Chapter 308-17 WAC
PRIVATE INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES AND PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

WAC

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PART A
GENERAL

WAC 308-17-010 Promulgation—Authority. The director of the department of licensing, state of Washington, pursuant to the authority vested in the director by RCW 18.165.170, does hereby promulgate the following rules and regulations relating to the licensing of private investigative agencies, private investigators and armed private investigators.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-010, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-010, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

(10/5/18)

WAC 308-17-020 Organization. The principal location of the private investigator licensing program is at 405 Black Lake Boulevard SW, Olympia, Washington 98504. The department of licensing administers the Washington private investigator license law, chapter 18.165 RCW. Submissions and requests for information regarding private investigative agency licenses, private investigator licenses, and armed private investigator licenses may be sent in writing to the Private Investigator Program, Department of Licensing, P.O. Box 9045, Olympia, Washington 98507-9045.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-020, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-020, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-030 Definitions. (1) Words and terms used in these rules shall have the same meaning as each has under chapter 18.165 RCW unless otherwise clearly provided in these rules, or the context in which they are used in these rules clearly indicates that they be given some other meaning.

(2) "Principal owner" means the sole owner of a private investigative agency.

(3) "Principal partner" means the partner who exercises operational control over a private investigative agency.

(4) "Certified trainer" means a principal or a licensed private investigator or armed private investigator who has fulfilled the requirements of WAC 308-17-320.

(5) "Company identification" in RCW 18.165.160(6), shall include the license card issued by the director to a private investigator or armed private investigator.

(6) "Fire investigator or arson investigator" is anyone who qualifies for certification and has certification by the International Association of Arson Investigators; the National Association of Fire Investigators; or any organization or government body that has a certification program that meets all the requirements of NFPA 1033.

(7) "Address of record" is a physical street address.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-030, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-030, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

PART B
LICENSEING APPLICATION AND FEES

WAC 308-17-100 Agency applications—Conditions. Any person desiring to be licensed as a private investigative agency must substantiate the experience requirements in RCW 18.165.050, or pass an examination as provided in this chapter. Persons meeting the experience requirements shall make application for a license on a form prescribed by the director. Persons who do not meet the experience require-
ments shall make application for an examination and for a license on a form prescribed by the director. Concurrently, the applicant shall:

1. Pay a nonrefundable fee or fees as prescribed by WAC 308-17-150.

2. If the applicant is the qualifying agent of a corporation, he or she shall furnish a certified copy of its articles of incorporation, and a list of its officers and directors and their addresses. If the applicant is the qualifying agent of a foreign corporation, he or she shall furnish a certified copy of certificate of authority to conduct business in the state of Washington, a list of its officers and directors and their addresses, and evidence of current registration with the secretary of state. If the applicant is a partnership or limited partnership, each partner shall apply and furnish their addresses.

3. When a license is issued to a principal owner he or she shall act as the principal of the agency without the payment of additional license fees. When a license is issued to a corporation the qualifying agent shall act as the principal of the agency without the payment of additional fees.

WAC 308-17-105 Branch office notification—Conditions. A principal of a private investigative agency shall notify the director of the addresses of all branch offices under the same name as the main office as a part of the agency application. The director shall issue a duplicate license for each of the branch offices showing the location of the main office and the particular branch. Each duplicate license shall be prominently displayed in the office for which it is issued. The principal shall notify the director by mail, within thirty days, of any changes to branch office addresses to include additions or deletions of branches.

WAC 308-17-110 Private investigator applications—Conditions. Any person desiring to be a private investigator shall make application for a license on a form prescribed by the director and pay a nonrefundable fee as prescribed by WAC 308-17-150.

WAC 308-17-120 Armed private investigator applications—Conditions. (1) Any person desiring to be an armed private detective shall obtain a firearms certificate from the criminal justice training commission, make application on a form prescribed by the director, and pay a nonrefundable fee as prescribed by WAC 308-17-150.

(2) If the applicant is an alien resident, the applicant must provide proof of their alien firearm license when they submit an application for original or renewal of their armed private investigator license. Proof of alien firearm license may be provided by submitting a copy of their current alien firearm license.

