

**Chapter 27.12 RCW
PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

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RCW 27.12.010 Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

(1) "Governmental unit" means any county, city, town, rural county library district, intercounty rural library district, rural partial-county library district, or island library district;

(2) "Intercounty rural library district" means a municipal corporation organized to provide library service for all areas outside of incorporated cities and towns within two or more counties:

PROVIDED, That any city or town meeting the population requirements of RCW 27.12.360 may be included therein as provided in RCW 27.12.360 through 27.12.390;

(3) "Island library district" means a municipal corporation organized to provide library service for all areas outside of incorporated cities and towns on a single island only, and not all of the area of the county, in counties composed entirely of islands and having a population of less than twenty-five thousand at the time the island library district was created: PROVIDED, That any city or town meeting the population requirements of RCW 27.12.360 may be included therein as provided in RCW 27.12.360 through 27.12.390;

(4) "Legislative body" means the body authorized to determine the amount of taxes to be levied in a governmental unit; in rural county library districts, in intercounty rural library districts, and in island library districts, the legislative body shall be the board of library trustees of the district;

(5) "Library" means a free public library supported in whole or in part with money derived from taxation;

(6) "Regional library" means a free public library maintained by two or more counties or other governmental units as provided in RCW 27.12.080;

(7) "Rural county library district" means a library serving all the area of a county not included within the area of incorporated cities and towns: PROVIDED, That any city or town meeting the population requirements of RCW 27.12.360 may be included therein as provided in RCW 27.12.360 through 27.12.390; and

(8) "Rural partial-county library district" means a municipal corporation organized to provide library service for a portion of the unincorporated area of a county. Any city or town located in the same county as a rural partial-county library district may annex to the district if the city or town has a population of one hundred thousand or less at the time of annexation. [2009 c 40 s 2; 1994 c 198 s 1; 1993 c 284 s 2; 1982 c 123 s 1; 1981 c 26 s 1; 1977 ex.s. c 353 s 5; 1965 c 122 s 1; 1947 c 75 s 10; 1941 c 65 s 1; 1935 c 119 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-2.]

Reviser's note: The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

RCW 27.12.020 Policy of state. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state, as a part of its provision for public education, to promote the establishment and development of public library service throughout its various subdivisions. [1935 c 119 s 1; RRS s 8226-1. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1941 c 65 s 2; 1935 c 119 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-3 now codified as RCW 27.12.025.]

RCW 27.12.025 Authorization. Any governmental unit has power to establish and maintain a library, either by itself or in cooperation with one or more other governmental units. [1941 c 65 s 2; 1935 c 119 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-3. Formerly RCW 27.12.020, part.]

RCW 27.12.030 Libraries, how established. A library may be established in any county, city, or town either (1) by its legislative body of its own initiative; or (2) upon the petition of one hundred taxpayers of such a governmental unit, the legislative body shall submit to a vote of the qualified electors thereof, at the next municipal or special election held therein (in the case of a city or

town) or the next general election or special election held therein (in the case of a county), the question whether a library shall be established; and if a majority of the electors voting on the question vote in favor of the establishment of a library, the legislative body shall forthwith establish one. [1965 c 122 s 2; 1941 c 65 s 3; 1935 c 119 s 4; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-4. Prior: 1915 c 12 s 1; 1913 c 123 s 1; 1909 c 116 s 1; 1901 c 166 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.040 Rural library districts—Establishment—Proposed maximum levy rate. The procedure for the establishment of a rural county library district shall be as follows:

(1) Petitions signed by at least ten percent of the registered voters of the county who voted in the last general election, outside of the area of incorporated cities and towns, asking that the question, "Shall a rural county library district be established?" be submitted to a vote of the people, shall be filed with the county legislative authority. For all districts created after July 26, 2009, the petition may include a proposed initial maximum levy rate. This initial maximum levy rate must not exceed the rate limit set forth in RCW 27.12.050 (1).

(2) The county legislative authority, after having determined that the petitions were signed by the requisite number of registered voters, shall place the proposition for the establishment of a rural county library district on the ballot for the vote of the people of the county, outside incorporated cities and towns, at the next succeeding general or special election. If the petition to create the rural county library district included a proposed initial maximum levy rate, the ballot proposition for the establishment of the rural county library district must include the initial maximum levy rate specified in the petition. This ballot must be submitted in such form as to enable the voters favoring the proposition to vote "Yes" and those opposing to vote "No."

(3) If a majority of those voting on the proposition vote in favor of the establishment of the rural county library district, the county legislative authority shall forthwith declare it established. [2009 c 306 s 1; 1990 c 259 s 1; 1955 c 59 s 4. Prior: 1947 c 75 s 11, part; 1943 c 251 s 1, part; 1941 c 65 s 4, part; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-4a, part.]

Dissolution—Disposition of property: RCW 27.12.320.

Dissolution of island library district: RCW 27.12.450.

RCW 27.12.050 Rural library districts—Board of library trustees—Tax levies. (1) After the board of county commissioners has declared a rural county library district established, it shall appoint a board of library trustees and provide funds for the establishment and maintenance of library service for the district by making a tax levy on the property in the district of not more than fifty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value per year sufficient for the library service as shown to be required by the budget submitted to the board of county commissioners by the board of library trustees, and by making a tax levy in such further amount as shall be authorized pursuant to RCW 27.12.222 or 84.52.052 or 84.52.056. Such levies shall

be a part of the general tax roll and shall be collected as a part of the general taxes against the property in the district.

(2) The initial levy rate may not exceed the rate limit in subsection (1) of this section or, if applicable, the initial maximum levy rate contained in the ballot proposition approved by the voters to create the district. In subsequent years, the levy rate may be increased as authorized under chapter 84.55 RCW. [2009 c 306 s 2; 1973 1st ex.s. c 195 s 5; 1955 c 59 s 5. Prior: 1947 c 75 s 11, part; 1943 c 251 s 1, part; 1941 c 65 s 4, part; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-4a, part.]

