



DMCMA Legislative Committee 2025 – 2026 Annual Report

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

It felt like it was over before it started. The short session ended after just sixty days with sine die ceremonies commencing on March 12. With so little time, the session was frantic and gravitated primarily around plugging budget gaps and addressing concerns of federal enforcement actions. SB 6346, dubbed the “millionaires’ tax”, required more than twenty-four hours of intense debate in the House before passing. And HB 5856, banning the use of facial coverings by law enforcement, passed primarily along party lines. With all the attention centered on these bills, there were very few that passed that had any significant impact on the courts.

For district courts, the passage of SB 5720 is of note. This bill adds requirements for default judgments in consumer credit cases. HB 5865, which was supported by the DMCJA, was aimed at improving the standardized form for garnishment answers. Unfortunately, it could not make it to the finish line and will have to return next year. The session started with some concern over a proposed bill designed to address legal financial obligations, by eliminating costs assessed against defendants in criminal cases. But the short duration of the session, paired with projected budget shortfalls, ended any chance of HB 2102 to move forward this year. All in all, most of the finalized bills either just added a new law violation or civil remedy for a violation.

Listed below are the bills that passed through the legislature and were signed into law by Governor Ferguson.

SIGNED BILLS

HB 2156 – Concerning the authority of the investigators at the AG’s office

- Allows the Attorney General's Office (AGO) to designate investigator positions that are limited authority peace officers in order to investigate economic and financial crimes.
- Requires a judicially authorized search warrant before an AGO investigator can electronically serve a search warrant on a business.
- Requires AGO investigators to comply with certain training and background requirements for peace officers and prohibits AGO investigators from being armed or detaining or arresting individuals.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

HB 2158 – Concerning electronic notarial acts

- Authorizes remote notarization of a tangible record not physically present before an electronic records notary by providing a process for confirming that the record before the notary is the same record in which the remotely located individual made a statement or on which the remotely located individual executed a signature.
- Authorizes an electronic records notary to administer an oath or affirmation to a remotely located individual by means of communication technology.
- Authorizes an electronic records notary to take an acknowledgement of a signature on a tangible record physically present before the notary. Effective Date: 01/01/2027
- [Session Law](#)

ESHB 2165 – Concerning false identification as a peace officer

- Establishes the gross misdemeanor offense of False Identification as a Peace Officer, which a person commits by claiming to be a peace officer or creating an impression that the person is a peace officer under specified circumstances
- Eliminates one of the means by which a person commits Criminal Impersonation in the second degree related to impersonating a law enforcement officer.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

HB 2178 – Concerning court rules and procedures

- Aligns statutory provisions with court rules on the subject of civil infractions.
- Reconciles the damage limit in two statutes concerning Malicious Mischief in the second degree.
- Repeals the requirement for the Administrative Office of the Courts to distribute to county clerks appropriated funds as grants for the collection of legal financial obligations and instead directs the State Treasurer to administer the grants.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

HB 2239 – Providing location choices for internment of remains

- Permits a natural person to designate an area of land the person owns as a family burial ground, subject to specified requirements and restrictions.
- Includes family burial grounds as a lawful place for disposition of human remains.
- Exempts family burial grounds from certain requirements applicable to private cemeteries.
- Unlawful construction of a mausoleum or columbarium on a family burial ground added as a civil infraction
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

ESHB 2303 – Prohibiting employers from microchipping employees

- Prohibits an employer from requesting, requiring, or coercing an employee to have a microchip implanted in the employee for any reason.
- An employee may bring a civil action if violation has occurred. Court may award a prevailing employee injunctive relief, actual damages, punitive damages, and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

ESHB 2320 – Concerning regulation of firearm manufacturing

- Prohibits the manufacturing of certain firearms and firearm components through use of a three-dimensional printer or computer numerical control milling machine, subject to exceptions.
- Prohibits the sale, transfer, or distribution of certain digital firearm manufacturing code, subject to exceptions.
- Effective Date: 03/24/2026
- [Session Law](#)

HB 2532 – Concerning the sale and distribution of nitrous oxide

- Makes the sale, furnishment, administration, and distribution of nitrous oxide a gross misdemeanor, with specified exemptions.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

HB 2543 – Concerning county clerk fees

- Updates and revises fees charged for copies of certain documents and exhibits provided by county clerk offices.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

SB 5720 - Enacting the uniform consumer debt default judgment act

- Adopts the Uniform Consumer Debt Default Judgments Act to create rules a plaintiff must follow in order to obtain a default judgment in a lawsuit seeking collection of a consumer debt.
- Establishes requirements for the contents of a complaint or amended complaint, contents of a required notice to the consumer, and penalties for violating these requirements
- Effective Date: 01/01/2027
- [Session Law](#)

SB 5855 - Concerning the use of face coverings by law enforcement

- Peace officers and federal law enforcement officers are prohibited from wearing facial coverings while interacting with the public in the performance of their duties, with certain exceptions.
- Allows a person detained by an unlawfully masked local, state, or federal officer to sue that officer in their official capacity
- A successful plaintiff can recover compensatory damages, punitive damages, attorneys' fees, injunctive relief, and any other relief deemed appropriate by the court.
- Effective Date: 03/19/2026
- [Session Law](#)

SB 5880 - Concerning toxicology testing by certified/accredited laboratories

- Establishes the validity of blood and breath tests conducted by laboratories certified or accredited pursuant to specific international standards.
- City/county must reimburse the Washington State Patrol for costs of sending evidence back if they wish to privately test the evidence previously submitted to the Washington State Patrol Toxicology Laboratory
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

ESSB 6002 – Concerning driver privacy protections

- Creates a regulatory structure for the use of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) systems and the data captured.
- Restricts the use of ALPR systems by state and local agencies, sets retention periods for the data collected, and limits the sharing of data.
- Effective Date: 03/30/2026
- [Session Law](#)

ESSB 6066 – Concerning driver privacy protections

- Allows a county, city, town, or the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), until January 1, 2029, to create a crash prevention zone (zone) on a certain portion of U.S. Highway 395, and two areas of Highway 12
- Allows a county, city, town, or WSDOT, beginning January 1, 2029, to create a zone by identifying public roads where the incidence of collisions resulting in serious injuries or fatalities is greater than expected for similar roads or highways, as appropriate.
- Authorizes local jurisdictions that create a zone to use automated traffic safety cameras to detect speed violations committed within the zone.
- Doubles the penalty amount for unlawful use of a personal electronic device if committed while driving in a zone.
- Effective Date: 06/11/2026
- [Session Law](#)

DMCMA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patrick Wells (King County District Court) – Committee Chair

Maryam Olson (Federal Way Municipal Court)

Sherri Hansen (Spokane County District Court)

Melissa Gibbs (Chelan County District Court)

Kristina Howard (Shelton Municipal Court)

Special thanks to:

Angie Autry (Administrative Office of the Courts)

Kristal Kessel (Administrative Office of the Courts)