniform records of each case filed and the proceedings had therein including an accounting for all funds received and disbursed. Financial reporting shall be in such form as may be prescribed by the state auditor. The form of other records may be prescribed by the supreme court. [1995 c 301 § 30; 1971 c 73 § 3; 1961 c 299 § 7.]

**RCW 3.30.080 Rules.** The supreme court may adopt rules of procedure for district courts. A district court may adopt local rules of procedure which are not inconsistent with state law or with the rules adopted by the supreme court. The rules for a county with a single district and multiple facilities may include rules to provide where cases shall be filed and where cases shall be heard. If the rules of the supreme court authorized under this section are adopted, all procedural laws in conflict with the rules shall be of no effect. [1989 c 227 § 5; 1984 c 258 § 7; 1961 c 299 § 8.]

**Intent—1989 c 227:** See note following RCW 3.38.070.

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

**RCW 3.30.090 Violations bureau.** A violations bureau may be established by any city or district court having jurisdiction of

traffic cases to assist in processing traffic cases. As designated by written order of the court having jurisdiction of traffic cases, specific offenses under city ordinance, county resolution, or state law may be processed by such bureau. Such bureau may be authorized to receive the posting of bail for such specified offenses, and, as authorized by the court order, to accept forfeiture of bail and payment of monetary penalties. The court order shall specify the amount of bail to be posted and shall also specify the circumstances or conditions which will require an appearance before the court. Such bureau, upon accepting the prescribed bail, shall issue a receipt to the alleged violator, which receipt shall bear a legend informing him or her of the legal consequences of bail forfeiture. The bureau shall transfer daily to the clerk of the proper department of the court all bail posted for offenses where forfeiture is not authorized by the court order, as well as copies of all receipts. All forfeitures or penalties paid to a violations bureau for violations of municipal ordinances shall be placed in the city general fund or such other fund as may be prescribed by ordinance. All forfeitures or penalties paid to a violations bureau for violations of state laws or county resolutions shall be remitted at least monthly to the county treasurer for deposit in the current expense fund. Employees of violations bureaus of a city shall be city employees under any applicable municipal civil service system. [2011 c 336 § 73; 1979 ex.s. c 136 § 15; 1971 c 73 § 4; 1961 c 299 § 9.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 136:** See notes following RCW 46.63.010.