Severability—Effective dates and termination dates—Construction—1973 1st ex.s. c 195: See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

Budget for capital outlays—Accumulation of funds: RCW 27.12.220.

Capital outlays—Bonds—Excess levies: RCW 27.12.222.

RCW 27.12.060 Rural library districts—General powers. A rural county library district shall be a public corporation with such powers as are necessary to carry out its functions and for taxation purposes shall have the power vested in municipal corporations for such purposes. [1984 c 186 s 6; 1983 c 167 s 19; 1980 c 100 s 1; 1955 c 59 s 6. Prior: 1947 c 75 s 11, part; 1943 c 251 s 1, part; 1941 c 65 s 4, part; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-4a, part.]

Purpose—1984 c 186: See note following RCW 39.46.110.

Liberal construction—Severability—1983 c 167: See RCW 39.46.010 and note following.

RCW 27.12.070 Rural county library districts or rural partial-county library districts—Disbursement of revenues and collection of taxes. The county treasurer of the county in which any rural county library district or rural partial-county library district is created shall receive and disburse all district revenues and collect all taxes levied under this chapter. [1993 c 284 s 3; 1984 c 186 s 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 195 s 6; 1970 ex.s. c 42 s 2; 1955 c 59 s 7. Prior: 1947 c 75 s 11, part; 1943 c 251 s 1, part; 1941 c 65 s 4, part; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-4a, part.]

Purpose—1984 c 186: See note following RCW 39.46.110.

Severability—Effective dates and termination dates—Construction—1973 1st ex.s. c 195: See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

Severability—Effective date—1970 ex.s. c 42: See notes following RCW 39.36.015.

Annual appropriations—Control of expenditures: RCW 27.12.240.

Capital outlays—General obligation bonds—Excess levies: RCW 27.12.222.

RCW 27.12.079 Disincorporation of district located in county with a population of two hundred ten thousand or more and inactive for five years. See chapter 57.90 RCW.

RCW 27.12.080 Regional libraries. Two or more counties, or other governmental units, by action of their legislative bodies, may join in establishing and maintaining a regional library under the terms of a contract to which all will agree. The expenses of the regional library shall be apportioned between or among the contracting parties concerned on such basis as shall be agreed upon in the contract. The treasurer of one of the governmental units, as shall be provided in the contract, shall have the custody of the funds of the regional library; and the treasurers of the other governmental units concerned shall transfer quarterly to him or her all moneys collected for free public library purposes in their respective governmental units. If the legislative body of any governmental unit decides to withdraw from a regional library contract, the governmental unit withdrawing shall be entitled to a division of the property on the basis of its contributions. [2011 c 336 s 700; 1941 c 65 s 5; 1935 c 119 s 5; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-5.]

RCW 27.12.090 Intercounty rural library districts—Establishment. Intercounty rural library districts may be established to provide throughout several counties free public library service similar to that provided within a single county by a rural county library district. [1947 c 75 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-1.]

Dissolution—Disposition of property: RCW 27.12.320.

RCW 27.12.100 Intercounty rural library districts—Establishment—Procedure. An intercounty rural library district shall be established by joint action of two or more counties proceeding by either of the following alternative methods:

(1) The boards of county commissioners of any two or more counties shall adopt identical resolutions proposing the formation of such a district to include all of the areas outside of incorporated cities or towns in such counties as may be designated in such resolutions. In lieu of such resolutions a petition of like purport signed by ten percent of the registered voters residing outside of incorporated cities or towns of a county, may be filed with the county auditor thereof, and shall have the same effect as a resolution. The proposition for the formation of the district as stated on the petition shall be prepared by the attorney general upon request of the state library commission. Action to initiate the formation of such a district shall become ineffective in any county if corresponding action is not completed within one year thereafter by each other county included in such proposal. The county auditor in each county shall check the validity of the signatures on the petition and shall certify to the board of county commissioners the sufficiency of the signatures. If each petition contains the signatures of ten percent of the registered voters residing outside the incorporated cities and towns of the county, each board of county commissioners shall pass a resolution calling an election for the purpose of submitting the

question to the voters and setting the date of said election. When such action has been taken in each of the counties involved, notification shall be made by each board of county commissioners to the board of county commissioners of the county having the largest population according to the last federal census, who shall give proper notification to each county auditor. At the next general or special election held in the respective counties there shall be submitted to the voters in the areas outside of incorporated cities and towns a question as to whether an intercounty rural library district shall be established as outlined in the resolutions or petitions. Notice of said election shall be given by the county auditor. The county auditor shall instruct the election boards in split precincts. The respective county canvassing boards in each county to be included within the intercounty rural library district shall canvass the votes and certify the results to the county auditor pursuant to chapter 29A.60 RCW; the result shall then be certified by each county auditor to the county auditor of the county having the largest population according to the last federal census. If a majority of the electors voting on the proposition in each of the counties affected shall vote in favor of such district it shall thereby become established, and the board of county commissioners of the county having the largest population according to the last federal census shall declare the intercounty rural library district established. If two or more of the counties affected are in an existing intercounty rural library district, then the electors in areas outside incorporated cities and towns in those counties shall vote as a unit and the electors in areas outside incorporated cities and towns in each of the other affected counties shall vote as separate units. If a majority of the electors voting on the proposition in the existing district and a majority of the voters in any of the other affected counties shall vote in favor of an expanded intercounty rural library district it shall thereby become established.

(2) The county commissioners of two or more counties meeting in joint session attended by a majority of the county commissioners of each county may, by majority vote of those present, order the establishment of an intercounty rural library district to include all of the area outside of incorporated cities and towns in as many of the counties represented at such joint meeting as shall be determined by resolution of such joint meeting. If two or more counties are in an existing intercounty rural library district, then a majority vote of all of the commissioners present from those counties voting as a unit, and a majority vote of the commissioners present from any other county shall cause the joint session to order the establishment of an expanded intercounty rural library district. No county, however, shall be included in such district if a majority of its county commissioners vote against its inclusion in such district. [2015 c 53 s 3; 1965 c 63 s 1; 1961 c 82 s 1; 1947 c 75 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-2.]

