

WASHINGTON 2024 LAW ENFORCEMENT QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

This pocket reference guide contains key provisions found within Chapter 84 of Title 29A of the Revised Code of Washington, and other relevant sections.

- Using menace, force, threat, or any unlawful means to hinder or deter a voter from voting is a felony.
- Intimidating a public servant by use of a threat to attempt to influence their vote, decision, or other official act is a felony.
- Electioneering, interfering with voting, or disrupting the administration of a voting center or ballot drop location is a misdemeanor.

VOTING HOURS

WA is a vote-by-mail state. In-person accessible voting is available at local centers during business hours starting 18 days before the election until 8 p.m. on Election Day:
sos.wa.gov/elections/voters/voter-registration/drop-box-and-voting-center-locations

2024 ELECTION DATES

Presidential Primary: March 12

Primary Election: August 6

General Election: November 5

For other election dates: sos.wa.gov/elections/elections-calendar/dates-and-deadlines

REPORT SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR TO

Your local election official:
sos.wa.gov/elections/voters/voter-registration/county-elections-offices

WA Secretary of State:

(360) 902-4180; elections@sos.wa.gov;
sos.wa.gov/elections/contact-info



Hindering or bribing voter.

RCW 29A.84.620

Any person who uses menace, force, threat, or any unlawful means towards any voter to hinder or deter such a voter from voting, or directly or indirectly offers any bribe, reward, or any thing of value to a voter in exchange for the voter's vote for or against any person or ballot measure, or authorizes any person to do so, is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Intimidating a public servant.

RCW 9A.76.180

(1) A person is guilty of intimidating a public servant if, by use of a threat, he or she attempts to influence a public servant's vote, opinion, decision, or other official action as a public servant.

(3) "Threat" as used in this section means:

(a) To communicate, directly or indirectly, the intent immediately to use force against any person who is present at the time; or

(b) Threats as defined in RCW 9A.04.110.

(4) Intimidating a public servant is a class B felony.

"Public servant" includes any person who presently occupies the position of or has been elected, appointed, or designated to become any officer or employee of government, and any person participating as an advisor, consultant, or otherwise in performing a governmental function, under RCW 9A.04.110 (23)]

Acts prohibited near voting centers, student engagement hubs, and ballot drop boxes.

RCW 29A.84.510

(1) During the voting period that begins eighteen days before and ends the day of a special election, general election, or primary, no person may:

(a) Within a voting center or student engagement hub or in any public street or room in any public manner within 100 feet measured radially from the entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet measured radially from a ballot drop box as described in RCW 29A.40.170:

- (i) Suggest or persuade or attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure;
- (ii) Circulate cards or handbills of any kind;
- (iii) Solicit signatures to any kind of petition; or
- (iv) Engage in any practice which interferes with the freedom of voters to exercise their franchise or disrupts the administration of the voting center;

(b) Engage in any activities restricted under (a) of this subsection through electronic amplification located more than 100 feet from an entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet from an entrance to a ballot drop box if the person is capable of being understood within 100 feet of the voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet of the ballot drop box;

(c) Obstruct the doors or entries to a building in which a voting center or ballot drop location is located or prevent free access to and from any voting center or ballot drop location.

(2) The auditor shall post a sign at the point or points specified at each voting center as required by RCW 29A.40.160 during the voting period providing notice of the prohibition in subsection (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any sheriff, deputy sheriff, or municipal law enforcement officer shall stop the prohibited activity, and may arrest any person engaging in the prohibited activity.

(4) Any violation of this section is a gross misdemeanor, punishable to the same extent as a gross misdemeanor that is punishable under RCW 9A.20.021, and the person convicted may be ordered to pay the costs of prosecution.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to limit or otherwise restrict the access of an authorized political party observer to a voting center, student engagement hub, or ballot drop box for the purpose of observing the election process.

Electioneering at voting center or ballot drop location by election officers forbidden.

RCW 29A.84.520

Any election officer who does any electioneering at a voting center or ballot drop location during the voting period that begins eighteen days before and ends the day of a special election, general election, or primary is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction must be fined in any sum not exceeding one hundred dollars and pay the costs of prosecution.

Possessing dangerous weapons at voting facilities—Penalty—Exceptions.

