

Chapter 43.31 RCW
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

(Formerly: Department of community, trade, and economic development)

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RCW 43.31.033 Grants for thermal energy network pilot projects.

(1) The department of commerce shall award grants for thermal energy network pilot projects.

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of commerce must provide grant funding to any gas company developing a thermal energy network pilot project in accordance with this section.

(3) Grant funding from the appropriation authorized in this section for thermal energy network pilot projects is only available for gas companies as defined in RCW 80.04.010.

(4) A gas company may receive grant funding from the department of commerce to offset the costs necessary to build and operate the project. The grant amount for a pilot project may not exceed the difference between the gas company's lowest reasonable cost resources under its current business practices and the costs of building and operating the thermal energy network pilot project. The utilities and transportation commission must determine this cost difference and provide the dollar amount to the department of commerce for the purposes of making the grant.

(5) When determining whether to award a grant and the grant amount for a thermal energy network pilot project, the department of commerce must consider the information submitted by the gas company in compliance with RCW 80.28.460 (3) and (4) and any finding or conclusions of the utilities and transportation commission regarding the pilot project. The department of commerce may also allocate available funds to prioritize projects based on their cost-effectiveness and geographic diversity.

(6) Each gas company receiving a grant from the department of commerce for a thermal energy network pilot project must coordinate with other grant awardees, the utilities and transportation commission, the department of commerce, and consultants with expertise on successful thermal energy networks to ensure that the pilot projects are diverse and designed to inform the utilities and transportation commission's decisions in the proceeding on the various ownership, market, and rate structures for thermal energy networks.
[2024 c 348 s 4.]

RCW 43.31.038 Geothermal exploration cost-share grant program.

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this

specific purpose, a competitive geothermal exploration cost-share grant program is established in order to incentivize deep exploratory drilling to identify locations suitable for the development of geothermal energy.

(2) Grants may be awarded to offset the direct costs associated with the expense of conducting deep exploratory drilling for the purpose of identifying locations in Washington suitable for the development of geothermal energy.

(3) The department of commerce must consult with the Washington geological survey to develop a method and criteria for the allocation of grants, subject to the following:

(a) Proposed exploratory drilling projects should be located in areas of high geothermal potential not impacting federally reserved tribal rights and resources including, but not limited to, those protected by treaty, executive order, or federal law;

(b) Grant applicants should possess, or should demonstrate a partnership or other form of relationship with entities who possess, demonstrated expertise in successful geothermal exploration;

(c) Grant applicants should meet high labor standards, including family sustaining wages, providing benefits including health care and employer-contributed retirement plans, career development opportunities, and must maximize access to economic benefits from exploratory projects for local workers;

(d) Selection and implementation of exploratory drilling projects should align with equity and environmental justice principles as established in chapter 70A.02 RCW;

(e) Grant awards must be available to private, public, and federally recognized tribal applicants. Grant awards to private grant applicants should be for no more than one-half of the overall cost of the project and grant awards to public grant applicants should be for no more than two-thirds of the overall cost of the project;

(f) Grant applicants must demonstrate that they have, or that they will have by the time of the execution of a grant agreement, site control of the site that is the subject of the exploration effort, either through an ownership interest or through a lease agreement that provides access to the site and the right to drill to the proposed depth;

(g) The grant application must demonstrate the applicant's engagement efforts with the local community to provide information about the potential project;

(h) If any fluid is proposed to be injected as part of the exploratory drilling, the grant applicant must:

(i) Include an analysis of any potential for induced seismicity as a result of the injection, as well as a plan for the management of the risk of induced seismicity; and

(ii) Consult with the department of ecology and, if applicable, comply with underground injection control standards and groundwater antidegradation standards as directed in chapter 90.48 RCW;

(i) The award of grants will seek to broaden the state's knowledge of geothermal resources, with a preference given to high impact projects in favorable geologic settings that have been comparatively underexplored; and

(j) All results of any exploratory drilling performed with grant funds must be made publicly available and must be submitted to the Washington geological survey for inclusion in the database created pursuant to RCW 43.92.090.

(4) In the course of administering the geothermal exploration cost-share grant program, the department of commerce shall make a reasonable effort to utilize the United States department of energy recommendations and guidelines concerning enhanced geothermal demonstration projects in the western states. [2024 c 350 s 3.]

RCW 43.31.0925 Business assistance center—Minority and women business development office. There is established within the department's *business assistance center the minority and women business development office. This office shall provide business-related assistance to minorities and women as well as serve as an outreach program to increase minority and women-owned businesses' awareness and use of existing business assistance services. [1993 c 512 s 7.]

***Reviser's note:** The business assistance center and its powers and duties were terminated June 30, 1995. RCW 43.31.083, 43.31.085, 43.31.087, and 43.31.089 were repealed by 1993 c 280 s 81, effective June 30, 1996.

RCW 43.31.125 Advisory groups. The director may establish such advisory groups as in the director's discretion are necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter. Members of and vacancies in such advisory groups shall be filled by appointment by the director. Members shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [1985 c 466 s 16.]

Effective date—1985 c 466: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect June 30, 1985." [1985 c 466 s 96.]

Severability—1985 c 466: "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 466 s 95.]

Headings—1985 c 466: "As used in this act, section headings constitute no part of the law." [1985 c 466 s 77.]

Transfer of assets—1985 c 466: "All reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files, papers, or written material in the possession of the department of commerce and economic development shall be delivered to the custody of the department of trade and economic development. All cabinets, furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible property employed by the department of commerce and economic development shall be made available to the department of trade and economic development. All funds, credits, or other assets held by the department of commerce and economic development shall be assigned to the department of trade and economic development.

Any appropriations made to the department of commerce and economic development shall, June 30, 1985, be transferred and credited to the department of trade and economic development.

Whenever any question arises as to the transfer of any personnel, funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment, or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the director of financial management shall make a determination as to the proper allocation and certify the same to the state agencies concerned." [1985 c 466 s 19.]

Transfer of employees—1985 c 466: "All classified employees of the department of commerce and economic development are transferred to the jurisdiction of the department of trade and economic development. All employees classified under chapter 41.06 RCW, the state civil service law, are assigned to the department of trade and economic development to perform their usual duties upon the same terms as formerly, without any loss of rights, subject to any action that may be appropriate thereafter in accordance with the laws and rules governing state civil service." [1985 c 466 s 20.]

Continuation of rules and business and existing contracts and obligations—1985 c 466: "All rules and all pending business before the department of commerce and economic development shall be continued and acted upon by the department of trade and economic development. All existing contracts and obligations shall remain in full force and shall be performed by the department of trade and economic development." [1985 c 466 s 21.]

Savings—1985 c 466: "The transfer of the powers, duties, functions, and personnel of the department of commerce and economic development shall not affect the validity of any act performed prior to June 30, 1985." [1985 c 466 s 22.]

Apportionment of funds—1985 c 466: "If apportionments of budgeted funds are required because of the transfers directed by sections 19 through 22, chapter 466, Laws of 1985, the director of financial management shall certify the apportionments to the agencies affected, the state auditor, and the state treasurer. Each of these shall make the appropriate transfer and adjustments in funds and appropriation accounts and equipment records in accordance with the certification." [1985 c 466 s 23.]

RCW 43.31.205 Hanford reservation—Promotion of sublease for nuclear-related industry. In an effort to enhance the economy of the Tri-Cities area, the department of commerce is directed to promote the existence of the lease between the state of Washington and the federal government executed September 10, 1964, covering one thousand acres of land lying within the Hanford reservation near Richland, Washington, and the opportunity of subleasing the land to entities for nuclear-related industry, in agreement with the terms of the lease. When promoting the existence of the lease, the department shall work in cooperation with any associate development organization located in or near the Tri-Cities area. [2023 c 470 s 2044; 1993 c 280 s 41; 1992 c 228 s 2; 1990 c 281 s 2.]

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Effective date—1993 c 280: See RCW 43.330.902.

Legislative findings—1992 c 228: "The legislature finds that the ninety-nine-year lease of one thousand acres of land by the state from the federal government requires that the state use any rent moneys from subleasing the land for the development of the leased land and nuclear-related industries in the Tri-Cities area. The legislature further finds that the new emphasis on waste cleanup at Hanford and the new technologies needed for environmental restoration warrant a renewed effort to promote development of the leased land and nuclear-related industries in the Tri-Cities area." [1992 c 228 s 1.]