WAC 308-17-130 Application for private investigator and armed private investigator license, licensed in another state—Conditions. Any person applying for a private investigator or armed private investigator license who holds a valid license, registration, identification, or similar card issued by another state that the director has determined has selection, training, and other requirements at least equal to those required by chapter 18.165 RCW shall make application on a form prescribed by the director, pay the fee as prescribed by WAC 308-17-150 for a private investigator or armed private investigator license, and submit evidence of licensure in another state by a license verification form completed by an administrative officer of the licensure authority of such state.

WAC 308-17-140 Comments by chief law enforcement officers and employers. If comments required by RCW 18.165.070(3), are not received by the department within ten working days from the forwarding date, the permanent license for a private investigator shall be issued if he or she is otherwise qualified.

WAC 308-17-150 Private investigative agency, private investigator, and armed private investigator fees. Licenses issued to private investigator agencies and private investigators expire one year from the date of issuance and must be renewed each year. The fees are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Fee</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private investigative agency/principal fee: Application/examination/ includes first examination plus current applicable background check fees</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal armed endorsement</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reexamination</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License renewal</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late renewal penalty</td>
<td>See below*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of principal/includes first examination plus current applicable background check fees</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Ch. 308-17 WAC p. 2]
Private Investigators and Agencies

**WAC 308-17-160 Expiration and renewal of licenses.** Licenses issued to private investigators and armed private investigators expire one year from the date of issuance which date will be the renewal date. Licenses issued to private investigative agencies expire one year from the date of issuance which date will be the renewal date, except that if the corporation registration or certificate of authority filed with the secretary of state expires, the agency license issued to the corporation shall expire on that date. Licenses must be renewed each year on or before the date established herein and a renewal license fee as prescribed by the director in WAC 308-17-150 must be paid.

If the application for a renewal license is not received by the director on or before the renewal date, a penalty fee as prescribed by the director in WAC 308-17-150 shall be paid. Acceptance by the director of an application for renewal after the renewal date shall not be a waiver of the delinquency.

The license of any person whose license renewal fee is not received within one year from the date of expiration shall be cancelled. This person may obtain a new license by satisfying the procedures and qualifications for initial licensing, including the successful completion of any applicable training and examination requirements.

**WAC 308-17-165 Private investigator and armed private investigator—Termination of services.** A person licensed as a private investigator or armed private investigator may perform duties and activities as licensed only under the direction and supervision of a licensed agency principal and as a representative of such principal. This relationship may be terminated unilaterally by either the company principal or private investigator or armed private investigator.

Notice of such termination shall be by the agency principal to the director without delay and such notice shall be accompanied by, and include the surrender of, the private investigator or armed private investigator license held by the agency.

Notice of termination shall be provided by signature of the agency principal, or a person authorized by the principal to sign for such principal, on the surrendered license. The termination date shall be the postmark date or date the license is hand delivered to the department. If the license held by the agency cannot be surrendered to the department because the license has been lost, the agency principal or authorized representative shall complete and submit an affidavit of lost license on a form provided by the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-165, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-165, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

**WAC 308-17-170 Inactive license.** (1) Any license issued under chapter 18.165 RCW and not otherwise revoked or suspended shall be deemed "inactive" at any time it is delivered to the director. Until reissued, the holder of an inactive license shall be deemed to be unlicensed.

(2) An inactive license may be placed in an active status upon completion of an application as provided by the director and upon compliance with the rules adopted pursuant to chapter 18.165 RCW.

(3) An inactive license may not be renewed. The inactive license will be cancelled if not activated and renewed within one year of the expiration date. To obtain a new license the person must satisfy the procedures and qualifications for initial licensing, including the successful completion of any applicable training and examination requirements.

(4) The provisions of chapter 18.165 RCW relating to the denial, suspension, and revocation of a license shall be applicable to an inactive license as well as an active license, except that when proceedings to suspend or revoke an inactive license have been initiated, the license shall remain inactive until the proceedings have been completed.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-165, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-165, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

**WAC 308-17-180 Application of brief adjudicative proceedings.** The director adopts RCW 34.05.482 through 34.05.494 for the administration of brief adjudicative proceedings conducted by request, and/or at the discretion of the director pursuant to RCW 34.05.482 for the categories of matters set forth below. Brief adjudicative proceedings will be limited to a determination of one or more of the following issues:

(1) A determination whether an applicant for a license meets the minimum criteria for a license to practice as a private investigator in this state and the department proposes to deny the application;

[Ch. 308-17 WAC p. 3]
(2) A determination whether a person is in compliance with the terms and conditions of a final order or agreement previously issued by the department;

(3) A determination whether an education course or curriculum meets the criteria for approval when approval by the department is required or authorized by statute or rule; and

(4) A determination whether a license holder requesting renewal has submitted all required information and meets minimum criteria for renewal.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110 and 2018 c 199. WSR 18-21-028, § 308-17-180, filed 10/5/18, effective 11/5/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-180, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97.]

