

Chapter 53.18 RCW
EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS—COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND ARBITRATION

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RCW 53.18.010 Definitions. "Port district" shall mean a municipal corporation of the state of Washington created pursuant to Title 53 RCW. Said port districts may also be hereinafter referred to as the "employer."

"Employee" shall include all port employees except managerial and administrative personnel, and their confidential assistants.

"Employee organization" means any lawful association, labor organization, union, federation, council, or brotherhood, having as its primary purpose the representation of employees on matters of employment relations.

"Employment relations" includes, but is not limited to, matters concerning wages, salaries, hours, vacation, sick leave, holiday pay and grievance procedures. [2018 c 251 s 1; 1967 c 101 s 1.]

RCW 53.18.015 Application of public employees' collective bargaining act. Port districts and their employees shall be covered by the provisions of chapter 41.56 RCW except as provided otherwise in this chapter. [1983 c 287 s 1.]

Severability—1983 c 287: See note following RCW 41.56.521.

RCW 53.18.020 Agreements authorized. Port districts may enter into labor agreements or contracts with employee organizations on matters of employment relations: PROVIDED, That nothing in this chapter shall be construed to authorize any employee, or employee organization to cause or engage in a strike or stoppage of work or slowdown or similar activity against any port district. [1967 c 101 s 2.]

RCW 53.18.030 Criteria for choice of employee organization—Procedures for resolution of controversy. In determining which employee organization will represent them, employees shall have maximum freedom in exercising their right of self-organization.

Controversies as to the choice of employee organization within a port shall be submitted to the public employment relations commission. Employee organizations may agree with the port district to

independently resolve jurisdictional disputes: PROVIDED, That when no other procedure is available the procedures of RCW 49.08.010 shall be followed in resolving such disputes. In such case the chair of the public employment relations commission shall, at the request of any employee organization, arbitrate any dispute between employee organizations and enter a binding award in such dispute. [2010 c 8 s 16005; 1975 1st ex.s. c 296 s 38; 1967 c 101 s 3.]

Powers and duties of public employment relations commission: Chapter 41.58 RCW.

RCW 53.18.040 Incidental powers of district. Port districts exercising the authority granted by RCW 53.18.020 may take any of the following actions as incidental thereto: Make necessary expenditures; act jointly with other ports or employers; engage technical assistance; make appearances before and utilize the services of state or federal agencies, boards, courts, or commissions; make retroactive payments of wages where provided by agreements; and exercise all other necessary powers to carry this chapter into effect, including the promulgation of rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this chapter. [1967 c 101 s 4.]

RCW 53.18.050 Agreements—Authorized provisions. A labor agreement signed by a port district may contain:

(1) Provisions that the employee organization chosen by a majority of the employees in a grouping or unit will be recognized as the representative of all employees in the classification included in such grouping or unit;

(2) Maintenance of membership provisions including dues cross-check arrangements as provided in *RCW 41.56.231; and

(3) Provisions providing for binding arbitration, the expenses being equally borne by the parties, in matters of contract interpretation and the settlement of jurisdictional disputes. [2019 c 230 s 24; 1967 c 101 s 5.]

***Reviser's note:** This RCW reference has been corrected to reflect the reorganization of chapter 41.56 RCW by 2025 c 290 s 2.

RCW 53.18.060 Restraints on agreement. No labor agreement or contract entered into by a port district shall:

(1) Restrict the right of the port district in its discretion to hire;

(2) Limit the right of the port to secure its regular or steady employees from the local community;

(3) Include within the same agreements: (a) Port security personnel and (b) port supervisory personnel; and

(4) Include within the same bargaining unit: (a) Port professional personnel and (b) port supervisory personnel. [2018 c 251 s 2; 1967 c 101 s 6.]

RCW 53.18.070 Certain communications—Privilege from examination and disclosure. The privilege established by RCW 5.60.060(11) shall

apply to all employee organizations covered by this chapter and in all proceedings authorized by this chapter. [2023 c 202 s 10.]

Findings—2023 c 202: See note following RCW 5.60.060.