Legislative findings—1990 c 281: "The legislature finds that the one thousand acres of land leased from the federal government to the state of Washington on the Hanford reservation constitutes an unmatched resource for development of high-technology industry, nuclear medicine research, and research into new waste immobilization and reduction techniques. The legislature further finds that continued diversification of the Tri-Cities economy will help stabilize and improve the Tri-Cities economy, and that this effort can be aided by emphasizing the resources of local expertise and nearby facilities." [1990 c 281 s 1.]

RCW 43.31.215 Hanford reservation—Tri-Cities area—Emphasize workforce and facilities. When the department implements programs intended to attract or maintain industrial or high-technology investments in the state, the department shall, to the extent possible, emphasize the following:

(1) The highly skilled and trained workforce in the Tri-Cities area;

(2) The world-class research facilities in the area, including the fast flux test facility and the Pacific Northwest laboratories;

(3) The existence of the one thousand acres leased by the state from the federal government for the purpose of nuclear-related industries; and

(4) The ability for high-technology and medical industries to safely dispose of low-level radioactive waste at the Hanford commercial low-level waste disposal facility. [1990 c 281 s 3.]

Legislative findings—1990 c 281: See note following RCW 43.31.205.

RCW 43.31.422 Hanford area economic investment fund. The Hanford area economic investment fund is established in the custody of the state treasurer. Moneys in the fund shall only be used for reasonable assistant attorney general costs in support of the committee or pursuant to the decisions of the committee created in RCW 43.31.425 for Hanford area revolving loan funds, Hanford area infrastructure projects, or other Hanford area economic development and diversification projects, but may not be used for government or nonprofit organization operating expenses. Up to five percent of moneys in the fund may be used for program administration. For the purpose of this chapter "Hanford area" means Benton and Franklin counties. The director of commerce or the director's designee shall

authorize disbursements from the fund with the advice of the committee created in RCW 43.31.425. The fund is subject to the allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for disbursements. The legislature intends to establish similar economic investment funds for areas that develop low-level radioactive waste disposal facilities. [2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 42; 2004 c 77 s 1; 1998 c 76 s 1; 1993 c 280 s 44; 1991 c 272 s 19.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 21: See note following RCW 72.23.025.

Effective date—1993 c 280: See RCW 43.330.902.

Effective dates—1991 c 272: See RCW 81.108.901.

Surcharge on waste generators: RCW 70A.384.110, 70A.384.120, and 70A.384.130.

RCW 43.31.425 Hanford area economic investment fund advisory committee. The Hanford area economic investment fund advisory committee is hereby established to advise the director of the department of commerce.

(1) The committee shall have eleven members. The director of the department of commerce shall appoint the members, in consultation with Hanford area elected officials, subject to the following requirements:

(a) All members shall either reside or be employed within the Hanford area.

(b) The committee shall have a balanced membership representing one member each from the elected leadership of Benton county, Franklin county, the city of Richland, the city of Kennewick, the city of Pasco, a Hanford area port district, the labor community, and four members from the Hanford area business and financial community.

(c) Careful consideration shall be given to assure minority representation on the committee.

(2) Each member appointed by the director of the department of commerce shall serve a term of three years. A person appointed to fill a vacancy of a member shall be appointed in a like manner and shall serve for only the unexpired term. A member is eligible for reappointment. A member may be removed by the director of the department of commerce for cause.

(3) The director of the department of commerce shall designate a member of the committee as its chairperson. The committee may elect such other officers as it deems appropriate. Six members of the committee constitute a quorum and six affirmative votes are necessary for the transaction of business or the exercise of any power or function of the committee.

(4) The members shall serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(5) Members shall not be liable to the state, to the fund, or to any other person as a result of their activities, whether ministerial or discretionary, as members except for willful dishonesty or intentional violations of law. The department may purchase liability insurance for members and may indemnify these persons against the

claims of others. [2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 41; 1998 c 76 s 2; 1991 c 272 s 20.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 21: See note following RCW 72.23.025.

Effective dates—1991 c 272: See RCW 81.108.901.

RCW 43.31.428 Hanford area economic investment fund committee—Powers. The *Hanford area economic investment fund committee created under RCW 43.31.425 may:

(1) Adopt bylaws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business;

(2) Utilize the services of other governmental agencies;

(3) Accept from any federal or state agency loans or grants for the purposes of funding Hanford area revolving loan funds, Hanford area infrastructure projects, or Hanford area economic development projects;

(4) Adopt rules for the administration of the program, including the terms and rates pertaining to its loans, and criteria for awarding grants, loans, and financial guarantees;

(5) Adopt a spending strategy for the moneys in the fund created in RCW 43.31.422. The strategy shall include five and ten year goals for economic development and diversification for use of the moneys in the Hanford area;

(6) Recommend to the director no more than two allocations eligible for funding per calendar year, with a first priority on Hanford area revolving loan allocations, and Hanford area infrastructure allocations followed by other Hanford area economic development and diversification projects if the committee finds that there are no suitable allocations in the priority allocations described in this section;

(7) Establish and administer a revolving fund consistent with this section and RCW 43.31.422 and 43.31.425; and

(8) Make grants from the Hanford area economic investment fund consistent with this section and RCW 43.31.422 and 43.31.425. [2004 c 77 s 2; 1998 c 76 s 3; 1991 c 272 s 21.]

***Reviser's note:** The "Hanford area economic investment fund committee" was renamed the "Hanford area economic investment fund advisory committee" pursuant to 2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 41.

Effective dates—1991 c 272: See RCW 81.108.901.

RCW 43.31.450 SEED act—Findings—Purpose. The legislature finds that economic well-being encompasses not only income, spending, and consumption, but also savings, investment, and asset-building. The building of assets, in particular, can improve individuals' economic independence and stability. The legislature further finds that it is appropriate for the state to institute an asset-based strategy to assist low-income families. It is the purpose of chapter 402, Laws of 2005 to promote job training, homeownership, and business development among low-income individuals and to provide assistance in meeting the financial goals of low-income individuals. [2005 c 402 s 2.]

RCW 43.31.455 SEED act—Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 43.31.450 through 43.31.475 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of commerce.

(2) "Director" means the director of the department of commerce.

(3) "Foster youth" means a person who is fifteen years of age or older who is a dependent of the department of social and health services; or a person who is at least fifteen years of age, but not more than twenty-three years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and health services for at least twenty-four months after attaining thirteen years of age.

(4) "Individual development account" or "account" means an account established by contract between a low-income individual and a sponsoring organization for the benefit of the low-income individual and funded through periodic contributions by the low-income individual which are matched with contributions by or through the sponsoring organization.

(5) "Low-income individual" means a person whose household income is equal to or less than either:

(a) Eighty percent of the median family income, adjusted for household size, for the county or metropolitan statistical area where the person resides; or

(b) Two hundred percent of the federal poverty guidelines updated periodically in the federal register by the United States department of health and human services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).

(6) "Program" means the individual development account program established pursuant to RCW 43.31.450 through 43.31.475.

(7) "Sponsoring organization" means: (a) A nonprofit, fund-raising organization that is exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code as amended and in effect on January 1, 2005; (b) a housing authority established under RCW 35.82.030; or (c) a federally recognized Indian tribe. [2009 c 565 s 28; 2005 c 402 s 3.]

RCW 43.31.460 SEED act—Individual development account program—Rules. An individual development account program is hereby established within the department for the purpose of facilitating the creation by sponsoring organizations of individual development accounts for low-income individuals.

(1) The department shall select sponsoring organizations to establish and monitor individual development accounts using the following criteria:

(a) The ability of the sponsoring organization to implement and administer an individual development account program, including the ability to verify a low-income individual's eligibility, certify that matching deposits are used only for approved purposes, and exercise general fiscal accountability;

(b) The capacity of the sponsoring organization to provide or raise funds to match the contributions made by low-income individuals to their individual development accounts;

(c) The capacity of the sponsoring organization to provide or arrange for the provision of financial counseling and other related services to low-income individuals;

(d) The links the sponsoring organization has to other activities and programs related to the purpose of chapter 402, Laws of 2005; and

(e) Such other criteria as the department determines are consistent with the purpose of chapter 402, Laws of 2005 and ease of administration.

(2) An individual development account may be established by or on behalf of an eligible low-income individual to enable the individual to accumulate funds for the following purposes:

(a) The acquisition of postsecondary education or job training;

(b) The purchase of a primary residence, including any usual or reasonable settlement, financing, or other closing costs;

(c) The capitalization of a small business. Account moneys may be used for capital, land, plant, equipment, and inventory expenses or for working capital pursuant to a business plan. The business plan must have been developed with a business counselor, trainer, or financial institution approved by the sponsoring organization. The business plan shall include a description of the services or goods to be sold, a marketing strategy, and projected financial statements;

(d) The purchase of a computer, an automobile, or home improvements; or

(e) The purchase of assistive technologies that will allow a person with a disability to participate in work-related activities.

