
HOUSE BILL 1854

State of Washington **69th Legislature** **2025 Regular Session**

By Representatives Engell, Klicker, Manjarrez, Abell, and Dufault

Read first time 02/05/25. Referred to Committee on Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to authorizing subdivision of land in rural areas
2 for families; adding a new section to chapter 36.70A RCW; adding a
3 new section to chapter 36.70 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the need for
6 families to provide for housing and also care for elderly family
7 members is important, particularly in rural areas where housing
8 options are far fewer. The legislature also finds that assisting
9 families with their ability to live on the land and continue to farm
10 is part of the rural character that has inadvertently been curtailed
11 by interpretations of the growth management act that are not in
12 statute related to size of lots outside of the urban growth areas.
13 This act recognizes that the growth management act is supposed to
14 foster the ability for farm families to live and work on the land.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70A
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) As part of the requirement in RCW 36.70A.070 for the rural
18 element to provide a variety of rural densities and uses and apply
19 innovative techniques in RCW 36.70A.090, a county may allow for a

1 family member to subdivide land for use or ownership of other family
2 members.

3 (2) Any county may permit the division of land outside of the
4 urban growth area for the transfer or sale to a family member
5 including, but not limited to, parents, children, grandchildren,
6 spouses, and siblings when the requirements of this section are met.

7 (3) In order for land to be divided under this section:

8 (a) The original parcel or lot must have been owned for more than
9 five years by the grantor or have been transferred from a family
10 member that is deceased with ownership in the family for more than
11 five years;

12 (b) The subdivision application must identify the family member
13 that each new lot is to be for and no receiving family member may
14 have more than one lot; and

15 (c) The lot sizes must be large enough to accommodate a residence
16 and infrastructure, such as a well and on-site sewage system, yet are
17 not required to be the same size as for a single residence being
18 built on property not owned by family members required in local
19 ordinances, comprehensive plans, or development regulations.

20 (4) Except for lot size and setbacks, any development of a lot
21 created under this section must conform with local regulations in
22 place at the time the permits for development are submitted.

23 (5) Decisions of a court or the growth management hearings board
24 related to requiring a specific lot size for rural character that
25 conflict with this section are replaced by the provisions of this
26 section.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70
28 RCW to read as follows:

29 (1) Any county may permit the division of land outside of the
30 urban growth area for the transfer or sale to a family member
31 including, but not limited to, parents, children, grandchildren,
32 spouses, and siblings when the requirements of this section are met.

33 (2) In order for land to be divided under this section:

34 (a) The original parcel or lot must have been owned for more than
35 five years by the grantor or have been transferred from a family
36 member that is deceased with ownership in the family for more than
37 five years;

1 (b) The subdivision application must identify the family member
2 that each new lot is to be for and no receiving family member may
3 have more than one lot; and

4 (c) The lot sizes must be large enough to accommodate a residence
5 and infrastructure, such as a well and on-site sewage system, yet are
6 not required to be the same size as for a single residence being
7 built on property not owned by family members required in local
8 ordinances, comprehensive plans, or development regulations.

9 (3) Except for lot size and setbacks, any development of a lot
10 created under this section must conform with local regulations in
11 place at the time the permits for development are submitted.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act may be known and cited as the
13 family housing act.

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