
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6182

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senate Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Padden, Becker, Stanford, Wilson, C., and Dhingra)

1 AN ACT Relating to closed captioning on televisions in places of
2 public accommodation; adding a new section to chapter 49.60 RCW; and
3 prescribing penalties.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 49.60
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1)(a) Any person that owns or manages a place of public
8 accommodation that offers a closed-captioned television receiver for
9 use in any public area must activate closed captioning, unless:

10 (i) The only receiver of television programming available in a
11 public area is technically incapable of displaying closed captioning;
12 or

13 (ii) The place of public accommodation is otherwise exempt from
14 the closed captioning requirement under state or federal law.

15 (b) In a public area with multiple televisions, up to fifty
16 percent of on-premises televisions may be exempt from displaying
17 closed captioning. The exempted televisions must clearly display that
18 they do not have volume or are on mute.

19 (2) If multiple television models are displayed together for sale
20 in a public area, at least one closed-captioned television must be
21 available for viewing.

1 (3) If after ninety days from the effective date of this section
2 a person that owns or manages a place of public accommodation fails
3 to comply with the requirements of this section, that person shall be
4 subject to a civil fine of up to seventy-five dollars for each
5 violation. Any subsequent violation shall result in a civil fine of
6 up to one hundred fifty dollars.

7 (4) For purposes of this section the following definitions apply:

8 (a) "Closed-captioned television receiver" means a receiver of
9 television programming that has the ability to display closed
10 captioning including, but not limited to, a television, digital set-
11 top box, and other technology capable of displaying closed captioning
12 for television programming.

13 (b) "Closed captioning" means a transcript or dialog of the audio
14 portion of a television program that is displayed on either the
15 bottom or top portion of a television receiver screen when the user
16 activates the feature. There is no requirement for the closed-
17 captioned transcript or dialog to be in any language other than the
18 language of the audio programming, or a default language where a
19 television receiver only displays one language.

20 (c) "Public area" means any part of a place of public
21 accommodation that is open to the general public.

22 (5) A violation of this section is a violation of this chapter.

23 (6) The human rights commission must prepare an educational
24 pamphlet advising employers and employees of their duty and liability
25 under this section. The pamphlet should be made available online.
26 Employers must provide employees with training on this section using
27 the pamphlet.

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