WAC 308-17-185 Preliminary record in brief adjudicative proceedings. (1) The preliminary record with respect to an application for an original or renewal license or for approval of an education course or curriculum shall consist of:

(a) The application for the license, renewal, or approval and all associated documents;

(b) All documents relied upon by the program in proposing to deny the application, renewal, or approval; and

(c) All correspondence between the applicant for license, renewal, or approval and the program regarding the application.

(2) The preliminary record with respect to determination of compliance with a previously issued final order or agreement shall consist of:

(a) The previously issued final order or agreement;

(b) All reports or other documents submitted by, or at the direction of, the license holder, in full or partial fulfillment of the terms of the final order or agreement;

(c) All correspondence between the license holder and the program regarding compliance with the final order or agreement; and

(d) All documents relied upon by the program showing that the license holder has failed to comply with the previously issued final order or agreement.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110 and 2018 c 199. WSR 18-21-028, § 308-17-185, filed 10/5/18, effective 11/5/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-185, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97.]

WAC 308-17-190 Conduct of brief adjudicative proceedings. (1) Brief adjudicative proceedings shall be conducted by a presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings designated by the director. The presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings shall have agency expertise in the subject matter but shall not have personally participated in the decision to issue the initiating document.

(2) The parties or their representatives may present written documentation. The presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceeding shall designate the date by which written documents must be submitted by the parties.

(3) The presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings may, in his or her discretion, entertain oral argument from the parties or their representatives.

(4) No witnesses may appear to testify.

(5) In addition to the record, the presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings may employ agency expertise as a basis for decision.

(6) The presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings shall not issue an oral order. Within ten days of the final date for submission of materials or oral argument, if any, the presiding officer for brief adjudicative proceedings shall enter an initial order.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-190, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97.]

PART C

OFFICE REQUIREMENTS AND LICENSEE’S RESPONSIBILITIES

WAC 308-17-205 Filing of licenses. Licenses of all private investigators and armed private investigators shall be on file in the office located at the address appearing on the individual license.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-205, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-205, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-210 Change of office location. The principal of a private investigative agency shall notify the department of the change of location and mailing address of the agency office within ten working days by filing a completed change of address application with the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-210, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-210, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-220 Licensee’s responsibilities. It is the responsibility of each and every licensee to obtain a copy of and be knowledgeable of and keep current with the rules implementing chapter 18.165 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-220, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-230 Complaint notification. Every licensee shall, within twenty days after service or knowledge thereof, notify the private investigator program manager of any criminal complaint, information, indictment, or conviction (including a plea of guilty or nolo contendere) in which the licensee is named as a defendant.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-230, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-230, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-240 Required records. The minimum records the principal of a private investigative agency shall be required to keep are:[1]

(1) Preassignment training and testing records for each private investigator.

(2) The company principal shall maintain proof of annual shooting requirements for each armed private investigator employed by the private investigator company in the armed private investigator's training files or employee's files.
These records shall be retained and available for inspection by the director or the director’s authorized representative for a minimum of three years.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.165 RCW. WSR 03-03-024, § 308-17-240, filed 1/8/03, effective 2/10/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-240, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-240, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

Revisor’s note: RCW 34.05.395 requires the use of underlining and deletion marks to indicate amendments to existing rules, and deems ineffectual changes not filed by the agency in this manner. The bracketed material in the above section does not appear to conform to the statutory requirement.