RCW 27.12.110 Intercounty rural library districts—Expansion of existing districts. An existing rural county library district may be expanded into an intercounty rural library district or an established intercounty rural library district may be expanded to include additional counties by joint action of all counties included in the proposed expanded district taken in the same manner as prescribed for

the initiation of an intercounty rural library district. [1947 c 75 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-3.]

RCW 27.12.120 Intercounty rural library districts—Assumption of property, assets, liabilities. All property, assets and liabilities of preexisting library districts within the area included in an intercounty rural library district shall pass to and be assumed by an intercounty rural library district: PROVIDED, That where within any intercounty rural library district heretofore or hereafter organized under the provisions of this chapter a preexisting library district had incurred a bonded indebtedness which was outstanding at the time of the formation of the intercounty rural library district, such preexisting library district shall retain its corporate existence insofar as is necessary for the purpose until the bonded indebtedness outstanding against it on and after the effective date of said formation has been paid in full: PROVIDED FURTHER, That a special election may be called by the board of trustees of the intercounty rural library district, to be held at the next general or special election held in the respective counties for the purpose of affording the voters residing within the area outside of the preexisting library district an opportunity to assume the obligation of the bonded indebtedness of the preexisting library district or the question may be submitted to the voters as a separate proposition at the election on the proposal for the formation of the intercounty rural library district. [1961 c 82 s 2; 1947 c 75 s 4; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-4.]

RCW 27.12.130 Intercounty rural library districts—Board of trustees. Immediately following the establishment of an intercounty rural library district the boards of county commissioners of the counties affected shall jointly appoint a board of five or seven trustees for the district in accordance with RCW 27.12.190. The board of trustees shall appoint a librarian for the district. [1959 c 133 s 1; 1947 c 75 s 5; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-5.]

RCW 27.12.140 Intercounty rural library districts—Name may be adopted. The board of trustees of an intercounty rural library district may adopt a name by which the district shall be known and under which it shall transact all of its business. [1947 c 75 s 6; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-6.]

RCW 27.12.150 Intercounty rural library districts—Tax levies. Funds for the establishment and maintenance of the library service of the district shall be provided by the boards of county commissioners of the respective counties by means of an annual tax levy on the property in the district of not more than fifty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value per year. The tax levy in the several counties shall be at a uniform rate and shall be based on a budget to be compiled by the board of trustees of the intercounty rural library district who shall determine the uniform tax rate necessary and certify their determination to the respective boards of county commissioners.

Excess levies authorized pursuant to RCW 27.12.222 and 84.52.052 or 84.52.056 shall be at a uniform rate which uniform rate shall be determined by the board of trustees of the intercounty rural library district and certified to the respective boards of county commissioners. [1973 1st ex.s. c 195 s 7; 1955 c 59 s 8; 1947 c 75 s 7; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-7.]

Severability—Effective dates and termination dates—Construction
—1973 1st ex.s. c 195: See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

Budget for capital outlays—Accumulation of funds: RCW 27.12.220.

Capital outlays—Bonds—Excess levies: RCW 27.12.222.

RCW 27.12.160 Intercounty rural library districts—District treasurer. The board of trustees of an intercounty rural library district shall designate the county treasurer of one of the counties included in the district to act as treasurer for the district. All moneys raised for the district by taxation within the participating counties or received by the district from any other sources shall be paid over to him or her, and he or she shall disburse the funds of the district upon warrants drawn thereon by the auditor of the county to which he or she belongs pursuant to vouchers approved by the trustees of the district. [2011 c 336 s 701; 1947 c 75 s 8; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-8.]

Annual expenditures—Control of appropriations: RCW 27.12.240.

RCW 27.12.170 Intercounty rural library districts—Powers of board—Procedures. Except as otherwise specifically provided intercounty rural library districts and the trustees thereof shall have the same powers as are prescribed by RCW 27.12.040 through 27.12.070, for rural county library districts and shall follow the same procedures and be subject to the same limitations as are provided therein with respect to the contracting of indebtedness. [1947 c 75 s 9; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246-9.]

RCW 27.12.180 Contracts for library service. Instead of establishing or maintaining an independent library, the legislative body of any governmental unit authorized to maintain a library shall have power to contract to receive library service from an existing library, the board of trustees of which shall have reciprocal power to contract to render the service with the consent of the legislative body of its governmental unit. Such a contract shall require that the existing library perform all the functions of a library within the governmental unit wanting service. In like manner a legislative body may contract for library service from a library not owned by a public corporation but maintained for free public use: PROVIDED, That such a library be subject to inspection by the state librarian and be certified by him or her as maintaining a proper standard. Any school district may contract for school library service from any existing library, such service to be paid for from funds available to the

school district for library purposes. [2011 c 336 s 702; 1941 c 65 s 6; 1935 c 119 s 7; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-7.]

RCW 27.12.190 Library trustees—Appointment, election, removal, compensation. The management and control of a library shall be vested in a board of either five or seven trustees as hereinafter in this section provided. In cities and towns five trustees shall be appointed by the mayor with the consent of the legislative body. In counties, rural county library districts, and island library districts, except as provided in RCW 27.12.192, five trustees shall be appointed by the board of county commissioners. In a regional library district a board of either five or seven trustees shall be appointed by the joint action of the legislative bodies concerned. In intercounty rural library districts a board of either five or seven trustees shall be appointed by the joint action of the boards of county commissioners of each of the counties included in a district. The first appointments for boards comprised of but five trustees shall be for terms of one, two, three, four, and five years respectively, and thereafter a trustee shall be appointed annually to serve for five years. The first appointments for boards comprised of seven trustees shall be for terms of one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven years respectively, and thereafter a trustee shall be appointed annually to serve for seven years. No person shall be appointed to any board of trustees for more than two consecutive terms. Vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms as soon as possible in the manner in which members of the board are regularly chosen.

