
HOUSE BILL 2877

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representative Sutherland

1 AN ACT Relating to honoring our disabled veterans by providing
2 financial relief; amending RCW 84.36.381, 46.18.235, and 77.32.480;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 84.36.381 and 2019 c 453 s 1 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 A person is exempt from any legal obligation to pay all or a
8 portion of the amount of excess and regular real property taxes due
9 and payable in the year following the year in which a claim is filed,
10 and thereafter, in accordance with the following:

11 (1) (a) The property taxes must have been imposed upon a residence
12 which was occupied by the person claiming the exemption as a
13 principal place of residence as of the time of filing. However, any
14 person who sells, transfers, or is displaced from his or her
15 residence may transfer his or her exemption status to a replacement
16 residence, but no claimant may receive an exemption on more than one
17 residence in any year. Moreover, confinement of the person to a
18 hospital, nursing home, assisted living facility, adult family home,
19 or home of a relative for the purpose of long-term care does not
20 disqualify the claim of exemption if:

21 (i) The residence is temporarily unoccupied;

1 (ii) The residence is occupied by a spouse or a domestic partner
2 and/or a person financially dependent on the claimant for support; or

3 (iii) The residence is rented for the purpose of paying nursing
4 home, hospital, assisted living facility, or adult family home costs.

5 (b) For the purpose of this subsection (1), "relative" means any
6 individual related to the claimant by blood, marriage, or adoption;

7 (2) The person claiming the exemption must have owned, at the
8 time of filing, in fee, as a life estate, or by contract purchase,
9 the residence on which the property taxes have been imposed or if the
10 person claiming the exemption lives in a cooperative housing
11 association, corporation, or partnership, such person must own a
12 share therein representing the unit or portion of the structure in
13 which he or she resides. For purposes of this subsection, a residence
14 owned by a marital community or state registered domestic partnership
15 or owned by cotenants is deemed to be owned by each spouse or each
16 domestic partner or each cotenant, and any lease for life is deemed a
17 life estate;

18 (3) (a) The person claiming the exemption must be:

19 (i) Sixty-one years of age or older on December 31st of the year
20 in which the exemption claim is filed, or must have been, at the time
21 of filing, retired from regular gainful employment by reason of
22 disability; or

23 (ii) A veteran of the armed forces of the United States entitled
24 to and receiving compensation from the United States department of
25 veterans affairs at:

26 (A) A combined service-connected evaluation rating of (~~eighty~~)
27 fifty percent or higher; or

28 (B) A total disability rating for a service-connected disability
29 without regard to evaluation percent.

30 (b) However, any surviving spouse or surviving domestic partner
31 of a person who was receiving an exemption at the time of the
32 person's death will qualify if the surviving spouse or surviving
33 domestic partner (~~is fifty-seven years of age or older and~~)
34 otherwise meets the requirements of this section;

35 (4) The amount that the person is exempt from an obligation to
36 pay is calculated on the basis of combined disposable income, as
37 defined in RCW 84.36.383. If the person claiming the exemption was
38 retired for two months or more of the assessment year, the combined
39 disposable income of such person must be calculated by multiplying
40 the average monthly combined disposable income of such person during

1 the months such person was retired by twelve. If the income of the
2 person claiming exemption is reduced for two or more months of the
3 assessment year by reason of the death of the person's spouse or the
4 person's domestic partner, or when other substantial changes occur in
5 disposable income that are likely to continue for an indefinite
6 period of time, the combined disposable income of such person must be
7 calculated by multiplying the average monthly combined disposable
8 income of such person after such occurrences by twelve. If it is
9 necessary to estimate income to comply with this subsection, the
10 assessor may require confirming documentation of such income prior to
11 May 31 of the year following application;

12 (5)(a) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and
13 has a combined disposable income equal (~~((+t+))~~) to or less than
14 income threshold 3 is exempt from all excess property taxes, the
15 additional state property tax imposed under RCW 84.52.065(2), and the
16 portion of the regular property taxes authorized pursuant to RCW
17 84.55.050 and approved by the voters, if the legislative authority of
18 the county or city imposing the additional regular property taxes
19 identified this exemption in the ordinance placing the RCW 84.55.050
20 measure on the ballot; and

21 (b)(i) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and
22 has a combined disposable income equal to or less than income
23 threshold 2 but greater than income threshold 1 is exempt from all
24 regular property taxes on the greater of fifty thousand dollars or
25 thirty-five percent of the valuation of his or her residence, but not
26 to exceed seventy thousand dollars of the valuation of his or her
27 residence; or

28 (ii) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and has
29 a combined disposable income equal to or less than income threshold 1
30 is exempt from all regular property taxes on the greater of sixty
31 thousand dollars or sixty percent of the valuation of his or her
32 residence;

33 (6)(a) For a person who otherwise qualifies under this section
34 and has a combined disposable income equal (~~((+t+))~~) to or less than
35 income threshold 3, the valuation of the residence is the assessed
36 value of the residence on the later of January 1, 1995, or January
37 1st of the assessment year the person first qualifies under this
38 section. If the person subsequently fails to qualify under this
39 section only for one year because of high income, this same valuation
40 must be used upon requalification. If the person fails to qualify for

1 more than one year in succession because of high income or fails to
2 qualify for any other reason, the valuation upon requalification is
3 the assessed value on January 1st of the assessment year in which the
4 person requalifies. If the person transfers the exemption under this
5 section to a different residence, the valuation of the different
6 residence is the assessed value of the different residence on January
7 1st of the assessment year in which the person transfers the
8 exemption.

