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**Juvenile Justice & Family Law  
Committee**

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**SB 5970**

**Brief Description:** Requiring that the family law handbook be provided when a person applies for a marriage license.

**Sponsors:** Senator Hargrove.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the county auditor to distribute a family law handbook to an individual who applies for a marriage license under RCW 26.04.140.

**Hearing Date:** 3/27/03

**Staff:** Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

**Background:**

In 2002, the Legislature created a requirement that the county auditor provide a family law handbook containing certain information relating to the marital relationship to a person who files a marriage certificate.

The Legislature declared that strong marital relationships result in stronger families, children, and communities, and place less of a fiscal burden on the state. The Legislature also declared that the state has a compelling interest to provide couples applying for a marriage license with information regarding marriage and the effects of divorce.

The law required the Office of the Administrator of the Courts to develop a family law handbook that contains the following information:

- prenuptial agreements;
- shared parental responsibility for children, including establishing a residential schedule for the child in the event of divorce;
- information on notice requirements and standards for parental relocation;
- information on child support;
- property rights;
- spousal maintenance;

- domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect;
- court process for dissolution;
- effects of dissolution on children; and
- community resources that are available to separating or divorcing persons.

The handbook is to be given by the county auditor to persons filing marriage certificates.

**Summary of Bill:**

The county auditor is required to distribute the family law handbook to an individual who applies for a marriage license under RCW 26.04.140, rather than distributing the handbook to the individual at the time he or she files the marriage license.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.