
HOUSE BILL 1039

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Representatives S. Hunt, Johnson, Gregerson, and Jinkins

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1 AN ACT Relating to allowing the use of a signature stamp for
2 voting purposes; amending RCW 29A.08.230; and reenacting and amending
3 RCW 29A.40.110.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29A.08.230 and 2013 c 11 s 14 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 For all voter registrations, the registrant shall sign the
8 following oath:

9 "I declare that the facts on this voter registration form are
10 true. I am a citizen of the United States, I will have lived at this
11 address in Washington for at least thirty days immediately before the
12 next election at which I vote, I will be at least eighteen years old
13 when I vote, I am not disqualified from voting due to a court order,
14 and I am not under department of corrections supervision for a
15 Washington felony conviction."

16 If the registrant is unable to write or sign his or her name
17 because of a physical disability, he or she may sign the registration
18 affidavit either by making his or her mark or by using a signature
19 stamp.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29A.40.110 and 2011 c 349 s 18, 2011 c 348 s 4, and
2 2011 c 10 s 41 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

3 (1) The opening and subsequent processing of return envelopes for
4 any primary or election may begin upon receipt. The tabulation of
5 absentee ballots must not commence until after 8:00 p.m. on the day
6 of the primary or election.

7 (2) All received return envelopes must be placed in secure
8 locations from the time of delivery to the county auditor until their
9 subsequent opening. After opening the return envelopes, the county
10 canvassing board shall place all of the ballots in secure storage
11 until processing. Ballots may be taken from the inner envelopes and
12 all the normal procedural steps may be performed to prepare these
13 ballots for tabulation.

14 (3) The canvassing board, or its designated representatives,
15 shall examine the postmark on the return envelope and signature on
16 the declaration before processing the ballot. The ballot must either
17 be received no later than 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary or
18 election, or must be postmarked no later than the day of the primary
19 or election. All personnel assigned to verify signatures must receive
20 training on statewide standards for signature verification. Personnel
21 shall verify that the voter's signature on the ballot declaration is
22 the same as the signature of that voter in the registration files of
23 the county. Verification may be conducted by an automated
24 verification system approved by the secretary of state. A variation
25 between the signature of the voter on the ballot declaration and the
26 signature of that voter in the registration files due to the
27 substitution of initials or the use of common nicknames is permitted
28 so long as the surname and handwriting are clearly the same. A
29 signature made using a signature stamp is permitted for a voter
30 unable to write or sign his or her name because of a physical
31 disability. Unless the voter registered to vote using a signature
32 stamp, pursuant to RCW 29A.08.230, he or she must notify the
33 applicable county auditor and submit an image of the signature stamp
34 for signature verification purposes.

35 (4) If the postmark is missing or illegible, the date on the
36 ballot declaration to which the voter has attested determines the
37 validity, as to the time of voting, for that ballot. For overseas
38 voters and service voters, the date on the declaration to which the
39 voter has attested determines the validity, as to the time of voting,
40 for that ballot. Any overseas voter or service voter may return the

1 signed declaration and voted ballot by fax or e-mail by 8:00 p.m. on
2 the day of the primary or election, and the county auditor must use
3 established procedures to maintain the secrecy of the ballot.

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