PART D

PREASSIGNMENT TRAINING AND EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

WAC 308-17-300 Minimum preassignment training and testing requirements. (1) The preassignment training required by RCW 18.165.090, shall include as a minimum four hours of training covering the following areas:

(a) Legal powers and limitations.
   (i) Representation and misrepresentation.
   (A) How to properly identify yourself.
   (B) Misrepresentation defined.
   (C) Problems/liability arising out of misrepresentation.
   (ii) Powers of arrest.
   (A) Laws pertaining to arrest by private citizen.
   (B) Probable cause.
   (C) Potential liability resulting from false arrest claim.
   (b) Evidence.
      (i) Definition.
      (A) Written.
      (B) Recorded.
      (C) Material.
      (ii) Marking.
      (iii) Storage.
      (iv) Chain of custody documentation.
      (c) Report writing.
         (i) Elements of a report.
         (ii) Fact versus opinion or assumption.
         (iii) Pennmanship.
         (d) Courtroom testimony.
            (i) Expert witnesses.
            (ii) Manufacturing evidence.
            (iii) Perjury.
            (iv) Discovery.
            (e) Confidentiality/privilege.
            (f) Federal, state, county, and municipal court systems.
            (g) Common sources of public information.
               (i) Court docket information.
               (ii) U.S. Postal Service.
               (iii) Voter registration.
               (iv) Credit reporting agencies.
               (v) Department of licensing.
               (vi) Private sources.
               (h) Frequent activities in violation of criminal statutes.
                  (i) Privacy laws: Electronic surveillance.
                  (ii) Chapter 9.73 RCW privacy violations.
                  (iii) U.S. Code violations.
                  (iii) Appellate court decisions.

   (A) Explanation of privacy.
   (B) Video/photography.
   (C) Tracking transmissions.
   (j) Fair Credit Reporting Act.
      (i) Permissible purposes of reports.
      (ii) Obtaining information under false pretenses.
   (2) The minimum time each private investigator candidate must spend in preassignment training is four hours. The time spent on each required topic may vary providing the time for all required topics totals four hours and the four hours is devoted solely to the topics designated.

   (3) All private investigator applicants, after receiving preassignment training and prior to receiving their license, must successfully complete a test designed to demonstrate their understanding and retention of the information learned in the training course. This test shall consist of a minimum of thirty multiple questions based on the training topics outlined above. Test results must be verified and signed by a certified trainer. All applicants must answer all questions correctly on both the applicant and the certified trainer verifying knowledge of the correct answer(s).

   [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-300, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-300, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]

WAC 308-17-310 Private investigative agency principal examination requirements. (1) All principals of an agency who do not meet the experience requirements required by RCW 18.165.050, must pass an examination demonstrating their knowledge and proficiency in the following areas:

   A. Washington state laws (45% of test)
   [I.] Private investigators law - chapters 18.165 RCW and 308-17 WAC
   [II.] All topics contained in the private investigator preassignment training course (WAC 308-17-300)
   [III.] Chapter 9.73 RCW Privacy, violating right of privacy (e.g. surveillance and wiretapping)
   [IV.] Chapter 42.17 RCW Public disclosure
   [V.] Title 9A RCW - Washington state criminal code
   [VI.] Other resources:
      - Title 2 RCW - Courts of record
      - Title 3 RCW - District courts/courts of limited jurisdictions
      - Title 26 RCW - Domestic relations (e.g. marriage, dissolution, adoption)
      - Title 36 RCW - Counties
      - Title 46 RCW - Motor vehicles (e.g. accidents, forms)
   [B.] Federal law (30% of test)
   [IV.] Federal Wiretapping Act (18 U.S.C[.])
   [V.] Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act
   [VI.] United States Code
   [C.] Court systems (7.5% of test)
   [I.] Federal courts

(10/5/18)
WAC 308-17-320 Certification of preassignment training trainers. An individual must successfully pass the agency principal examination and have three years investigative experience to become a certified trainer. Individuals who fail the exam will be required to wait a minimum of seven days before reexamination. There is no limit on the number of certified trainers an individual private investigative agency may have certified.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.165 RCW. WSR 02-23-060, § 308-17-320, filed 11/18/02, effective 1/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170(1), 43.24.086 and 34.05.482. WSR 97-17-051, § 308-17-320, filed 8/15/97, effective 9/15/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.165.170. WSR 91-22-111, § 308-17-310, filed 11/6/91, effective 12/7/91.]