(3) An eligible low-income individual participating in the program must contribute to an individual development account. The contributions may be derived from earned income or other income, as provided by the department. Other income shall include child support payments, supplemental security income, and disability benefits.

(4) A sponsoring organization may authorize a low-income individual for whom an individual development account has been established to withdraw all or part of the individual's deposits for the following emergencies:

(a) Necessary medical expenses;

(b) To avoid eviction of the individual from the individual's residence;

(c) Necessary living expenses following loss of employment; or

(d) Such other circumstances as the sponsoring organization determines merit emergency withdrawal.

The low-income individual making an emergency withdrawal shall reimburse the account for the amount withdrawn within twelve months of the date of withdrawal or the individual development account shall be closed.

(5) Funds held in an individual development account established under RCW 43.31.450 through 43.31.475 shall not be used in the determination of eligibility for, or the amount of, assistance in any state or federal means-tested program.

(6) The department shall adopt rules as necessary to implement chapter 402, Laws of 2005, including rules regulating the use of individual development accounts by eligible low-income individuals. The department's rules shall require that funds held in an individual development account are to be withdrawn only for the purposes specified in subsection (2) of this section or withdrawn as permitted for emergencies under subsection (4) of this section.

(7) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create an entitlement to matching moneys. [2005 c 402 s 4.]

RCW 43.31.465 SEED act—Foster youth individual development account program. (1) A foster youth individual development account

program is hereby established within the individual development account program established pursuant to RCW 43.31.460 for the purpose of facilitating the creation by sponsoring organizations of individual development accounts for foster youth.

(2) The department shall select sponsoring organizations to establish and monitor individual development accounts for foster youth from those entities with whom the department of social and health services contracts for independent living services for youth who are or have been dependents of the department of social and health services.

(3) An individual development account may be established by or on behalf of a foster youth to enable the individual to accumulate funds for the following purposes:

(a) The acquisition of postsecondary education or job training;

(b) Housing needs, including rent, security deposit, and utilities costs;

(c) The purchase of a computer if necessary for postsecondary education or job training;

(d) The purchase of a car if necessary for employment; and

(e) Payment of health insurance premiums.

(4) A foster youth participating in the program must contribute to an individual development account. The contributions may be derived from earned income or other income, as provided by the department. Other income shall include financial incentives for educational achievement provided by entities contracted with the department of social and health services for independent living services for youth who are or have been dependents of the department of social and health services. [2005 c 402 s 5.]

RCW 43.31.470 SEED act—Individual development account program account. (1) An account is created in the custody of the state treasurer to be known as the individual development account program account. The account shall consist of all moneys appropriated to the account by the legislature and any other federal, state, or private funds, appropriated or nonappropriated, as the department receives for the purpose of matching low-income individuals' contributions to their individual development accounts. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the following:

(a) Grants to sponsoring organizations selected by the department to participate in the individual development account program to assist sponsoring organizations in providing or arranging for the provision of financial counseling and other related services to low-income individuals participating in the program and for program administration purposes;

(b) A match to be determined by the department of up to four dollars for every dollar deposited by an individual into the individual's individual development account, except that the maximum amount provided as a match for each individual development account shall be four thousand dollars; and

(c) The department's administrative expenses in carrying out the purposes of chapter 402, Laws of 2005.

(2) Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account.

(3) The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. [2005 c 402 s 6.]

RCW 43.31.475 SEED act—Additional funds and purposes.

Sponsoring organizations may seek additional funds to increase the match rate and the maximum annual match amount established pursuant to RCW 43.31.465. Such funds may also be used for purposes in addition to those provided in RCW 43.31.460(2). [2005 c 402 s 7.]

RCW 43.31.480 SEED act—Report to the legislature. The department shall annually report to the legislature and the governor on the individual development account program established pursuant to RCW 43.31.450 through 43.31.475. [2005 c 402 s 9.]

RCW 43.31.485 SEED act—Short title—2005 c 402. This act shall be known as the saving, earning, and enabling dreams (SEED) act. [2005 c 402 s 1.]

RCW 43.31.502 Child care facility revolving fund—Purpose—Source of funds. (1) A child care facility revolving fund is created. Money in the fund shall be used solely for the purpose of starting or improving a child care facility pursuant to RCW *43.31.085 and 43.31.502 through 43.31.514. Only moneys from private or federal sources may be deposited into this fund.

(2) Funds provided under this section shall not be subject to reappropriation. The child care facility fund committee may use loan and grant repayments and income for the revolving fund program.

(3) During the 2019-2021 fiscal biennium, the legislature may direct the state treasurer to make transfers of moneys in the child care facility revolving fund to the state general fund. [2020 c 357 s 914; 1991 c 248 s 1; 1989 c 430 s 3.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 43.31.085 was repealed by 1993 c 280 s 81, effective June 30, 1996.

Effective date—2020 c 357: See note following RCW 43.79.545.

Legislative findings—1989 c 430: "The legislature finds that increasing the availability and affordability of quality child care will enhance the stability of the family and facilitate expanded economic prosperity in the state. The legislature finds that balancing work and family life is a critical concern for employers and employees. The dramatic increase in participation of women in the workforce has resulted in a demand for affordable child care exceeding the supply. The future of the state's workforce depends in part upon the availability of quality affordable child care. There are not enough child care services and facilities to meet the needs of working parents, the costs of care are often beyond the resources of working parents, and facilities are not located conveniently to workplaces and neighborhoods. The prospect for labor shortages resulting from the aging of the population and the importance of the quality of the workforce to the competitiveness of Washington businesses make the

availability of quality child care an important concern for the state's businesses.

The legislature further finds that a partnership between business and child care providers can help the market for child care adjust to the needs of businesses and working families and improve productivity, reduce absenteeism, improve recruitment, and improve morale among Washington's labor force. The legislature further finds that private and public partnerships and investments are necessary to increase the supply, affordability, and quality of child care in the state." [1989 c 430 s 1.]

Severability—1989 c 430: "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." [1989 c 430 s 12.]

RCW 43.31.504 Child care facility fund committee—Generally.

The child care facility fund committee is established within the *business assistance center of the department of commerce. The committee shall administer the child care facility fund, with review by the director of commerce.

(1) The committee shall have five members. The director of commerce shall appoint the members, who shall include:

(a) Two persons experienced in investment finance and having skills in providing capital to new businesses, in starting and operating businesses, and providing professional services to small or expanding businesses;

(b) One person representing a philanthropic organization with experience in evaluating funding requests;

(c) One child care services expert; and

(d) One early childhood development expert.

In making these appointments, the director shall give careful consideration to ensure that the various geographic regions of the state are represented and that members will be available for meetings and are committed to working cooperatively to address child care needs in Washington state.

(2) The committee shall elect officers from among its membership and shall adopt policies and procedures specifying the lengths of terms, methods for filling vacancies, and other matters necessary to the ongoing functioning of the committee.

(3) Committee members shall serve without compensation, but may request reimbursement for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(4) Committee members shall not be liable to the state, to the child care facility fund, or to any other person as a result of their activities, whether ministerial or discretionary, as members except for willful dishonesty or intentional violation of the law. The department of commerce may purchase liability insurance for members and may indemnify these persons against the claims of others. [2023 c 470 s 2045; 1993 c 280 s 45; 1989 c 430 s 4.]

***Reviser's note:** The business assistance center and its powers and duties were terminated June 30, 1995. RCW 43.31.083, 43.31.085, 43.31.087, and 43.31.089 were repealed by 1993 c 280 s 81.

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Effective date—1993 c 280: See RCW 43.330.902.

Legislative findings—Severability—1989 c 430: See notes following RCW 43.31.502.

RCW 43.31.506 Child care facility fund committee—Authority to award moneys from fund. The child care facility fund committee is authorized to solicit applications for and award grants and loans from the child care facility fund to assist persons, businesses, or organizations to start a licensed child care facility, or to make capital improvements in an existing licensed child care facility. Grants and loans shall be awarded on a one-time only basis, and shall not be awarded to cover operating expenses beyond the first three months of business. No grant shall exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. No loan shall exceed one hundred thousand dollars. [1991 c 248 s 2; 1989 c 430 s 5.]

Legislative findings—Severability—1989 c 430: See notes following RCW 43.31.502.

RCW 43.31.508 Child care facility fund committee—Loans to child care facilities. The child care facility fund committee is authorized, upon application, to use the child care facility fund to guarantee loans made to persons, businesses, or organizations to start a licensed child care facility, or to make capital improvements in an existing licensed child care facility.