A library trustee shall not receive a salary or other compensation for services as trustee, but necessary expenses actually incurred shall be paid from the library funds.

A library trustee in the case of a city or town may be removed only by vote of the legislative body. A trustee of a county library, a rural county library district library, or an island library district library may be removed for just cause by the county commissioners after a public hearing upon a written complaint stating the ground for removal, which complaint, with a notice of the time and place of hearing, shall have been served upon the trustee at least fifteen days before the hearing. A trustee of an intercounty rural library district may be removed by the joint action of the board of county commissioners of the counties involved in the same manner as provided herein for the removal of a trustee of a county library. [2017 c 134 s 1; 1982 c 123 s 8; 1981 c 26 s 2; 1965 c 122 s 3; 1959 c 133 s 2; 1947 c 75 s 12; 1941 c 65 s 7; 1939 c 108 s 1; 1935 c 119 s 8; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-8. Prior: 1915 c 12 s 2; 1909 c 116 s 4; 1901 c 166 s 4. Formerly RCW 27.12.190 and 27.12.200.]

RCW 27.12.192 Library trustees—Seven member rural county library district boards. In any county with an adopted home rule charter and one million or more residents, the board of trustees of a rural county library district will be made up of seven members who are appointed by the county executive and confirmed by the county legislative authority. Members shall be residents of either those cities or towns that, through annexation, have become part of the rural county library district or unincorporated areas of the county, and that represent the geographic diversity of the library district.

The composition of an initial seven-member rural county library district board of trustees will comprise the existing five trustees, who will serve out their existing terms, and two new trustees, whose positions shall have initial terms of one and two years respectively. Thereafter a trustee shall be appointed to serve for five years to fill each expired term. No person may be appointed to any board of trustees for more than two consecutive terms. [2017 c 134 s 2.]

RCW 27.12.210 Library trustees—Organization—Bylaws—Powers and duties. The trustees, immediately after their appointment or election, shall meet and organize by the election of such officers as they deem necessary. They shall:

(1) Adopt such bylaws, rules, and regulations for their own guidance and for the government of the library as they deem expedient;

(2) Have the supervision, care, and custody of all property of the library, including the rooms or buildings constructed, leased, or set apart therefor;

(3) Employ a librarian, and upon his or her recommendation employ such other assistants as may be necessary, all in accordance with the provisions of *RCW 27.08.010, prescribe their duties, fix their compensation, and remove them for cause;

(4) Submit annually to the legislative body a budget containing estimates in detail of the amount of money necessary for the library for the ensuing year; except that in a library district the board of library trustees shall prepare its budget, certify the same and deliver it to the board of county commissioners in ample time for it to make the tax levies for the purpose of the district;

(5) Have exclusive control of the finances of the library;

(6) Accept such gifts of money or property for library purposes as they deem expedient;

(7) Lease or purchase land for library buildings;

(8) Lease, purchase, or erect an appropriate building or buildings for library purposes, and acquire such other property as may be needed therefor;

(9) Purchase books, periodicals, maps, and supplies for the library; and

(10) Do all other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient management and control of the library. [2011 c 336 s 703; 1982 c 123 s 9; 1941 c 65 s 8; 1935 c 119 s 9; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-9. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 5; 1901 c 166 s 5.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 27.08.010 was repealed by 1987 c 330 s 402. See RCW 27.04.055 for qualifications of librarians.

RCW 27.12.212 Community revitalization financing—Public improvements. In addition to other authority that a rural county library district or intercounty rural library district possesses, a rural county library district or an intercounty rural library district may provide any public improvement as defined under RCW 39.89.020, but this additional authority is limited to participating in the financing of the public improvements as provided under RCW 39.89.050.

This section does not limit the authority of a rural county library district or intercounty rural library district to otherwise participate in the public improvements if that authority exists elsewhere. [2001 c 212 s 11.]

RCW 27.12.215 Job recruitment expenditures authorized. The trustees of a library or a library district have the authority to spend funds to recruit job candidates. The trustees have the authority to reimburse job candidates for reasonable and necessary travel expenses including transportation, subsistence, and lodging. [1979 ex.s. c 40 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.220 Rural, island, and intercounty rural districts—Budget for capital outlays—Accumulation of funds. The trustees of any rural county library district, any island library district, or any intercounty rural library district may include in the annual budget of such district an item for the accumulation during such year of a specified sum of money to be expended in a future year for the acquisition, enlargement or improvement of real or personal property for library purposes. [1982 c 123 s 10; 1947 c 22 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8246a.]

RCW 27.12.222 Rural, island, and intercounty rural districts—General obligation bonds—Excess levies. A rural county library district, intercounty rural library district, or island library district may contract indebtedness and issue general obligation bonds not to exceed an amount, together with any outstanding nonvoter approved general obligation indebtedness, equal to one-tenth of one percent of the value of the taxable property within the district, as the term "value of the taxable property" is defined in RCW 39.36.015. The maximum term of nonvoter approved general obligation bonds shall not exceed twenty years. A rural county library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district may additionally contract indebtedness and issue general obligation bonds for capital purposes only, together with any outstanding general indebtedness, not to exceed an amount equal to one-half of one percent of the value of the taxable property within the district, as the term "value of the taxable property" is defined in RCW 39.36.015 whenever a proposition authorizing the issuance of such bonds has been approved by the voters of the district pursuant to RCW 39.36.050, by three-fifths of the persons voting on the proposition at which election the number of persons voting on the proposition shall constitute not less than forty percent of the total number of votes cast in such taxing district at the last preceding general election. If the voters shall so authorize at an election held pursuant to RCW 39.36.050, the district may levy annual taxes in excess of normal legal limitations to pay the principal and interest upon such bonds as they shall become due. The excess levies mentioned in this section or in RCW 84.52.052 or 84.52.056 may be made notwithstanding anything contained in RCW 27.12.050 or 27.12.150 or any other statute pertaining to such library districts. [2020 c 207 s 1; 1984 c 186 s 8; 1982 c 123 s 11; 1970 ex.s. c 42 s 3; 1955 c 59 s 1.]