RCW 9.41.284

(1) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4) of this section, it is unlawful for a person to knowingly carry onto, or to possess in, a ballot counting center, a voting center, a student engagement hub, or the county elections and voter registration office, or areas of facilities while being used as a ballot counting center, a voting center, a student engagement hub, or the county elections and voter registration office:

(a) Any firearm;

(b) Any other dangerous weapon as described in RCW 9.41.250;

(c) Any air gun, including any air pistol or air rifle, designed

to propel a BB, pellet, or other projectile by the discharge of compressed air, carbon dioxide, or other gas;

(d) (i) Any portable device manufactured to function as a weapon and which is commonly known as a stun gun, including a projectile stun gun that projects wired probes that are attached to the device that emit an electrical charge designed to administer to a person or an animal an electric shock, charge, or impulse; or

(ii) Any device, object, or instrument that is used or intended to be used as a weapon with the intent to injure a person by an electric shock, charge, or impulse; or

(e) Any spring blade knife as defined in RCW 9.41.250.

(2) (a) A person who violates subsection (1) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) Second and subsequent violations of this section are a gross misdemeanor.

[Subsection (1) of this section does not apply to federal, state, or local law enforcement officers or trained security personnel hired by a county to provide security for counting or voting centers or other election facilities. This section also does not prohibit a person licensed pursuant to RCW 9.41.070 to conceal carry a pistol in a voting center or county elections office, but all firearms and other dangerous weapons are prohibited in all ballot counting centers and facilities.]

Ballots—Removing from voting center or ballot drop location.

RCW 29A.84.540

Any person who, without lawful authority, removes a ballot from a voting center or ballot drop location is guilty of a class C felony punishable to the same extent as a class C felony that is punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Tampering with materials.

RCW 29A.84.550

Any person who willfully defaces, removes, or destroys any of the supplies or materials that the person knows are intended both for use in a voting center, election office, ballot counting area, ballot storage area, or election system including materials and systems meant for enabling a voter to prepare the voter's ballot is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Voting machines, devices—Tampering with—Extra keys.

RCW 29A.84.560

Any person who tampers with or damages or attempts to damage any voting machine or device to be used or being used in a primary or special or general election, or who prevents or attempts to prevent the correct operation of such machine or device, or any unauthorized person who accesses or assists another person or entity with unauthorized access to a voting center, election office, ballot counting area, ballot storage area, or election system, voting machine, or device to be used or being used in a primary or special or general election, is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Unqualified persons voting.

RCW 29A.84.660

Any person who knows that he or she does not possess the legal qualifications of a voter and who votes at any primary or special or general election authorized by law to be held in this state for any office whatever is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Malicious mischief in the first degree.

RCW 9A.48.070

(1) A person is guilty of malicious mischief in the first degree if he or she knowingly and maliciously:

(a) Causes physical damage to the property of another in an amount exceeding five thousand dollars;

(b) Causes an interruption or impairment of service rendered to the public by physically damaging or tampering with an emergency vehicle or property of the state, a political subdivision thereof, or a public utility or mode of public transportation, power, or communication;

(c) Causes an impairment of the safety, efficiency, or operation of an aircraft by physically damaging or tampering with the aircraft or aircraft equipment, fuel, lubricant, or parts; or

(d) Causes an interruption or impairment of service rendered to the public by, without lawful authority, physically damaging, destroying, or removing an official ballot deposit box or ballot drop box or, without lawful authority, damaging, destroying, removing, or tampering with the contents thereof.

(2) Malicious mischief in the first degree is a class B felony.

Malicious mischief in the second degree.

RCW 9A.48.080

(1) A person is guilty of malicious mischief in the second degree if he or she knowingly and maliciously:

(a) Causes physical damage to the property of another in an amount exceeding seven hundred fifty dollars;

(b) Creates a substantial risk of interruption or impairment of service rendered to the public, by physically damaging or tampering with an emergency vehicle or property of the state, a political subdivision thereof, or a public utility or mode of public transportation, power, or communication; or

(c) Creates a substantial risk of interruption or impairment of service rendered to the public by, without lawful authority, physically damaging, destroying, or removing an official ballot deposit box or ballot drop box or, without lawful authority, damaging, destroying, removing, or tampering with the contents thereof.

(2) Malicious mischief in the second degree is a class C felony.

Unauthorized Access.

2024 SB 5843, Section 7

Any person who willfully and without authority accesses or assists another person or entity with unauthorized access to a voting center, election office, ballot counting area, ballot storage area, or any election system, or provides unauthorized access to another person or entity to a voting center, election office, ballot counting area, ballot storage area, or any election system, whether electronic or physical access, is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Officers—Violations generally.

RCW 29A.84.720

Every person charged with the performance of any duty under the provisions of any law of this state relating to elections, including primaries, or the provisions of any charter or ordinance of any city or town of this state relating to elections who willfully neglects or refuses to perform such duty, or provides unauthorized access to a person or entity to physical locations or electronic or physical access to election software or hardware used in any element of conduct of an election, or who, in the performance of such duty, or in the person's official capacity, knowingly or fraudulently violates any of the provisions of law relating to such duty, is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021 and shall the person's office.