(1) Loan guarantees shall be awarded on a one-time only basis, and shall not be awarded for loans to cover operating expenses beyond the first three months of business.

(2) The total aggregate amount of the loan guarantee awarded to any applicant may not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars and may not exceed eighty percent of the loan.

(3) The total aggregate amount of guarantee from the child care facility fund, with respect to the guaranteed portions of loans, may not exceed at any time an amount equal to five times the balance in the child care facility fund. [1989 c 430 s 6.]

Legislative findings—Severability—1989 c 430: See notes following RCW 43.31.502.

RCW 43.31.512 Child care facility fund committee—Loans or grants to individuals, businesses, or organizations. The child care facility fund committee shall award loan guarantees, loans or grants to those persons, businesses, or organizations meeting the minimum standards set forth in this chapter who will best serve the intent of the chapter to increase the availability of high quality, affordable child care in Washington state. The committee shall promulgate rules regarding the application for and disbursement of loan guarantees, loans, or grants from the fund, including loan terms and repayment

procedures. At a minimum, such rules shall require an applicant to submit a plan which includes a detailed description of:

(1) The need for a new or improved child care facility in the area served by the applicant;

(2) The steps the applicant will take to serve a reasonable number of children with disabilities, sick children, infants, children requiring nighttime or weekend care, or children whose costs of care are subsidized by government;

(3) Why financial assistance from the state is needed to start or improve the child care facility;

(4) How the guaranteed loan, loan, or grant will be used, and how such uses will meet the described need;

(5) The child care services to be available at the facility and the capacity of the applicant to provide those services; and

(6) The financial status of the applicant, including other resources available to the applicant which will ensure the continued viability of the facility and the availability of its described services.

Recipients shall annually for two years following the receipt of the loan guarantee, loan, or grant, submit to the child care facility fund committee a report on the facility and how it is meeting the child care needs for which it was intended. [2020 c 274 s 23; 1989 c 430 s 7.]

Legislative findings—Severability—1989 c 430: See notes following RCW 43.31.502.

RCW 43.31.514 Child care facility fund committee—Grants, repayment requirements. Where the child care facility fund committee makes a grant to a person, organization, or business, the grant shall be repaid to the child care facility fund if the child care facility using the grant to start or expand ceases to provide child care earlier than the following time periods from the date the grant is made: (1) Twelve months for a grant up to five thousand dollars; (2) twenty-four months for a grant over five thousand dollars up to ten thousand dollars; (3) thirty-six months for a grant over ten thousand dollars up to fifteen thousand dollars; (4) forty-eight months for a grant over fifteen thousand dollars up to twenty thousand dollars; and (5) sixty months for a grant over twenty thousand dollars up to twenty-five thousand dollars. [1989 c 430 s 8.]

Legislative findings—Severability—1989 c 430: See notes following RCW 43.31.502.

RCW 43.31.545 Recycled materials and products—Market development. The department is the lead state agency to assist in establishing and improving markets for recyclable materials generated in the state. [1991 c 319 s 210; 1989 c 431 s 64.]

RCW 43.31.565 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 43.31.569 through 43.31.583:

- (1) "Department" means the department of commerce.
- (2) "Director" means the director of commerce.
- (3) "Early learning facility" means a facility providing regularly scheduled care for a group of children one month of age through 12 years of age for periods of less than 24 hours.
- (4) "Tribal compact school" means a state-tribal education compact school subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW. [2025 c 21 s 1; 2021 c 130 s 4; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 3.]

Findings—Intent—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: "The legislature finds that there is a significant and critical need for additional early learning facilities to meet the state's commitment to providing high quality early learning opportunities to low-income children, including the legal mandate to provide preschool opportunities through the early childhood education and assistance program to all eligible children by 2023.

The legislature further finds that private and public partnerships and investments are critical to meeting the need for increased classrooms necessary to deliver high quality early learning opportunities to low-income children across Washington.

The legislature intends to provide state financial assistance to leverage local and private resources to enable early childhood education and assistance program contractors and child care providers to expand, remodel, purchase, or construct early learning facilities and classrooms necessary to support state-funded early learning opportunities for low-income children." [2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 1.]

Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [July 6, 2017]." [2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 15.]

RCW 43.31.569 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Early learning facilities revolving account—Early learning facilities development account. (1)(a) The early learning facilities revolving account is created in the state treasury.

(b) Revenues to the early learning facilities revolving account shall consist of appropriations by the legislature, early learning facilities grant and loan repayments, taxable bond proceeds, and all other sources deposited in the account.

(c) Expenditures from the account shall be used, in combination with other private and public funding, for: (i) State matching funds for the planning, renovation, purchase, and construction of early learning facilities as established in RCW 43.31.573 through 43.31.583 and 43.84.092; and (ii) emergency grants for eligible organizations.

(d) Expenditures from the account are subject to appropriation and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW.

(e) The early learning facilities revolving account shall be known as the Ruth LeCocq Kagi early learning facilities revolving account.

(2)(a) The early learning facilities development account is created in the state treasury.

(b) Revenues to the early learning facilities development account shall consist of tax exempt bond proceeds.

(c) Expenditures from the account shall be used for the planning, renovation, purchase, and construction of early learning facilities as established in RCW 43.31.573 through 43.31.583 and 43.84.092.

(d) Expenditures from the account are subject to appropriation and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW.

(e) The early learning facilities development account shall be known as the Ruth LeCocq Kagi early learning facilities development account. [2025 c 21 s 2; 2021 c 130 s 3; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 4.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.571 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Oversight, in consultation with the department of children, youth, and families—Head state agency—Use of funds. (1) The department, in consultation with the department of children, youth, and families, shall oversee the early learning facilities revolving account and the early learning facilities development account, and is the lead state agency for the early learning facilities grant and loan program.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature that state funds invested in the accounts be matched by private or local government funding whenever feasible. Every effort may be made to maximize funding available for early learning facilities from public schools, community colleges, educational service districts, local governments, and private funders.

(3) Amounts used for program administration by the department may not exceed an average of four percent of the appropriated funds.

(4) The department is encouraged to leverage private and public match funds when feasible and may not require match funds for applicants experiencing financial hardship. The department may not consider the level of project match funds as a competitive criterion when selecting or recommending projects for funding. Private or public match funds may consist of cash, equipment, land, buildings, or like-kind. [2025 c 21 s 3; 2018 c 58 s 5; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 5.]

Effective date—2018 c 58: See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.573 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—State matching funds for grants or loans—Emergency grants—Participation by nongovernmental private-public partnerships—Monitoring performance. (1) The department must expend moneys from the early learning facilities revolving account: (a) To provide state matching funds for early learning facilities grants or loans to provide classrooms necessary for children to participate in the early childhood education and assistance program and working connections child care; and (b) for emergency grants for eligible organizations as identified in this chapter.

(2) The department must expend moneys from the early learning facilities development account for early learning facilities grants to provide classrooms necessary for children to participate in the early

childhood education and assistance program and working connections child care.

(3) Funds expended from the accounts as specified in subsections (1) and (2) of this section may fund projects only for:

- (a) Eligible organizations identified in RCW 43.31.575;
- (b) School districts; and
- (c) Tribal compact schools.

(4) The department shall:

(a) In consultation with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, implement and administer the early learning facilities grant and loan program for school districts and tribal compact schools as described in RCW 43.31.579(3) and 43.31.581(1); and

(b) Contract with one or more nongovernmental private-public partnerships that are certified by the community development financial institutions fund to: (i) Implement and administer grants and loans funded through the early learning facilities revolving account or for a grant funded through the early learning facilities development account, for eligible organizations; and (ii) subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, award and administer emergency project grants on an ongoing basis to eligible organizations.

(A) Emergency projects are projects that are made necessary by a natural disaster or another immediate health or safety threat resulting from unforeseen circumstances. Emergency projects may include the construction, repair, reconstruction, replacement, rehabilitation, or other improvements to early learning facilities that are necessary to restore a safe and healthy early learning environment, preserve existing capacity, or to mitigate situations that obstruct children's access to early learning.

(B) The grant administrator must adopt policies and procedures to ensure that funding from emergency grants does not duplicate payments resulting from insurance proceeds or other payment from any other source. The grant administrator may receive administrative costs associated with conducting application processes, managing contracts, and providing technical assistance for emergency project grants.

(5) Any nongovernmental private-public partnership that is certified by the community development financial institutions fund that is seeking early learning fund resources must demonstrate an ability to raise funding from private and other public entities for early learning facilities construction projects.