Purpose—1984 c 186: See note following RCW 39.46.110.

Severability—Effective date—1970 ex.s. c 42: See notes following RCW 39.36.015.

Island library districts—Tax levies: RCW 27.12.420.

RCW 27.12.223 Bonds—Sale—Security for deposit. Bonds authorized by RCW 27.12.222 shall be issued and sold in accordance with chapter 39.46 RCW. All such bonds shall be legal securities for any bank or trust company for deposit with the state treasurer or any county or city treasurer as security for deposits in lieu of a surety bond under any law relating to deposits of public moneys. [1984 c 186 s 9; 1983 c 167 s 20; 1970 ex.s. c 56 s 6; 1969 ex.s. c 232 s 4; 1955 c 59 s 2.]

Purpose—1984 c 186: See note following RCW 39.46.110.

Liberal construction—Severability—1983 c 167: See RCW 39.46.010 and note following.

Purpose—1970 ex.s. c 56: See note following RCW 39.52.020.

Validation—Saving—Severability—1969 ex.s. c 232: See notes following RCW 39.52.020.

RCW 27.12.240 Annual appropriations—Control of expenditures. After a library shall have been established or library service contracted for, the legislative body of the governmental unit for which the library was established or the service engaged, shall appropriate money annually for the support of the library. All funds for the library, whether derived from taxation or otherwise, shall be in the custody of the treasurer of the governmental unit, and shall be designated by him or her in some manner for identification, and shall not be used for any but library purposes. The board of trustees shall have the exclusive control of expenditures for library purposes subject to any examination of accounts required by the state and money shall be paid for library purposes only upon vouchers of the board of trustees, without further audit. The board shall not make expenditures or incur indebtedness in any year in excess of the amount of money appropriated and/or available for library purposes. [2011 c 336 s 704; 1965 c 122 s 4; 1941 c 65 s 9; 1939 c 108 s 3; 1935 c 119 s 10; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 8226-10. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 3; 1901 c 166 s 3. Formerly RCW 27.12.240 and 27.12.250.]

RCW 27.12.260 Annual report of trustees. At the close of each year the board of trustees of every library shall make a report to the legislative body of the governmental unit wherein the board serves, showing the condition of their trust during the year, the sums of money received for the library fund from taxes and other sources, the sums of money expended and the purposes of the expenditures, the number of books and periodicals on hand, the number added during the year, the number retired, the number loaned out, and such other statistics and information and such suggestions as they deem of public interest. A copy of this report shall be filed with the state librarian. [1935 c 119 s 12; RRS s 8226-12. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 8; 1901 c 166 s 8.]

RCW 27.12.270 Rules and regulations—Free use of libraries. Every library established or maintained under *this act shall be free

for the use of the inhabitants of the governmental unit in which it is located, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the trustees find necessary to assure the greatest benefit to the greatest number, except that the trustees may charge a reasonable fee for the use of certain duplicate copies of popular books. [1935 c 119 s 13; RRS s 8226-13. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 9, part; 1901 c 166 s 9, part.]

***Reviser's note:** Term "this act" was first used in basic act, 1935 c 119 and appeared in subsequent amendments. Chapter 119, Laws of 1935 was codified in RCW 27.08.010, 27.12.010 through 27.12.080, 27.12.180 through 27.12.210, 27.12.230 through 27.12.280, 27.12.290 through 27.12.320, 27.12.330, and 27.12.340.

RCW 27.12.280 Use by nonresidents—Exchange of books. The board of trustees of a library, under such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon, may allow nonresidents of the governmental unit in which the library is situated to use the books thereof, and may make exchanges of books with any other library, either permanently or temporarily. [1935 c 119 s 14; RRS s 8226-14. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 10; 1901 c 166 s 10.]

RCW 27.12.285 Library services for Indian tribes. The legislature finds that it is necessary to give the several boards of library trustees in this state additional powers in order to effectuate the state's policy with regard to libraries as set forth in RCW 27.12.020. On and after March 27, 1975 the board of library trustees in any county of this state, in addition to any other powers and duties, is hereby authorized to provide library services to Indian tribes recognized as such by the federal government or to supplement any existing library services of such an Indian tribe. The power granted by this section shall extend beyond the geographic limits of the library district and the county or counties in which the district is located. [1975 c 50 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.290 Violators may be excluded. A board of library trustees may exclude from the use of the library under its charge any person who wilfully and persistently violates any rule or regulation prescribed for the use of the library or its facilities or any person whose physical condition is deemed dangerous or offensive to other library users. [1935 c 119 s 15; RRS s 8226-15. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 9, part; 1901 c 166 s 9, part.]

RCW 27.12.300 Gifts—Title to property. The title to money or property given to or for the use or benefit of a library shall vest in the board of trustees, to be held and used according to the terms of the gift. [1935 c 119 s 18; RRS s 8226-18. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 20; 1901 c 166 s 20.]

RCW 27.12.305 Sale of library materials authorized—Disposition of proceeds. Any public library, including the state library created pursuant to chapter 27.04 RCW, shall have the authority to provide for

the sale of library materials developed by the library staff for its use but which are of value to others such as book catalogs, books published by the library, indexes, films, slides, book lists, and similar materials.

