

Lost and Found

OVERVIEW

WSU encourages all citizens to turn in items of found property in accordance with this section and state law (*RCW 63.21*).

Any finder of property who fails to discharge the duties imposed by state law forfeits all right to the property and is liable for the full value of the property to its owner. (*RCW 63.21.040*)

Individuals who find lost items on University property are to bring the items to one of the following:

- Pullman campus building lost and found locations.
Refer to the WSU Police website at:

<http://police.wsu.edu/lostandfoundmain.html>

The building custodian takes all found property to the assigned lost and found location for the building where the item is found.

- Regional campus lost and found locations (see 50.48.4).
- WSU Police Services.
- Local police department.

**WSU Pullman
Police Services**

WSU Pullman Police Services does not normally accept found property from campus buildings, Martin Stadium, Beasley Coliseum, or University baseball or track areas, except as specifically described below.

Valuables or Money

WSU Pullman Police Services accepts valuable found property items (i.e., "valuables") or currency found in any University facility or area. For purposes of this section, "valuables" are defined as items valued at \$25 or more and items of obvious value, e.g. jewelry.

**Nonvaluable or
Nonmonetary Items**

WSU Police Services accepts nonvaluable or nonmonetary items that are found in public areas not associated with specific buildings or athletic events. For the purposes of this section, "nonvaluables or nonmonetary items" are defined as items valued at less than \$25 or items of used personal property, e.g., clothing, umbrellas, personal belongings.

Other WSU Campuses

See 50.48.4 for non-Pullman campus departments/locations accepting valuables, money, nonvaluables, or nonmonetary items.

REQUIREMENTS

State law requires any University department which is responsible for receiving found property to attempt to notify the apparent owner of the property. (*RCW 63.21.060*)

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Claims by Owner

To claim found property, the apparent owner must satisfactorily establish his or her ownership or right of possession.

Securing Found Property

A University unit holding found property is responsible for logging the receipt of the property and maintaining items in a secure location.

Nonvaluables or Nonmonetary Items

The department holding found nonvaluable or nonmonetary property must send written notice to the owner, if identified, or post notice of the items in a public place in one of the following:

- Building where the lost and found area is located,
- Local city hall, or
- Local police department.

See also 50.48.1 concerning nonvaluables or nonmonetary items found in public areas at WSU Pullman.

Disposition of Unclaimed Property (Nonvaluables or Nonmonetary Items)

If a nonvaluable or nonmonetary found item is not claimed by a valid owner after 60 days of posting notice, the responsible unit sends the item to Surplus Stores or a local area charitable organization.

Valuables or Money

At WSU Pullman, if valuable or monetary property is not returned to a valid owner after not less than ten days and not more than 30 days, the department forwards the found property to WSU Police Services.

At other campus locations, if valuable or monetary property is not returned to a valid owner after not less than ten days and not more than 30 days, the department forwards the found property to the local police department. See 50.48.4 and *RCW* 63.21.060.

NOTE: This section is not applicable to certain unclaimed property as defined in *RCW* 63.21.080 including, but not limited to motor vehicles, which are covered under *RCW* 46.52.

Disposition of Unclaimed Property (Valuables/Money)

If the found property remains unclaimed or not removed for a period of 60 days from the date of written notice to the owner, WSU Police Services or the local police department may:

- Sell the found property at public auction;
- Retain the found property for WSU Police Services or the local police department, in accordance with *RCW* 63.32.010(2);
- Destroy the found property, in accordance with *RCW* 63.32.010(3); or
- Sell the found property to bonafide dealers in trade for law enforcement equipment, in accordance with *RCW* 63.32.010(4).

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Claim of Found Property By Finder

A WSU employee, officer, or agent of the University who finds or acquires any property covered by this policy while acting within the course of his or her employment may not claim possession of the found property as a finder under this policy. (*RCW 63.21.070*)

Claim Procedures

A finder interested in claiming found property must take the following steps:

Report Find

Within seven days of finding the property, the finder must report the find to the chief law enforcement officer or designee of the University campus where the property was found.

If requested, the finder must also surrender the property to the campus or local area chief law enforcement officer or designee.

Appraisal

The finder must acquire a signed statement setting forth an appraisal of the current market value of the property. The appraisal must be prepared by a qualified person engaged in buying and selling like items or by a district court judge. An appraisal is not required if the found property is U.S. currency.

The finder must submit a copy of the appraisal of the value of the property to the campus chief law enforcement officer or designee.

Written Notice of Claim

The finder must serve written notice to the officer of the finder's intent to claim the property if the owner fails to make out his or her right to the item(s), in accordance with *RCW 63.21*.

Public Notification

Within 30 days of the report, if the found property value is equal to or exceeds the cost of the public notification, the police department publishes notice at least once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the property was found. (A finder who claims the property bears the public notification costs plus \$10.)

If the value of the found property is less than the cost of publishing the notice, the police department may cause notice to be posted or published in other media or formats that do not incur expense to the police department (e.g., University announcement).

After 60 Days

If unclaimed by the owner after 60 days, the police department releases the found property to the finder upon request. The finder must pay any applicable notice publication costs and fees before the property is released. (See "Public Notification" above.)

After 90 Days

If after 90 days from the date of reporting to the police department, the finder has not completed the requirements for claiming the found property, the finder's claim is expired and the property is disposed of as unclaimed property in accordance with *RCW 63.32*. (See also 50.48.2.)

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LOST AND FOUND AREAS

WSU Pullman

On the Pullman campus, certain University departments maintain lost and found areas.

- The Coliseum is responsible for lost and found items associated with Coliseum events.
- The Athletics Department (office located in the Bohler building) is responsible for lost and found items associated with athletic events, excluding events in the Coliseum.
- Transportation Services is responsible for lost and found items turned in from WSU Pullman parking lots and garages.
- The WSU Police Department is responsible for lost and found items turned in from WSU Pullman exterior locations, e.g., Terrell Mall, and walkways.

See the following WSU Police website for a listing of lost and found area locations on the WSU Pullman campus:

<http://police.wsu.edu/lostandfoundmain.html>

WSU Spokane (Riverpoint Campus)

The Security department at WSU Spokane (Riverpoint Campus) maintains a locked depository for found property. The Security department inventories and logs all found property items stored in the depository.

Turn in found property to the Riverpoint Campus Security Office, located in the South Campus Facility building, Room 269.

To report a lost item, contact Riverpoint Campus Security directly; telephone 509-358-7995 (24-hours/day, seven days/week).

WSU Tri-Cities

On the Tri-Cities campus, bring found property items to the Copy and Mail Distribution Center located in West Building, Room 127.

Contact the Copy and Mail Distribution Center to report a lost item; telephone 509-372-7273, or send an e-mail to:

copyctr@tricity.wsu.edu

WSU Vancouver

On the Vancouver campus, turn all items of found property to the Parking Services Office located in the Physical Plant Building, Room 15A.

To report a lost item, contact Public Safety; telephone 360-546-9001, or send e-mail to:

wsuvcops@vancouver.wsu.edu