(6) The department may allow the application of an eligible organization for a grant or loan from the early learning facilities revolving account or for a grant from the early learning facilities development account created in RCW 43.31.569 to be considered without the involvement of the nongovernmental private-public partnership that is certified by the community development financial institutions fund if a nongovernmental private-public partnership certified by the community development financial institutions fund is not reasonably available to the location of the proposed facility or if the eligible organization has sufficient ability and capacity to proceed with a project absent the involvement of a nongovernmental private-public partnership that is certified by the community development financial institutions fund.

(7) The department shall monitor performance of the early learning facilities grant and loan program. Any nongovernmental private-public partnership that is certified by the community development financial institutions fund receiving state funds for

purposes of this section and RCW 43.31.577 and 43.31.579, shall provide reports by July 1st of each year, to the department. The reports must include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) A list of projects funded through the early learning facilities grant and loan program for eligible organizations to include:

- (i) Name;
- (ii) Location;
- (iii) Grant or loan amount;
- (iv) Private match amount;
- (v) Public match amount;
- (vi) Number of early learners served; and
- (vii) Other elements as required by the department;

(b) A demonstration of sufficient investment of private match funds; and

(c) A description of how the projects met the criteria described in RCW 43.31.581. [2025 c 21 s 4; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 6.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.574 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Collocation with affordable or supportive housing—State funding. For early learning facilities collocated with affordable or supportive housing developments, the department may remit state funding on a reimbursement basis for 90 percent of eligible project costs, regardless of the project's match amount, once the nonstate share of project costs have been either expended or firmly committed in an amount sufficient to complete the entire project or a distinct phase of the project that is useable to the public as an early learning facility. During the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium, the department may remit state funding on a reimbursement basis for 100 percent of eligible project costs. Eligible housing developments are projects that have received public funding and have secured enough funding to complete construction of the project that will result in a certificate of occupancy to open the affordable housing development, including the early learning facility. [2025 c 414 s 8045; 2024 c 230 s 2.]

Effective date—2025 c 414: See note following RCW 79A.25.210.

RCW 43.31.575 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Eligible organizations—Requirements. (1) Organizations eligible to receive funding from the early learning facilities grant and loan program include:

- (a) Early childhood education and assistance program providers;
- (b) Working connections child care providers who are eligible to receive state subsidies;
- (c) Licensed early learning centers not currently participating in the early childhood education and assistance program, but intending to do so;
- (d) Developers of housing and community facilities;
- (e) Community and technical colleges;
- (f) Educational service districts;
- (g) Local governments;

(h) Federally recognized tribes in the state; and

(i) Religiously affiliated entities.

(2) To be eligible to receive funding from the early learning facilities grant and loan program for activities described in RCW 43.31.577 (1) (b), (c), and (d) and (2), eligible organizations, school districts, and tribal compact schools must:

(a) Commit to being an active participant in good standing with the early achievers program as defined by chapter 43.216 RCW; and

(b) Demonstrate that projects receiving construction, purchase, or renovation grants or loans must also:

(i) Demonstrate that the project site is under the applicant's control for a minimum of 10 years, either through ownership or a long-term lease; and

(ii) Commit to using the facility funded by the grant or loan for the purposes of providing preschool or child care for a minimum of 10 years.

(3) To be eligible to receive funding from the early learning facilities grant and loan program for activities described in RCW 43.31.577 (1) (b), (c), and (d) and (2), religiously affiliated entities must use the facility to provide child care and education services consistent with subsection (4)(a) of this section.

(4)(a) Upon receiving a grant or loan, the recipient must continue to be an active participant and in good standing with the early achievers program.

(b) If the recipient does not meet the conditions specified in (a) of this subsection, the grants shall be repaid to the early learning facilities revolving account or the early learning facilities development account, as directed by the department. So long as an eligible organization continues to provide an early learning program in the facility, the facility is used as authorized, and the eligible organization continues to be an active participant and in good standing with the early achievers program, the grant repayment is waived. [2025 c 21 s 5; 2024 c 230 s 3; 2021 c 130 s 2; 2018 c 58 s 18; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 7.]

Effective date—2018 c 58: See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.577 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Eligible activities. (1) Activities eligible for funding through the early learning facilities grant and loan program for eligible organizations include:

(a) Facility predesign grants or loans to allow eligible organizations to secure professional services or consult with organizations certified by the community development financial institutions fund to plan for and assess the feasibility of early learning facilities projects or receive other technical assistance to design and develop projects for construction funding;

(b) Grants or loans for predevelopment activities to advance a proposal from planning to major construction or renovation;

(c) Grants or loans for renovations or repairs of existing early learning facilities;

(d) Major construction and renovation grants or loans and grants or loans for facility purchases to create or expand early learning facilities, including those that increase early childhood education and assistance program capacity by supporting conversion of slots from part day to full day or extended day, or conversion of full day to extended day, as defined in RCW 43.216.010;

(e) Emergency project grants as provided in RCW 43.31.573; and

(f) Administration costs associated with conducting application processes, managing contracts, translation services, and providing technical assistance.

(2) For grants or loans awarded under subsection (1)(c) and (d) of this section, the department must prioritize applications for facilities that are ready for construction.

(3) Activities eligible for funding through the early learning facilities grant and loan program for school districts and tribal compact schools include major construction, purchase, and renovation grants or loans to create or expand early learning facilities that received priority and ranking as described in RCW 43.31.581. [2025 c 21 s 6; 2024 c 230 s 1; 2023 c 474 s 8031; 2021 c 130 s 1; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 8.]

Effective date—2024 c 230 s 1: "Section 1 of this act takes effect July 1, 2025." [2024 c 230 s 5.]

Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2023 c 474: See notes following RCW 28A.320.330.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.579 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Private or local government matching funding—Ranked and prioritized list of projects. (1) It is the intent of the legislature that state funds invested in the early learning facilities grant and loan program be matched by private or local government funding whenever feasible. Every effort may be made to maximize funding available for early learning facilities from public schools, community colleges, educational service districts, local governments, and private funders.

(2) In the administration of the early learning facilities grant and loan program for eligible organizations, any nongovernmental private-public partnership that is certified by the community development financial institutions fund contracted with the department shall award grants or loans as described in RCW 43.31.577 and 43.31.573, that meet the criteria described in RCW 43.31.581 or 43.31.573, through an application process or in compliance with state and federal requirements of the funding source.

(3) In the administration of the early learning facilities grant and loan program for school districts and tribal compact schools, the department, in coordination with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall submit a ranked and prioritized list of proposed purchases and major construction or renovation of early learning facilities projects for school districts and tribal compact schools subject to the prioritization methodology described in RCW 43.31.581 to the office of financial management and the relevant

legislative committees by September 15th of even-numbered years.
[2025 c 21 s 7; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 9.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.581 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Committee of facilities experts—Advice regarding prioritization methodology—Liability insurance. (1) The department shall convene a committee of early learning facilities experts to advise the department regarding the prioritization methodology of applications for projects described in RCW 43.31.577 including no less than one representative each from the department of children, youth, and families, the Washington state housing finance commission, an organization certified by the community development financial institutions fund, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

(2) When developing a prioritization methodology under this section, the committee shall consider, but is not limited to:

(a) Projects that add early childhood education and assistance program slots in areas with the highest unmet need or increase capacity by supporting conversion of slots from part day to full day or extended day, or conversion of full day to extended day, as defined in RCW 43.216.010;

(b) Projects benefiting low-income children;

(c) Projects located in low-income neighborhoods;

(d) Projects that provide more access to the early childhood education and assistance program as a ratio of the children eligible to participate in the program;

(e) Projects that are geographically disbursed relative to statewide need;

(f) Projects that include new or renovated kitchen facilities equipped to support the use of from scratch, modified scratch, or other cooking methods that enhance overall student nutrition; and

(g) Projects that balance mixed-use development and rural locations.

(3) Committee members shall serve without compensation, but may request reimbursement for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(4) Committee members are not liable to the state, the early learning facilities revolving account, the early learning facilities development account, or to any other person, as a result of their activities, whether ministerial or discretionary, as members except for willful dishonesty or intentional violation of the law.

(5) The department may purchase liability insurance for members and may indemnify these persons against the claims of others. [2025 c 21 s 8; 2018 c 58 s 17; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 10.]

Effective date—2018 c 58: See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.583 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Report. When funding is provided in the previous biennium, the department, in collaboration with the department of children, youth, and families, shall submit a report no later than December 1st of even-numbered years, to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature that provides an update on the status of the early learning facilities grant and loan program that includes, but is not limited to:

(1) The total amount of funds, by grant and loan, spent or contracted to be spent; and

(2) A list of projects awarded funding including, but not limited to, information about whether the project is a renovation or new construction or some other category, where the project is located, and the number of slots the project supports. [2018 c 58 s 16; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 12 s 11.]