The library commission, board of library trustees, or other governing authority charged with the direct control of a public library shall determine the prices and quantities of materials to be prepared and offered for sale. Prices shall be limited to the publishing and preparation costs, exclusive of staff salaries and overhead. Any moneys received from the sales of such materials shall be placed in the appropriate library fund.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any library to charge any resident for a library service nor to authorize any library to sell materials to a branch library or library which is part of a depository library system when such materials may be distributed free of cost to such library nor shall this section be construed to prevent, curtail, or inhibit any free distribution programs or exchange programs between libraries or between libraries and other agencies. [1972 ex.s. c 90 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.310 Charter provisions superseded. Every existing free public library shall be considered as if established under *this act, and the board of trustees and the legislative body of the governmental unit in which the library is located shall proceed forthwith to make such changes as may be necessary to effect compliance with the terms hereof; and every existing contract for library service shall continue in force and be subject to *this act until the contract be terminated or a library be established by the governmental unit for which the service was engaged. The provisions of *this act shall be construed as superseding the provisions of any municipal charter in conflict herewith. [1935 c 119 s 19; RRS s 8226-19.]

***Reviser's note:** For "this act," see note following RCW 27.12.270.

RCW 27.12.320 Dissolution—Disposition of property. (1) A library established or maintained under this chapter may be abolished upon the petition process found in subsection (3) of this section.

(2) If a library of a city or town is abolished, the books and other printed or written matter belonging to it shall go to the library of the county whereof the municipality is a part, if there be a county library, but if not, then to the state library. If a library of a county or region is abolished, the books and other printed matter belonging to it shall go to the state library. All other library property shall be disposed of as the legislative body of the governmental unit shall direct.

(3) After a library district established or maintained under this chapter has been in operation for three or more years, it may be dissolved pursuant to a majority vote of all of the qualified electors of the district voting upon a proposition for its dissolution, at a general election, which proposition may be placed upon the ballot at any such election whenever a petition by 25 percent or more qualified voters residing within a rural county library district, an island library district, or an intercounty rural library district requesting

such dissolution shall be filed with the board of trustees of such district not less than ninety days prior to the holding of any such election. An island library district may also be dissolved pursuant to RCW 27.12.450.

(4) If a rural county library district is dissolved, the books and other printed matter belonging to it shall go to the state library. All other library property shall be disposed of as the legislative body of the governmental unit shall direct. When an intercounty rural library district is dissolved, the books, funds and other property thereof shall be divided among the participating counties in the most equitable manner possible as determined by the state librarian, who shall give consideration to such items as the original source of property, the amount of funds raised from each county by the district, and the ability of the counties to make further use of such property or equipment for library purposes. Printed material which the state librarian finds will not be used by any of the participating counties for further library purposes shall be turned over to the state library.

(5) When an island library district is dissolved pursuant to this section, the books and other printed matter belonging to it shall go to the state library. All other library property shall be disposed of as the legislative body of the governmental unit shall direct. When an island library district is dissolved due to the establishment of a county library district, pursuant to RCW 27.12.450, all property, assets, and liabilities of the preexisting island library district within the area included in the county rural library district shall pass to and be assumed by the county rural library district: PROVIDED, That where within any county rural library district heretofore or hereafter organized under the provisions of this chapter a preexisting island library district has incurred a bonded indebtedness which was outstanding at the time of the formation of the county rural library district, the preexisting island library district shall retain its corporate existence insofar as is necessary for the purpose until the bonded indebtedness outstanding against it on and after the effective date of the formation has been paid in full: PROVIDED FURTHER, That a special election may be called by the board of trustees of the county rural library district, to be held at the next general or special election held in the respective counties, for the purpose of affording the voters residing within the area outside of the preexisting island library district an opportunity to assume the obligation of the bonded indebtedness of the preexisting island library district or the question may be submitted to the voters as a separate proposition at the election on the proposal for the formation of the county rural library district. [2024 c 266 s 1; 1982 c 123 s 12; 1965 c 122 s 5; 1947 c 75 s 13; 1935 c 119 s 20; Rem. Supp. 1947 s 8226-20. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 19; 1901 c 166 s 19.]

**RCW 27.12.321 School district public libraries abolished—
Disposition of assets.** School district public libraries organized under chapter 119, Laws of 1935, as amended prior to *this 1965 amendatory act, are hereby abolished as of January 1, 1966.

All assets belonging to any school district public library abolished by this section shall go to the rural county library district of the county in which the school district public library is located. [1965 c 122 s 6.]

***Reviser's note:** For codification of "this 1965 amendatory act" [1965 ex.s. c 122], see Codification Tables.

RCW 27.12.330 Penalty for injury to property. Whoever intentionally injures, defaces, or destroys any property belonging to or deposited in any public library, reading room, or other educational institution, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. [1935 c 119 s 16; RRS s 8226-16. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 11; 1901 c 166 s 11.]

RCW 27.12.340 Wilfully retaining books—Infraction. It is a class 4 civil infraction for any person to wilfully retain any book, newspaper, magazine, pamphlet, manuscript, or other property belonging in or to any public library, reading room, or other educational institution, for thirty days after notice in writing to return the same, given after the expiration of the time that by the rules of such institution such article or other property may be kept. [1987 c 456 s 29; 1935 c 119 s 17; RRS s 8226-17. Prior: 1909 c 116 s 12; 1901 c 166 s 12.]

Legislative finding—1987 c 456: See RCW 7.80.005.

Effective date—1987 c 456 ss 9-31: See RCW 7.80.901.

RCW 27.12.350 Executory conditional sales contracts for purchase of property—Limit on indebtedness—Election, when. See RCW 39.30.010.

RCW 27.12.355 Rural county library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district—Withdrawal or reannexation of areas. (1) As provided in this section, a rural county library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district may withdraw areas from its boundaries, or reannex areas into the library district that previously had been withdrawn from the library district under this section.

