

RCW 10.93.020 Definitions. As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agency with primary territorial jurisdiction" means a city or town police agency which has responsibility for police activity within its boundaries; or a county police or sheriff's department which has responsibility with regard to police activity in the unincorporated areas within the county boundaries; or a statutorily authorized port district police agency or four-year state college or university police agency which has responsibility for police activity within the statutorily authorized enforcement boundaries of the port district, state college, or university.

(2) "Federal peace officer" means any employee or agent of the United States government who has the authority to carry firearms and make warrantless arrests and whose duties involve the enforcement of criminal laws of the United States.

(3) "General authority Washington law enforcement agency" means any agency, department, or division of a municipal corporation, political subdivision, or other unit of local government of this state, and any agency, department, or division of state government, having as its primary function the detection and apprehension of persons committing infractions or violating the traffic or criminal laws in general, as distinguished from a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency, and any other unit of government expressly designated by statute as a general authority Washington law enforcement agency. The Washington state patrol and the department of fish and wildlife are general authority Washington law enforcement agencies.

(4) "General authority Washington peace officer" means any fully compensated and elected, appointed, or employed officer of a general authority Washington law enforcement agency who is commissioned to enforce the criminal laws of the state of Washington generally.

(5) "Limited authority Washington law enforcement agency" means any agency, political subdivision, or unit of local government of this state, and any agency, department, or division of state government, having as one of its functions the apprehension or detection of persons committing infractions or violating the traffic or criminal laws relating to limited subject areas, including, but not limited to, the state departments of natural resources and social and health services, the state gambling commission, the state lottery commission, the state parks and recreation commission, the state utilities and transportation commission, the state liquor and cannabis board, the office of the insurance commissioner, the state department of corrections, the office of independent investigations, and the state department of labor and industries.

(6) "Limited authority Washington peace officer" means any fully compensated officer of a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency empowered by that agency to detect or apprehend violators of the laws in some or all of the limited subject areas for which that agency is responsible. A limited authority Washington peace officer may be a specially commissioned Washington peace officer if otherwise qualified for such status under this chapter.

(7) "Mutual law enforcement assistance" includes, but is not limited to, one or more law enforcement agencies aiding or assisting one or more other such agencies through loans or exchanges of personnel or of material resources, for law enforcement purposes.

(8) "Primary commissioning agency" means (a) the employing agency in the case of a general authority Washington peace officer, a limited authority Washington peace officer, a tribal peace officer from a federally recognized tribe, or a federal peace officer, and (b) the commissioning agency in the case of a specially commissioned Washington peace officer (i) who is performing functions within the course and scope of the special commission and (ii) who is not also a general authority Washington peace officer, a limited authority Washington peace officer, a tribal peace officer from a federally recognized tribe, or a federal peace officer.

(9) "Primary function of an agency" means that function to which greater than fifty percent of the agency's resources are allocated.

(10) "Reserve officer" means any person who does not serve as a regularly employed, fully compensated peace officer of this state, but who, when called by an agency into active service, is fully commissioned on the same basis as regularly employed, fully compensated officers to enforce the criminal laws of this state.

(11) "Specially commissioned Washington peace officer," for the purposes of this chapter, means any officer, whether part-time or full-time, compensated or not, commissioned by a general authority Washington law enforcement agency to enforce some or all of the criminal laws of the state of Washington, who does not qualify under this chapter as a general authority Washington peace officer for that commissioning agency, specifically including reserve peace officers, and specially commissioned full-time, fully compensated peace officers duly commissioned by the states of Oregon or Idaho or any such peace officer commissioned by a unit of local government of Oregon or Idaho. [2025 c 28 s 1; 2024 c 319 s 2. Prior: 2021 c 318 s 307; 2006 c 284 s 16; 2002 c 128 s 1; 1994 c 264 s 3; 1988 c 36 s 5; 1985 c 89 s 2.]

Finding—Intent—2021 c 318: See note following RCW 43.102.020.

Effective date—2006 c 284: See RCW 48.135.901.