

**Chapter 70.84 RCW**  
**BLIND, HANDICAPPED, AND DISABLED PERSONS—"WHITE CANE LAW"**

**Sections**

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*Dog guide or service animal, interfering with: RCW 9.91.170.*

**RCW 70.84.010 Declaration—Policy.** The legislature declares:

(1) It is the policy of this state to encourage and enable the blind, persons with [visual] disabilities, the hearing impaired, and other persons with disabilities to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state, and to engage in remunerative employment.

(2) As citizens, the blind, persons with visual disabilities, the hearing impaired, and other persons with disabilities have the same rights as the able-bodied to the full and free use of the streets, highways, walkways, public buildings, public facilities, and other public places.

(3) The blind, persons with visual disabilities, the hearing impaired, and other persons with disabilities are entitled to full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges on common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles, railroad trains, motor buses, streetcars, boats, and all other public conveyances, as well as in hotels, lodging places, places of public resort, accommodation, assemblage or amusement, and all other places to which the general public is invited, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons. [2020 c 274 s 48; 1980 c 109 s 1; 1969 c 141 s 1.]

**RCW 70.84.020 "Dog guide" defined.** For the purpose of this chapter, the term "dog guide" means a dog that is trained for the purpose of guiding blind persons or a dog trained for the purpose of assisting hearing impaired persons. [1997 c 271 s 18; 1980 c 109 s 2; 1969 c 141 s 2.]

**RCW 70.84.021 "Service animal" defined.** For the purpose of this chapter, "service animal" means an animal that is trained for the purposes of assisting or accommodating a disabled person's sensory, mental, or physical disability. [1997 c 271 s 19; 1985 c 90 s 1.]

**RCW 70.84.040 Precautions for drivers of motor vehicles approaching a wheelchair user or pedestrian who is using a white cane, dog guide, or service animal.** The driver of a vehicle approaching a totally or partially blind pedestrian who is carrying a cane predominantly white in color (with or without a red tip), a totally or partially blind or hearing impaired pedestrian using a dog guide, a person with physical disabilities using a service animal, or a person with a disability using a wheelchair or a power wheelchair as defined in RCW 46.04.415 shall take all necessary precautions to avoid injury to such pedestrian or wheelchair user. Any driver who fails to take such precaution shall be liable in damages for any injury caused such pedestrian or wheelchair user. It shall be unlawful for the operator of any vehicle to drive into or upon any crosswalk while there is on such crosswalk such pedestrian or wheelchair user crossing or attempting to cross the roadway, if such pedestrian or wheelchair user is using a white cane, using a dog guide, using a service animal, or using a wheelchair or a power wheelchair as defined in RCW 46.04.415. The failure of any such pedestrian or wheelchair user so to signal shall not deprive him or her of the right-of-way accorded him or her by other laws. [2010 c 184 s 1; 1997 c 271 s 20; 1985 c 90 s 3; 1980 c 109 s 4; 1971 ex.s. c 77 s 1; 1969 c 141 s 4.]

**Effective date—2010 c 184:** "This act takes effect August 1, 2010." [2010 c 184 s 2.]

**RCW 70.84.050 Handicapped pedestrians not carrying white cane or using dog guide—Rights and privileges.**

A totally or partially blind pedestrian not carrying a white cane or a totally or partially blind or hearing impaired pedestrian not using a dog guide in any of the places, accommodations, or conveyances listed in RCW 70.84.010, shall have all of the rights and privileges conferred by law on other persons. [1997 c 271 s 21; 1980 c 109 s 5; 1969 c 141 s 5.]

**RCW 70.84.060 Unauthorized use of white cane, dog guide, or service animal.** It shall be unlawful for any pedestrian who is not totally or partially blind to use a white cane or any pedestrian who is not totally or partially blind or is not hearing impaired to use a dog guide or any pedestrian who is not otherwise physically disabled to use a service animal in any of the places, accommodations, or conveyances listed in RCW 70.84.010 for the purpose of securing the rights and privileges accorded by the chapter to totally or partially blind, hearing impaired, or otherwise physically disabled people. [1997 c 271 s 22; 1985 c 90 s 4; 1980 c 109 s 6; 1969 c 141 s 6.]

**RCW 70.84.070 Penalty for violations.** Any person or persons, firm or corporation, or the agent of any person or persons, firm or corporation, who denies or interferes with admittance to or enjoyment of the public facilities enumerated in RCW 70.84.010, or otherwise interferes with the rights of a totally or partially blind, hearing impaired, or otherwise physically disabled person as set forth in RCW 70.84.010 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. [1985 c 90 s 5; 1980 c 109 s 7; 1969 c 141 s 7.]

**RCW 70.84.080 Employment of persons with disabilities in public service.** In accordance with the policy set forth in RCW 70.84.010, the blind, persons with visual disabilities, the hearing impaired, and other persons with disabilities shall be employed in the state service, in the service of the political subdivisions of the state, in the public schools, and in all other employment supported in whole or in part by public funds on the same terms and conditions as the able-bodied, unless it is shown that the particular disability prevents the performance of the work involved. [2020 c 274 s 49; 1980 c 109 s 8; 1969 c 141 s 9.]

**RCW 70.84.900 Short title.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "White Cane Law." [1969 c 141 s 11.]