(2) The withdrawal of an area shall be authorized upon: (a) Adoption of a resolution by the board of trustees requesting the withdrawal and finding that, in the opinion of the board, inclusion of this area within the library district will result in a reduction of the district's tax levy rate under the provisions of RCW 84.52.010; and (b) adoption of a resolution by the city or town council approving the withdrawal, if the area is located within the city or town, or adoption of a resolution by the county legislative authority of the county within which the area is located approving the withdrawal, if the area is located outside of a city or town. A withdrawal shall be effective at the end of the day on the thirty-first day of December in the year in which the resolutions are adopted, but for purposes of establishing boundaries for property tax purposes, the boundaries shall be established immediately upon the adoption of the second resolution.

The authority of an area to be withdrawn from a library district as provided under this section is in addition, and not subject, to the provisions of RCW 27.12.380.

The withdrawal of an area from the boundaries of a library district shall not exempt any property therein from taxation for the purpose of paying the costs of redeeming any indebtedness of the library district existing at the time of the withdrawal.

(3) An area that has been withdrawn from the boundaries of a library district under this section may be reannexed into the library district upon: (a) Adoption of a resolution by the board of trustees proposing the reannexation; and (b) adoption of a resolution by the city or town council approving the reannexation, if the area is located within the city or town, or adoption of a resolution by the county legislative authority of the county within which the area is located approving the reannexation, if the area is located outside of a city or town. The reannexation shall be effective at the end of the day on the thirty-first day of December in the year in which the adoption of the second resolution occurs, but for purposes of establishing boundaries for property tax purposes, the boundaries shall be established immediately upon the adoption of the second resolution. Referendum action on the proposed reannexation may be taken by the voters of the area proposed to be reannexed if a petition calling for a referendum is filed with the city or town council, or county legislative authority, within a thirty-day period after the adoption of the second resolution, which petition has been signed by registered voters of the area proposed to be reannexed equal in number to ten percent of the total number of the registered voters residing in that area.

If a valid petition signed by the requisite number of registered voters has been so filed, the effect of the resolutions shall be held in abeyance and a ballot proposition to authorize the reannexation shall be submitted to the voters of the area at the next special election date according to RCW 29A.04.330. Approval of the ballot proposition authorizing the reannexation by a simple majority vote shall authorize the reannexation. [2006 c 344 s 18; 1987 c 138 s 1.]

Effective date—2006 c 344 ss 1-16 and 18-40: See note following RCW 29A.04.311.

RCW 27.12.360 Annexation of city or town into rural county library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district—Initiation procedure. Any city or town with a population of three hundred thousand or less at the time of annexation may become a part of any rural county library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district lying contiguous thereto by annexation in the following manner: The inclusion of such a city or town may be initiated by the adoption of an ordinance by the legislative authority thereof stating its intent to join the library district and finding that the public interest will be served thereby. Before adoption, the ordinance shall be submitted to the library board of the city or town for its review and recommendations. If no library board exists in the city or town, the state librarian shall be notified of the proposed ordinance. If the board of trustees of the library district concurs in the annexation, notification thereof shall be transmitted to the legislative authority or authorities of the counties in which the city or town is situated. [2009 c 40 s 1; 1982 c 123 s 13; 1981 c 26 s 3; 1977 ex.s. c 353 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.370 Annexation of city or town into library district—Special election procedure. The county legislative authority or authorities shall by resolution call a special election to be held in such city or town at the next special election date according to RCW 29A.04.321, and shall cause notice of such election to be given as provided for in RCW 29A.52.355.

The election on the annexation of the city or town into the library district shall be conducted by the auditor of the county or counties in which the city or town is located in accordance with the general election laws of the state and the results thereof shall be canvassed by the canvassing board of the county or counties. No person shall be entitled to vote at such election unless he or she is registered to vote in said city or town for at least thirty days preceding the date of the election. The ballot proposition shall be in substantially the following form:

"Shall the city or town of be annexed to and
be a part of library district?
YES
NO

If a majority of the persons voting on the proposition shall vote in favor thereof, the city or town shall thereupon be annexed and shall be a part of such library district. [2011 c 10 s 78; 2006 c 344 s 19; 1982 c 123 s 14; 1977 ex.s. c 353 s 2.]

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10:
See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

Effective date—2006 c 344 ss 1-16 and 18-40: See note following RCW 29A.04.311.

RCW 27.12.380 Annexation of city or town into library district—Withdrawal of annexed city or town. The legislative body of such a city or town which has annexed to such a library district, may, by resolution, present to the voters of such city or town a proposition to withdraw from said library district at any general election held at least three years following the annexation to the library district. [1982 c 123 s 15; 1977 ex.s. c 353 s 3.]

RCW 27.12.390 Annexation of city or town into library district—Tax levies. The annual tax levy authorized by RCW 27.12.050, 27.12.150, and 27.12.420 shall be imposed throughout the library district, including any city or town annexed thereto. Any city or town annexed to a rural library district, island library district, or intercounty rural library district shall be entitled to levy up to three dollars and sixty cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation less any regular levy made by such library district in the incorporated area, notwithstanding any other provision of law: PROVIDED, That the limitations upon regular property taxes imposed by chapter 84.55 RCW shall apply. [1982 c 123 s 16; 1977 ex.s. c 353 s 4.]

RCW 27.12.395 Annexation of city or town into library district—Assumption of liabilities. (1) All liabilities of a city or town that is annexed to a rural county library district or intercounty rural library district, which liabilities were incurred for the purpose of or in the course of acquiring, operating, or maintaining a library or libraries, may, if provided for in the ordinance providing for annexation and in the resolution of the district consenting to annexation, pass to and be assumed by the rural county library district or intercounty rural library district. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the city or town has incurred any voted bonded indebtedness for the purpose of acquiring, operating, or maintaining a library or libraries, and if the indebtedness is outstanding at the time of the annexation, the voted bonded indebtedness shall not be assumed by the annexing district.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, if the annexed city or town has outstanding at the time of the annexation any voted bonded indebtedness incurred for the purpose of acquiring, operating, or maintaining a library or libraries, a special election may be called by the board of trustees of the rural county library district or intercounty rural library district, to be held at the next general or special election held in the applicable county or counties, for the purpose of affording the voters residing within the area of the district outside the annexed city or town an opportunity to assume the voted bonded indebtedness of the annexed city or town upon the assent of three-fifths of the voters. [1985 c 392 s 1.]

