

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF FINDERS & OWNERS

RCW 63.21.010

PROCEDURE WHEN FINDER WISHES TO CLAIM FOUND PROPERTY – APPRAISAL – SURRENDER OF PROPERTY – NOTICE OF INTENT TO CLAIM – PUBLICATION

Any person who finds property that is not unlawful to possess, the owner of which is unknown, and who wishes to claim the found property, shall:

- (1) Within seven days of the finding acquire a signed statement setting forth an appraisal of the current market value of the property prepared by a qualified person engaged in buying or selling like items or by a district court judge;
- (2) Within seven days report the find of property and surrender, if requested, the property and a copy of the evidence of the value of the property to the chief law enforcement officer, or his or her designated representative, of the governmental entity where the property was found, and serve written notice upon the officer of the finder's intent to claim the property if the owner does not make out his or her right to it under this chapter; and
- (3) Within thirty days of the report the governmental entity shall cause notice of the finding to be published at least once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the property was found, unless the appraised value of the property is less than the cost of publishing notice. If the value is less than the cost of publishing notice, the governmental entity may cause notice to be posted or published in other media or formats that do not incur expense to the governmental entity.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF EXTINGUISHING FINDER'S CLAIM TO PROPERTY

The finder's claim to the property shall be extinguished:

- (1) If the owner satisfactorily establishes, within sixty days after the find was reported to the appropriate officer, the owner's right to possession of the property; or
- (2) If the chief law enforcement officer determines and so informs the finder that the property is illegal for the finder to possess.

RELEASE OF PROPERTY TO FINDER – LIMITATIONS – PAYMENT TO GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY OF PORTION OF APPRAISED VALUE – EXPIRATION OF FINDER'S CLAIM

- (1) The found property shall be released to the finder and become the property of the finder sixty days after the find was reported to the appropriate officer if no owner has been found, or sixty days after the final disposition of any judicial or other official proceeding involving the property, whichever is later. The property shall be released only after the finder has presented evidence of payment to the treasurer of the governmental entity handling the found property, the amount of ten dollars plus the amount of the cost of publication of notice incurred by the governmental entity pursuant to RCW 63.21.010, which amount shall be deposited in the general fund of the governmental entity. If the appraised value of the property is less than the cost of publication of notice of the finding, then the finder is not required to pay any fee.

- (2) When ninety days have passed after the found property was reported to the appropriate officer, or ninety days after the final disposition of a judicial or other proceeding involving the found property, and the finder has not completed the requirements of this chapter, the finder's claim shall be deemed to have expired and the found property may be disposed of as unclaimed property under chapter 63.32 or 63.40 RCW. Such laws shall also apply whenever a finder states in writing that he or she has no intention of claiming the found property.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CHAPTER – FORFEITURE OF RIGHT TO PROPERTY

Any finder of property who fails to discharge the duties imposed by this chapter shall forfeit all right to the property and shall be liable for the full value of the property to its owner.

Case Number: _____ Tag Number: _____

Finders Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Finders Address: _____

Item Description: _____

Received by me this _____ day of _____, 20____ Time _____

By: _____