

HB 2624-S2.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Requires any person who discovers skeletal human remains to notify the coroner and local law enforcement in the most expeditious manner possible. Any person knowing of the existence of human remains and not having good reason to believe that the coroner and local law enforcement has notice thereof and who fails to give notice thereof is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Requires the coroner to make a determination whether the skeletal human remains are forensic or nonforensic within five business days of receiving notification of a finding of such remains provided that there is sufficient evidence to make such a determination within that time period. The coroner will retain jurisdiction over forensic remains.

Provides, upon determination that the remains are nonforensic, the coroner must notify the department of archaeology and historic preservation within two business days. The department will have jurisdiction over such remains until provenance of the remains is established. A determination that remains are nonforensic does not create a presumption of removal or nonremoval.

Requires, upon receiving notice from a coroner of a finding of nonforensic skeletal human remains, the department to notify the appropriate local cemeteries, and all affected Indian tribes via certified mail to the head of the appropriate tribal government, and contact the appropriate tribal cultural resources staff within two business days of the finding.

Provides if the remains are determined to be Indian, the department must notify all affected Indian tribes via certified mail to the head of the appropriate tribal government within two business days and contact the appropriate tribal cultural resources staff.

Requires the department of archaeology and historic preservation to develop and maintain a centralized database and geographic information systems spatial layer of all known cemeteries and known sites of burials of human remains in Washington state.

Creates the skeletal human remains assistance account.

Requires the department of archaeology and historic preservation to communicate with the appropriate committees of the legislature by November 15, 2009, and biennially thereafter, regarding the numbers of inadvertent discoveries of skeletal remains and associated activities pursuant to this act.