



Changes to Chapter 246-500 WAC

Handling of Human Remains

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WASHINGTON STATE 
BOARD OF HEALTH

Background

Generally, under RCW 68.50, a person has the authority to direct the disposition of their own remains. If a person has not made arrangements, or the cost of executing the person's wishes exceeds a reasonable amount, the liability for the costs falls to the person's agent, family, or guardian.

When a person dies indigent and their body is not claimed by relatives or a church organization, it is the responsibility of the board of county commissioners of the county in which they died to provide for the disposition of the remains. RCW 36.29.030

Under current law, a person, firm, corporation, or association that is in lawful possession of human remains may dispose of those remains after 90 days if no relative of or persons interested in the decedent directs the disposition. RCW 68.50.230



Substitute House Bill 1974

Signed by the Governor March 13

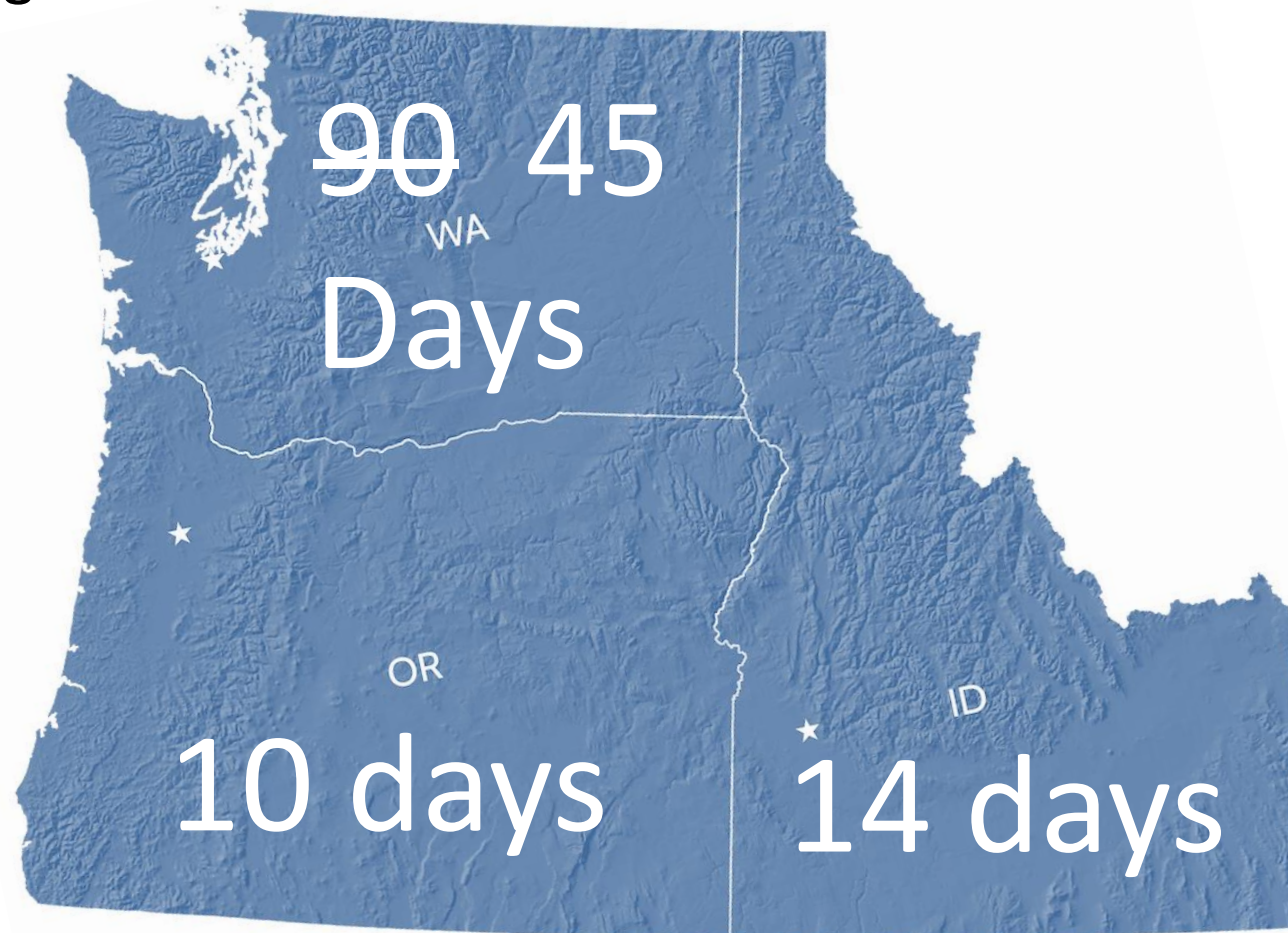
- Reduces holding period from 90 to 45 days

