

Chapter 19.220 RCW
INTERNATIONAL MATCHMAKING ORGANIZATIONS

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RCW 19.220.005 Intent. The legislature intends to provide increased consumer awareness on the part of persons living abroad regarding Washington residents who utilize international matchmaking services for purposes of establishing relationships with those living abroad. The legislature recognizes that persons living abroad are already required to provide background information to the federal government during visa applications, but, unlike residents of the United States, are unlikely to have the means to access and fully verify personal history information about prospective spouses residing in the United States. The legislature does not intend to impede the ability of any person to establish a marital or romantic relationship, but rather to increase the ability of persons living abroad to make informed decisions about Washington residents.

The legislature does not intend to adversely impact in any way those businesses who offer international matchmaking services on a not for fee basis. [2002 c 115 s 1.]

RCW 19.220.010 Dissemination of information—Definitions. (1) Each international matchmaking organization doing business in Washington state shall disseminate to a recruit, upon request, state background check information and personal history information relating to any Washington state resident about whom any information is provided to the recruit, in the recruit's native language. The organization shall notify all recruits that background check and personal history information is available upon request. The notice that background check and personal history information is available upon request shall be in the recruit's native language and shall be displayed in a manner that separates it from other information, is highly noticeable, and in lettering not less than one-quarter of an inch high.

(2) If an international matchmaking organization receives a request for information from a recruit pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the organization shall notify the Washington state resident of the request. Upon receiving notification, the Washington state resident shall obtain from the state patrol and provide to the organization the complete transcript of any background check information provided pursuant to RCW 43.43.760 based on a submission of fingerprint impressions and provided pursuant to RCW 43.43.838 and shall provide to the organization his or her personal history information. The organization shall require the resident to affirm that personal history information is complete and accurate. The organization shall refrain from knowingly providing any further

services to the recruit or the Washington state resident in regards to facilitating future interaction between the recruit and the Washington state resident until the organization has obtained the requested information and provided it to the recruit.

(3) This section does not apply to a traditional matchmaking organization of a religious nature that otherwise operates in compliance with the laws of the countries of the recruits of such organization and the laws of the United States nor to any organization that does not charge a fee to any party for the service provided.

(4) As used in this section:

(a) "International matchmaking organization" means a corporation, partnership, business, or other legal entity, whether or not organized under the laws of the United States or any state, that does business in the United States and for profit offers to Washington state residents, including aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence and residing in Washington state, dating, matrimonial, or social referral services involving citizens of a foreign country or countries who are not residing in the United States, by: (i) An exchange of names, telephone numbers, addresses, or statistics; (ii) selection of photographs; or (iii) a social environment provided by the organization in a country other than the United States.

(b) "Personal history information" means a declaration of the person's current marital status, the number of previous marriages, annulments, and dissolutions for the person, and whether any previous marriages occurred as a result of receiving services from an international matchmaking organization; founded allegations of child abuse or neglect; and any existing orders under chapter 7.105 or 10.99 RCW, or any of the former chapters 7.90, 10.14, and 26.50 RCW. Personal history information shall include information from the state of Washington and any information from other states or countries.

(c) "Recruit" means a noncitizen, nonresident person, recruited by an international matchmaking organization for the purpose of providing dating, matrimonial, or social referral services. [2021 c 215 s 129; 2006 c 138 s 24; 2003 c 268 s 1; 2002 c 115 s 2.]

Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215: See note following RCW 7.105.900.

RCW 19.220.020 Jurisdiction. For purposes of establishing personal jurisdiction under chapter 115, Laws of 2002, an international matchmaking organization is deemed to be doing business in Washington and therefore subject to specific jurisdiction if it contracts for matchmaking services with a Washington resident or if it is considered to be doing business under any other provision or rule of law. [2002 c 115 s 3.]

RCW 19.220.030 Finding—Consumer protection act—Application to chapter. The legislature finds that the practices covered by this chapter are matters vitally affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. A violation of this chapter is not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business and is an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the

purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW.
[2002 c 115 s 4.]

RCW 19.220.900 Effective date—2002 c 115. This act takes effect September 1, 2002. [2002 c 115 s 7.]

RCW 19.220.901 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521. For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 s 59.]