Effective date—2018 c 58: See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 12: See notes following RCW 43.31.565.

RCW 43.31.585 Early learning facilities grant and loan program—Rule making. The department may adopt rules to implement RCW 43.31.565 through 43.31.583. [2025 c 21 s 9.]

RCW 43.31.605 Landlord mitigation program—Department to administer and have rule-making authority—Claims—Eligibility for reimbursement—Review—Damages—Inspection—Landlords prohibited from certain acts—Denial of reimbursement—Department to establish website—Liability—Report, recommendations. (1) Subject to the availability of funds for this purpose, the landlord mitigation program is created and administered by the department. The department shall have such rule-making authority as the department deems necessary to administer the program.

The following types of claims related to landlord mitigation are eligible for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program account:

(a) Claims relating to renting private market rental units to low-income tenants using a housing subsidy program for:

(i) Up to one thousand dollars for improvements identified in RCW 59.18.255(1)(a). In order to be eligible for reimbursement under this subsection (1)(a)(i), the landlord must pay for the first five hundred dollars for improvements, and rent to the tenant whose housing subsidy program was conditioned on the real property passing inspection. Reimbursement under this subsection (1)(a)(i) may also include up to fourteen days of lost rental income from the date of offer of housing to the applicant whose housing subsidy program was conditioned on the real property passing inspection until move in by that applicant;

(ii) Reimbursement for damages as reflected in a judgment obtained against the tenant through either an unlawful detainer proceeding, or through a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction after a hearing;

(iii) Reimbursement for damages established pursuant to subsection (2) of this section; and

(iv) Reimbursement for unpaid rent and unpaid utilities, provided that the landlord can evidence it to the department's satisfaction.

(b) Claims related to landlord mitigation for an unpaid judgment for rent, unpaid judgments resulting from the tenant's failure to comply with an installment payment agreement identified in RCW 59.18.610, late fees, attorneys' fees, and costs after a court order pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3), including any unpaid portion of the judgment after the tenant defaults on the payment plan pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3)(c), are eligible for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program account and are exempt from any postjudgment interest required under RCW 4.56.110. Any claim for reimbursement made pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3)(e)(ii) must be accompanied by a court order staying the writ of restitution pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3). Any claim for reimbursement under this subsection (1)(b) is not an entitlement.

(i) The department shall provide for a form on its website for tenants and landlords to apply for reimbursement funds for the landlord pursuant to this subsection (1)(b).

(ii) The form must include: (A) Space for the landlord and tenant to provide names, mailing addresses, phone numbers, date of birth for the tenant, and any other identifying information necessary for the department to process payment; (B) the landlord's statewide vendor identification number and how to obtain one; (C) name and address to whom payment must be made; (D) the amount of the judgment with instructions to include any other supporting documentation the department may need to process payment; (E) instructions for how the tenant is to reimburse the department under (b)(iii) of this subsection; (F) a description of the consequences if the tenant does not reimburse the department as provided in this subsection (1)(b); (G) a signature line for the landlord and tenant to confirm that they have read and understood the contents of the form and program; and (H) any other information necessary for the operation of the program. If the tenant has not signed the form after the landlord has made good faith efforts to obtain the tenant's signature, the landlord may solely submit the form but must attest to the amount of money owed and sign the form under penalty of perjury.

(iii) When a landlord has been reimbursed pursuant to this subsection (1)(b), the tenant for whom payment was made shall reimburse the department by depositing the amount disbursed from the landlord mitigation program account into the court registry of the superior court in which the judgment was entered. The tenant or other interested party may seek an ex parte order of the court under the unlawful detainer action to order such funds to be disbursed by the court. Upon entry of the order, the court clerk shall disburse the funds and include a case number with any payment issued to the department. If directed by the court, a clerk shall issue any payments made by a tenant to the department without further court order.

(iv) The department may deny an application made by a tenant who has failed to reimburse the department for prior payments issued pursuant to this subsection (1)(b).

(v) With any disbursement from the account to the landlord, the department shall notify the tenant at the address provided within the application that a disbursement has been made to the landlord on the tenant's behalf and that failure to reimburse the account for the payment through the court registry may result in a denial of a future application to the account pursuant to this subsection (1)(b). The

department may include any other additional information about how to reimburse the account it deems necessary to fully inform the tenant.

(vi) The department's duties with respect to obtaining reimbursement from the tenant to the account are limited to those specified within this subsection (1)(b).

(vii) If at any time funds do not exist in the landlord mitigation program account to reimburse claims submitted under this subsection (1)(b), the department must create and maintain a waitlist and distribute funds in the order the claims are received pursuant to subsection (6) of this section. Payment of any claims on the waitlist shall be made only from the landlord mitigation program account. The department shall not be civilly or criminally liable and may not have any penalty or cause of action of any nature arise against it regarding the provision or lack of provision of funds for reimbursement.

(c)(i) Claims related to unpaid rent for:

(A) Up to \$15,000 in unpaid rent that accrued between March 1, 2020, and six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium and the tenant being low-income, limited resourced or experiencing hardship, voluntarily vacated or abandoned the tenancy; or

(B) Up to \$15,000 in remaining unpaid rent if a tenant defaults on a repayment plan entered into under RCW 59.18.630 are eligible for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program account subject to the program requirements under this section, provided the tenancy has not been terminated at the time of reimbursement.

(ii) A landlord is ineligible for reimbursement under this subsection (1)(c) where the tenant vacated the tenancy because of an unlawful detainer action under RCW 59.12.030(3).

(iii) A landlord in receipt of reimbursement from the program pursuant to this subsection (1)(c) is prohibited from:

(A) Taking legal action against the tenant for damages or any remaining unpaid rent accrued between March 1, 2020, and six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium attributable to the same tenancy; or

(B) Pursuing collection, or authorizing another entity to pursue collection on the landlord's behalf, of a judgment against the tenant for damages or any remaining unpaid rent accrued between March 1, 2020, and six months following the expiration of the eviction moratorium attributable to the same tenancy.

(d)(i) Claims, up to \$5,000, related to landlord mitigation for damages to rental property when:

(A) A tenant has terminated a rental agreement pursuant to RCW 59.18.575;

(B) The property has sustained damage beyond wear resulting from ordinary use of the premises;

(C) The landlord has, within the time limits specified in RCW 59.18.280, provided the tenant with a full and specific statement;

(D) The landlord has, rather than retaining any of the damage deposit, returned the full damage deposit to the tenant; and

(E) The landlord has agreed not to proceed against the tenant to recover the balance owed.

(ii) Any claim for reimbursement under this subsection (1)(d) is not an entitlement.

(iii) If at any time funds do not exist in the landlord mitigation program account to reimburse claims submitted under this subsection (1)(d), the department must create and maintain a waitlist

and distribute funds in the order the claims are received pursuant to subsection (6) of this section. Payment of any claims on the waitlist shall be made only from the landlord mitigation program account. The department is not civilly or criminally liable and may not have any penalty or cause of action of any nature arise against it regarding the provision or lack of provision of funds for reimbursement.

(iv) The department shall provide for a form on its website for landlords to apply for reimbursement funds for the landlord pursuant to this subsection (1)(d).

(v) The department shall provide for the confidentiality of tenants' personal information and shall have such rule-making authority as is necessary to protect the personal information of tenants under this subsection (1)(d).

(2) In order for a claim under subsection (1)(a)(iii) or (d) of this section to be eligible for reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program account, a landlord must:

(a) Have ensured that the rental property was inspected at the commencement of the tenancy by both the tenant and the landlord or landlord's agent and that a detailed written move-in property inspection report, as required in RCW 59.18.260, was prepared and signed by both the tenant and the landlord or landlord's agent;

(b) Make repairs and then apply for reimbursement to the department;

(c) Submit a claim on a form to be determined by the department, signed under penalty of perjury; and

(d) Submit to the department copies of the move-in property inspection report specified in (a) of this subsection and supporting materials including, but not limited to, before repair and after repair photographs, videos, copies of repair receipts for labor and materials, and such other documentation or information as the department may request.

(3)(a) The department shall make reasonable efforts to review a claim within ten business days from the date it received properly submitted and complete claims to the satisfaction of the department.

(b) In reviewing a claim pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section, and determining eligibility for reimbursement, the department must receive documentation, acceptable to the department in its sole discretion, that the claim involves a private market rental unit rented to a low-income tenant who is using a housing subsidy program.