RCW 27.12.400 Island library districts—Establishment—Procedure. The procedure for the establishment of an island library district shall be as follows:

(1) Petitions signed by at least ten percent of the registered voters of the island, outside of the area of incorporated cities and towns, asking that the question, "Shall an island library district be established?" be submitted to a vote of the people of the island, shall be filed with the board of county commissioners.

(2) The board of county commissioners, after having determined that the petitions were signed by the requisite number of qualified petitioners, shall place the proposition for the establishment of an island library district on the ballot for the vote of the people of the island, outside incorporated cities and towns, at the next succeeding general or special election.

(3) If a majority of those voting on the proposition vote in favor of the establishment of the island library district, the board of county commissioners shall forthwith declare it established. [1982 c 123 s 2.]

RCW 27.12.410 Island library districts—Restrictions on establishment. An island library district may not be established if there is in existence a library district serving all of the area of the county not included within the area of incorporated cities and towns. [1982 c 123 s 3.]

RCW 27.12.420 Island library districts—Board of trustees—Tax levies. Immediately following the establishment of an island library

district, the board of county commissioners shall appoint a board of library trustees for the district in accordance with RCW 27.12.190. The board of trustees shall appoint a librarian for the district.

Funds for the establishment and maintenance of the library service of the district shall be provided by the board of county commissioners by means of an annual tax levy on the property in the district of not more than fifty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value per year. The tax levy shall be based on a budget to be compiled by the board of trustees of the island library district who shall determine the tax rate necessary and certify their determination to the board of county commissioners.

Excess levies authorized pursuant to RCW 27.12.222, 84.52.052, or 84.52.056 shall be at a rate determined by the board of trustees of the island library district and certified to the board of county commissioners. [1982 c 123 s 4.]

RCW 27.12.430 Island library districts—Name may be adopted.

The board of trustees of an island library district may adopt a name by which the district shall be known and under which it shall transact all of its business. [1982 c 123 s 6.]

RCW 27.12.440 Island library districts—Powers and limitations for indebtedness. Except as otherwise specifically provided, island library districts and the trustees thereof shall have the same powers and limitations as are prescribed by RCW 27.12.060 through 27.12.070 for rural county library districts and shall follow the same procedures and be subject to the same limitations as are provided therein with respect to the contracting of indebtedness. [1982 c 123 s 5.]

RCW 27.12.450 Island library districts—Dissolution, when. If after an island library district serving a single island has been established, a rural county library district serving all of the area of the county not included within the area of incorporated cities and towns is established as provided in RCW 27.12.040, the district serving the single island in the county shall be dissolved. [1982 c 123 s 7.]

Dissolution of library districts: RCW 27.12.320.

RCW 27.12.470 Rural partial-county library districts. A rural partial-county library district may be created in a portion of the unincorporated area of a county as provided in this section if a rural county library district, intercounty rural library district, or island library district has not been created in the county.

The procedure to create a rural partial-county library district is initiated by the filing of petitions with the county auditor proposing the creation of the district that have been signed by at least ten percent of the registered voters residing in the area proposed to be included in the rural partial-county library district. The county auditor shall review the petitions and certify the

sufficiency or insufficiency of the signatures to the county legislative authority.

If the petitions are certified as having sufficient valid signatures, the county legislative authority shall hold a public hearing on the proposed rural partial-county library district, may adjust the boundaries of the proposed district, and may cause a ballot proposition to be submitted to the voters of the proposed rural partial-county library district authorizing its creation if the county legislative authority finds that the creation of the rural partial-county library district is in the public interest. A subsequent public hearing shall be held if additional territory is added to the proposed rural partial-county library district by action of the county legislative authority.

The rural partial-county library district shall be created if the ballot proposition authorizing the creation of the district is approved by a simple majority vote of the voters voting on the proposition. Immediately after creation of the rural partial-county library district the county legislative authority shall appoint a board of library trustees for the district as provided under RCW 27.12.190.

Except as provided in this section, a rural partial-county library district is subject to all the provisions of law applicable to a rural county library district and shall have all the powers, duties, and authorities of a rural county library district, including, but not limited to, the authority to impose property taxes, incur debt, and annex a city or town with a population of less than one hundred thousand at the time of the annexation that is located in the same county as the rural partial-county library district.

Adjacent unincorporated territory in the county may be annexed to a rural partial-county library district in the same manner as territory is annexed to a water-sewer district, except that an annexation is not subject to potential review by a boundary review board.

If, at the time of creation, a rural partial-county library district has an assessed valuation of less than fifty million dollars, it may provide library services only by contracting for the services through an interlocal agreement with an adjacent library district, or an adjacent city or town that maintains its own library. If the assessed valuation of the rural partial-county library district subsequently reaches fifty million dollars as a result of annexation or appreciation, the fifty million dollar limitation shall not apply.

If a ballot proposition is approved creating a rural county library district in the county, every rural partial-county library district in that county shall be dissolved and its assets and liabilities transferred to the rural county library district. Where a rural partial-county library district has annexed a city or town, the voters of the city or town shall be allowed to vote on the proposed creation of a rural county library district and, if created, the rural county library district shall include each city and town that was annexed to the rural partial-county library district.

Nothing in this section authorizes the consolidation of a rural partial-county library district with any rural county library district; island library district; city, county, or regional library; intercounty library district; or other rural partial-county library district, unless, in addition to any other requirements imposed by statute, the boards of all library districts involved approve the consolidation. [1999 c 153 s 25; 1994 c 198 s 2; 1993 c 284 s 1.]

Part headings not law—1999 c 153: See note following RCW 57.04.050.