9 (b) In no event may the valuation under this subsection be
10 greater than the true and fair value of the residence on January 1st
11 of the assessment year.

12 (c) This subsection does not apply to subsequent improvements to
13 the property in the year in which the improvements are made.
14 Subsequent improvements to the property must be added to the value
15 otherwise determined under this subsection at their true and fair
16 value in the year in which they are made.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.18.235 and 2011 c 332 s 6 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1) A registered owner who is a veteran, as defined in RCW
20 41.04.007, may apply to the department for disabled American veteran
21 or former prisoner of war license plates, for use on one personal use
22 motor vehicle required to display one or two license plates,
23 excluding vehicles registered under chapter 46.87 RCW, upon terms and
24 conditions established by the department. The veteran must be
25 recorded as the registered owner of the motor vehicle on which the
26 disabled American veteran or former prisoner of war license plate or
27 plates will be displayed and:

28 (a) Provide certification from the veterans administration or the
29 military service from which the veteran was discharged that the
30 veteran has a service-connected disability rating;

31 (b) Have lost the use of both hands or one foot;

32 (c) Have been captured and incarcerated by an enemy of the United
33 States during a period of war with the United States and have
34 received a prisoner of war medal;

35 (d) Have become blind in both eyes as the result of military
36 service; or

37 (e) Be rated by the veterans administration or the military
38 service from which the veteran was discharged and be receiving

1 service-connected compensation at or above the (~~one hundred~~) fifty
2 percent rate that is expected to exist for more than one year.

3 (2) The special license plates under this section must:

4 (a) Display distinguishing marks, letters, or numerals indicating
5 that the registered owner is a disabled American veteran or former
6 prisoner of war; and

7 (b) Be issued for one personal use vehicle without the payment of
8 any vehicle license fees, license plate fees, or excise taxes.

9 (3) A registered owner who is a veteran, as defined in RCW
10 41.04.007, may, in lieu of applying for the special license plates
11 under this section, apply for regular issue or any qualifying special
12 license plate and receive the full benefit of the vehicle license fee
13 and excise tax exemption provided in subsection (2)(b) of this
14 section.

15 (4) The department may periodically verify the (~~one hundred~~
16 ~~percent~~) rate as described in subsection (1)(e) of this section.

17 (5) A veteran who has been issued disabled American veteran or
18 former prisoner of war license plates under this section before July
19 1, 1983, continues to be eligible for the vehicle license fee and
20 excise tax exemption described in subsection (2)(b) of this section.

21 (6) A disabled American veteran and former prisoner of war
22 license plate or plates may be transferred from one motor vehicle to
23 another motor vehicle owned by the veteran upon application to the
24 department, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by
25 the director.

26 (7) For the purposes of this section:

27 (a) "Blind" means the definition of "blind" used by the state of
28 Washington in determining eligibility for financial assistance to the
29 blind under Title 74 RCW; and

30 (b) "Special license plates" does not include any plate from the
31 armed forces license plate collection established in RCW
32 46.18.200(~~(+3)~~) (2).

33 (8) Any unauthorized use of a special license plate under this
34 section is a gross misdemeanor.

35 **Sec. 3.** RCW 77.32.480 and 2016 c 78 s 1 are each amended to read
36 as follows:

37 (1) Upon written application, a combination fishing license shall
38 be issued at the reduced rate of five dollars and all hunting

1 licenses shall be issued at the reduced rate of a youth hunting
2 license fee for the following individuals:

3 (a) A resident sixty-five years old or older who is an honorably
4 discharged veteran of the United States armed forces having a
5 service-connected disability of less than one hundred percent;

6 (b) A resident who is an honorably discharged veteran of the
7 United States armed forces with a (~~thirty percent or more~~) service-
8 connected disability of at least thirty percent, but less than one
9 hundred percent;

10 (c) A resident with a disability who permanently uses a
11 wheelchair;

12 (d) A resident who is blind or visually impaired; and

13 (e) A resident with a developmental disability as defined in RCW
14 71A.10.020 with documentation of the disability certified by a
15 physician licensed to practice in this state.

16 (2) Upon department verification of eligibility, a nonstate
17 resident veteran with a disability who otherwise satisfies the
18 criteria of subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section, or who has a
19 service-connected disability of one hundred percent, must be issued a
20 combination fishing license or any hunting license at the same cost
21 charged to a nondisabled Washington resident for the same license.

22 (3) Upon written application and department verification, the
23 following recreational hunting licenses must be issued at no cost to
24 a resident member of the state guard or national guard, as defined in
25 RCW 38.04.010, as long as the state guard or national guard member
26 is: An active full-time state guard or national guard employee; or a
27 state guard or national guard member whose status requires the state
28 guard or national guard member to participate in drill training on a
29 part-time basis:

30 (a) A small game hunting license under RCW 77.32.460(1);

31 (b) A supplemental migratory bird permit under RCW 77.32.350; and

32 (c) A big game hunting license under RCW 77.32.450 (1) and (2).

33 (4) Upon written application and department verification, a
34 resident who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States
35 armed forces with a service-connected disability of one hundred
36 percent must be issued a combination fishing license or any hunting
37 license at no cost.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The provisions of RCW 82.32.805 and
2 82.32.808 do not apply to section 1 of this act.

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