(c) In reviewing a claim pursuant to subsection (1)(d)(i) of this section, and determining eligibility for reimbursement, the department must receive documentation, acceptable to the department in its sole discretion, that the claim involves a tenancy that was terminated pursuant to RCW 59.18.575 and that all of the requirements of subsection (1)(d)(i) of this section have been met.

(4) Claims pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section related to a tenancy must total at least five hundred dollars in order for a claim to be eligible for reimbursement from the program. While claims or damages may exceed five thousand dollars, total reimbursement from the program may not exceed five thousand dollars per tenancy. For the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, while claims or damages may exceed \$10,000, total reimbursement from the program may not exceed \$10,000 per tenancy.

(5) Damages, beyond wear and tear, that are eligible for reimbursement include, but are not limited to: Interior wall gouges and holes; damage to doors and cabinets, including hardware; carpet stains or burns; cracked tiles or hard surfaces; broken windows;

damage to household fixtures such as disposal, toilet, sink, sink handle, ceiling fan, and lighting. Other property damages beyond normal wear and tear may also be eligible for reimbursement at the department's discretion.

(6) All reimbursements for eligible claims shall be made on a first-come, first-served basis, to the extent of available funds. The department shall use best efforts to notify the tenant of the amount and the reasons for any reimbursements made.

(7) The department, in its sole discretion, may inspect the property and the landlord's records related to a claim, including the use of a third-party inspector as needed to investigate fraud, to assist in making its claim review and determination of eligibility.

(8) A landlord in receipt of reimbursement from the program pursuant to subsection (1)(a) or (d) of this section is prohibited from:

(a) Taking legal action against the tenant for damages attributable to the same tenancy; or

(b) Pursuing collection, or authorizing another entity to pursue collection on the landlord's behalf, of a judgment against the tenant for damages attributable to the same tenancy.

(9) A landlord denied reimbursement under subsection (1)(a)(iii) of this section may seek to obtain a judgment from a court of competent jurisdiction and, if successful, may resubmit a claim for damages supported by the judgment, along with a certified copy of the judgment. The department may reimburse the landlord for that portion of such judgment that is based on damages reimbursable under the landlord mitigation program, subject to the limitations set forth in this section.

(10) Determinations regarding reimbursements shall be made by the department in its sole discretion.

(11) The department must establish a website that advertises the landlord mitigation program, the availability of reimbursement from the landlord mitigation program account, and maintains or links to the agency rules and policies established pursuant to this section.

(12) Neither the state, the department, or persons acting on behalf of the department, while acting within the scope of their employment or agency, is liable to any person for any loss, damage, harm, or other consequence resulting directly or indirectly from the department's administration of the landlord mitigation program or determinations under this section.

(13)(a) A report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the effectiveness of the program and recommended modifications shall be submitted to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by January 1, 2021. In preparing the report, the department shall convene and solicit input from a group of stakeholders to include representatives of large multifamily housing property owners or managers, small rental housing owners in both rural and urban markets, a representative of tenant advocates, and a representative of the housing authorities.

(b) The report shall include discussion of the effectiveness of the program as well as the department's recommendations to improve the program, and shall include the following:

(i) The number of total claims and total amount reimbursed to landlords by the fund;

(ii) Any indices of fraud identified by the department;

(iii) Any reports by the department regarding inspections authorized by and conducted on behalf of the department;

(iv) An outline of the process to obtain reimbursement for improvements and for damages from the fund;

(v) An outline of the process to obtain reimbursement for lost rent due to the rental inspection and tenant screening process, together with the total amount reimbursed for such damages;

(vi) An evaluation of the feasibility for expanding the use of the mitigation fund to provide up to ninety-day no interest loans to landlords who have not received timely rental payments from a housing authority that is administering section 8 rental assistance; and

(vii) Any other modifications and recommendations made by stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and applicability of the program.

(14) As used in this section:

(a) "Housing subsidy program" means a housing voucher as established under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1437 as of January 1, 2018, or other housing subsidy program including, but not limited to, valid short-term or long-term federal, state, or local government, private nonprofit, or other assistance program in which the tenant's rent is paid either partially by the program and partially by the tenant, or completely by the program directly to the landlord;

(b) "Low-income" means income that does not exceed eighty percent of the median income for the standard metropolitan statistical area in which the rental unit is located; and

(c) "Private market rental unit" means any unit available for rent that is owned by an individual, corporation, limited liability company, nonprofit housing provider, or other entity structure, but does not include housing acquired, or constructed by a public housing agency under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1437 as it existed on January 1, 2018. This definition only applies to claims for mitigation under subsection (1)(a) of this section and does not exclude public housing agencies from making claims under subsection (1)(b), (c), or (d) of this section. [2022 c 297 s 952; 2022 c 196 s 2; 2021 c 115 s 5. Prior: 2020 c 315 s 8; 2020 c 169 s 2; 2019 c 356 s 12; 2018 c 66 s 2.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2022 c 196 s 2 and by 2022 c 297 s 952, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Effective date—2022 c 297: See note following RCW 43.79.565.

Finding—Intent—2022 c 196: "The legislature finds that domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, and stalking are acts of violence that have devastating effects upon individual victims, their children, their communities, and the state as a whole. These acts of violence threaten the housing stability of many residents of this state. Victims of these violent acts may be forced to remain in unsafe and abusive situations because they do not have the financial wherewithal to obtain alternate housing. It is the long-standing practice of the state to provide rental assistance to its residents in a variety of urgent situations. By this act, the legislature intends to increase safety for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, and stalking by removing some of the financial barriers to safely obtaining alternate housing and thereby contribute to the general welfare of the state." [2022 c 196 s 1.]

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Effective date—2020 c 315 ss 5-8: See note following RCW 59.18.410.

Findings—Intent—2020 c 315: See note following RCW 59.18.057.

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 43.31.615 Landlord mitigation program account. (1) The landlord mitigation program account is created in the custody of the state treasury. All transfers and appropriations by the legislature, repayments, private contributions, and all other sources must be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the account may only be used for the landlord mitigation program under this chapter to reimburse landlords for eligible claims related to private market rental units during the time of their rental to low-income tenants using housing subsidy programs as defined in RCW 43.31.605, for any unpaid judgment issued within an unlawful detainer action after a court order pursuant to RCW 59.18.410(3) as described in RCW 43.31.605(1)(b), for any unpaid rent as described in RCW 43.31.605(1)(c), for any damages to rental property as described in RCW 43.31.605(1)(d), and for the administrative costs identified in subsection (2) of this section. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) Administrative costs associated with application, distribution, and other program activities of the department may not exceed twenty percent of the annual funds available for the landlord mitigation program. Reappropriations must not be included in the calculation of the annual funds available for determining the administrative costs.

(3) Funds deposited into the landlord mitigation program account shall be prioritized by the department for allowable costs under RCW 43.31.605(1) (a) and (d), and may only be used for other allowable costs when funding available in the account exceeds the amount needed to pay claims under RCW 43.31.605(1) (a) and (d). [2022 c 196 s 6; 2021 c 115 s 6; 2019 c 356 s 13; 2018 c 66 s 3.]

Finding—Intent—2022 c 196: See note following RCW 43.31.605.

Finding—Intent—Application—Effective date—2021 c 115: See notes following RCW 59.18.620.

Intent—2019 c 356: See note following RCW 59.12.030.

RCW 43.31.625 Industrial waste coordination program. (1) An industrial waste coordination program is established in order to provide expertise, technical assistance, and best practices to support local industrial symbiosis projects.

(2) The industrial waste coordination program must be administered by the department of commerce and administered

regionally, with each region provided with a dedicated facilitator and technical and administrative support.

(3) The industrial waste coordination program must facilitate waste exchange by:

(a) Developing inventories of industrial waste innovation currently in operation;

(b) Generating a material flow data collection system in order to capture and manage data on resource availability and potential synergies;

(c) Establishing guidance and best practices for emerging local industrial resource hubs, which must include a consideration of steps to avoid creating or worsening negative impacts to overburdened communities as identified by tools such as the department of health's environmental health disparities map;

(d) Identifying access to capital in order to fund projects, including federal, state, local, and private funding;

(e) Developing economic, environmental, and health disparities metrics to measure the results of industrial or commercial hubs;

(f) Hosting workshops and connecting regional businesses, governments, utilities, research institutions, and other organizations in order to identify opportunities for resource collaboration;

(g) Assisting entities throughout the entire life cycle of industrial symbiosis projects, from identification of opportunities to full project implementation;

(h) Developing economic cluster initiatives in order to spur growth and innovation; and

(i) Making any additional recommendations to the legislature in order to incentivize and facilitate industrial symbiosis.