- Improvements in technology used to identify next of kin

- Industry feedback regarding the speed of decomposition

- Capacity of small counties

- Adds Counties

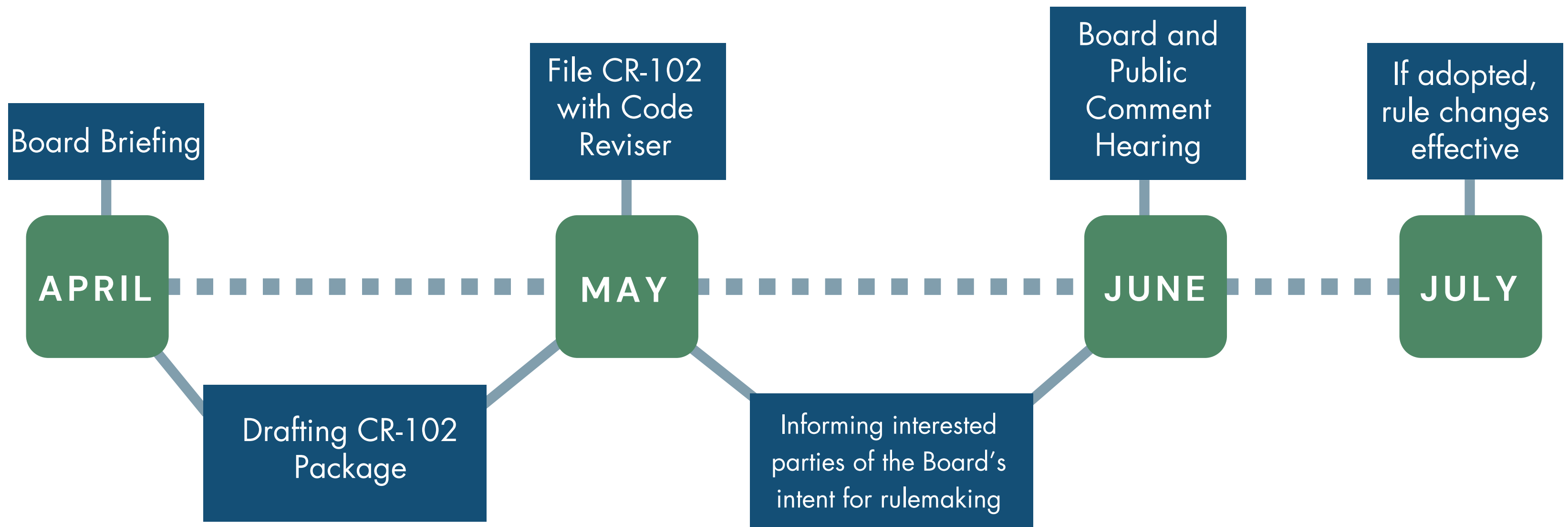


Mandated holding period of Washington and neighboring states



WAC 246-500 References The Waiting Period Established in RCW 68.50.230

- Amendment is exempt under the Administrative Procedure Act because the content is explicitly and specifically dictated by statute.



THANK YOU

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