(4) The department of commerce may coordinate with other agencies, representatives of business and manufacturing networks, and other entities in order to develop material flow generation data and increase multisectoral outreach.

(5) In generating the material flow data collection system under subsections (3)(b) and (4) of this section, the department of commerce may only use publicly available data or data voluntarily provided by program participants. No entity may be required to disclose material flow data. The department of commerce must keep any proprietary business information confidential and such information is exempt from public disclosure, as provided in RCW 42.56.270. [2021 c 308 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—2021 c 308: "The legislature finds that industrial symbiosis networks create valuable collaborative opportunities where the underutilized resources of one company, such as waste, by-products, residues, energy, water, logistics, capacity, expertise, equipment, and materials may be used by another. The legislature further finds that many existing businesses and organizations in the state have the potential to partner in the establishment of these networks, and the formation of industrial symbiosis innovation hubs at the state and local level would facilitate a systems approach that identifies business opportunities to improve resource utilization and productivity for a more sustainable and integrated industrial economy.

Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a statewide industrial waste coordination program in order to nurture and coordinate existing industrial symbiosis efforts and to catalyze new industrial symbiosis opportunities. Furthermore, the legislature

intends to establish the program in order to: Find ways of turning waste and by-products into valued resource inputs; reduce waste management costs; generate new business opportunities; increase the size and diversity of business networks; identify means of improving environmental performance; achieve environmental justice in goals and policies; incentivize pathways to family-wage, green jobs; expand the regional circular economy; and drive innovation." [2021 c 308 s 1.]

RCW 43.31.635 Industrial symbiosis grant program. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, a competitive industrial symbiosis grant program is established in order to provide grants for the research, development, and deployment of local waste coordination projects.

(2) Grants may go towards:

(a) Existing industrial symbiosis efforts by public or private sector organizations;

(b) Emerging industrial symbiosis opportunities involving public or private sector organizations, including projects arising from:

(i) The industrial waste coordination program established in RCW 43.31.625;

(ii) Conceptual work completed by public utilities to redirect their wastes to productive use; or

(iii) Existing inventories or project concepts involving specific biobased wastes converted to renewable natural gas;

(c) Research on product development using a specific waste flow;

(d) Feasibility studies to evaluate potential biobased resources;

(e) Feasibility studies for publicly owned utilities to evaluate business models to transform to multiutility operations or for the evaluation of potential symbiosis connections with other regional businesses; or

(f) Other local waste coordination projects as determined by the department of commerce.

(3) The department of commerce must develop a method and criteria for the allocation of grants, subject to the following:

(a) Project allocation should reflect geographic diversity, with grants being distributed equally in western and eastern parts of the state, urban and rural areas, and small towns and large cities;

(b) Project allocation should consider factors such as time to implementation and scale of economic or environmental benefits;

(c) Grants must require a one-to-one nonstate to state match;

(d) Individual grant awards may not exceed \$500,000; and

(e) Project allocation should avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities and should make use of tools such as the department of health's environmental health disparities map. [2021 c 308 s 3.]

Findings—Intent—2021 c 308: See note following RCW 43.31.625.

RCW 43.31.645 Sustainable aviation fuel account. (Effective January 1, 2026.) The sustainable aviation fuel account is created in the state treasury. The account shall consist of concession fees collected and deposited into the account pursuant to RCW 19.430.020. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Moneys in the account may be expended by the department for activities

supporting research development, environmental review, and infrastructure to support the production of sustainable aviation fuel. [2025 c 406 s 4.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2025 c 406: See notes following RCW 19.430.010.

RCW 43.31.801 2023 wildfires—Disaster relief payment program.

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of commerce shall establish and administer a disaster relief payment program to provide assistance to qualifying property owners and local governments that had buildings destroyed or damaged in a wildfire occurring between August 1 and October 1, 2023. The department shall develop a system for the submission and evaluation of disaster relief payment applications in consultation with the emergency management division of the state military department and tribal and local government emergency management authorities. The system developed by the department must ensure that the disaster relief payments are only used for the purposes specified in this section.

(2) Disaster relief payments may only be awarded to property owners who had buildings damaged or destroyed during a wildfire and that meet the following criteria:

(a) The area in which the building was damaged or destroyed was under a state of emergency declared by the governor or a local government due to wildfires occurring in a county located to the east of the crest of the Cascade mountains with a population of at least 500,000;

(b) The building that was damaged or destroyed was a residential home, including manufactured homes, a multifamily building, a commercial building, or a public building;

(c) The same type of building as was damaged or destroyed in the wildfire is being constructed or repaired; and

(d) The new or repaired building will comply with all current state building and state energy code requirements in effect at the time of the permit application for the construction or repair.

(3) Disaster relief payments awarded under this section may only be used for the purpose of meeting increased energy efficiency standards, providing or increasing electric vehicle charging capacity, and the installation and use of solar panels on a building that did not, prior to being damaged or destroyed, utilize solar panels.

(4) The department shall develop criteria for awarding disaster relief payments under this section that is consistent with RCW 38.52.030(9) and, as appropriate, with other disaster response and recovery programs. When awarding disaster relief payments, the department must prioritize any building that is owned or rented by a low-income to moderate-income household. Thereafter, the department must award disaster relief payments based upon the amount of energy efficiency, electric vehicle charging capacity, or solar panels installation that will occur, with disaster relief payments going first to those buildings which will yield the greatest environmental benefits.

(5) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Increased energy efficiency standards" means energy code standards under chapter 19.27A RCW that have increased between the

time the building was originally constructed and the time that it is to be repaired or rebuilt.

(b) "Local government" means a city, town, county, or special purpose district.

(c) "Low-income or moderate-income household" means a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose adjusted income is at or below 120 percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States department of housing and urban development.

(d) "Public building" means a building or building wholly owned and used by a local government. [2024 c 143 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—2024 c 143: "In recent years, devastating wildfires have destroyed homes, businesses, and infrastructure. These wildfires have become more frequent and more destructive due to the effects of climate change. Since the original construction of many of the lost structures, technological advances have made possible more energy efficient buildings, greater use of electric vehicles, and more opportunities to utilize solar energy. The insurance coverage for the destroyed structures, however, may not cover reconstruction utilizing new methods and technologies. As a result, many buildings may be rebuilt in less efficient ways that require greater use of greenhouse gases. These greenhouse gases, in turn, will exacerbate the threat of wildfires.

It is the intent of the legislature to assist in disrupting this cycle. By making disaster relief payments available to local governments, businesses, and individuals to repair or replace damaged or destroyed buildings in more energy efficient and environmentally friendly ways, the legislature will encourage a more sustainable use of resources and increased climate resilience with resulting environmental benefits for all of the people of the state. It is the intent of the legislature that the assistance provided in this act be considered disaster relief payments by the internal revenue service." [2024 c 143 s 1.]

Effective date—2024 c 143: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 18, 2024]." [2024 c 143 s 3.]

RCW 43.31.859 Rural development council—Successor organization—Funding. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in chapter 41.06 RCW or any other provision of law, the department may contract to provide funding to a successor organization under *RCW 43.31.856 to carry out activities of the organization that are consistent with the department's powers and duties. All moneys for contracts entered into under this section are subject to appropriation. [1999 c 299 s 4.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 43.31.856 was repealed by 1999 c 299 s 6, effective June 30, 2002.

RCW 43.31.970 Electric vehicle infrastructure. The department of commerce must distribute to local governments model ordinances, model development regulations, and guidance for local governments for

siting and installing electric vehicle infrastructure, and in particular battery charging stations, and appropriate handling, recycling, and storage of electric vehicle batteries and equipment, when available. The model ordinances, model development regulations, and guidance must be developed by a federal or state agency, or nationally recognized organizations with specific expertise in land-use regulations or electric vehicle infrastructure. [2023 c 470 s 2046; 2009 c 459 s 18.]

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Finding—Purpose—2009 c 459: See note following RCW 47.80.090.

Regional transportation planning organizations—Electric vehicle infrastructure: RCW 47.80.090.

RCW 43.31.980 Impact fee annual report. (1) Beginning December 1, 2018, and each year thereafter, the department of commerce must prepare an annual report on the impact fee deferral process established in RCW 82.02.050(3). The report must include: (a) The number of deferrals requested of and issued by counties, cities, and towns; (b) the number of deferrals that were not fully and timely paid; and (c) other information as deemed appropriate.

(2) The report required by this section must, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, be submitted to the appropriate committees of the house of representatives and the senate. [2015 c 241 s 4.]

Effective date—2015 c 241: See note following RCW 82.02.050.