

Standard Formatting Requirements for Recording Documents (Pursuant to RCW 36.18.010 and 65.04.045)

Beginning 1/1/1997 all documents submitted for recording in the State of Washington must conform to standards required by RCW 36.18 and 65.04. A cover sheet is required for documents that do not contain the necessary index fields or margins on the 1st page.

For Documents signed after 1996, all pages must have a 1" clear border in order to use a cover sheet.

1) **ALL PAGES:**

- a) Documents submitted for recording must be able to be digitally scanned and reproduce a legible copy, including notary seals (raised notary seals must be smudged prior to recording). **Documents that contain illegible portions will not be accepted for recording.**
- b) Nothing may be affixed to pages (no item can be taped, stapled, etc. – no cut and paste)
- c) Page must be 8 ½" x 14" or less
- d) Font size must be at least 8-point (This is 8-point type)
- e) Paper and ink color must be **capable of being imaged**. Watch for color of highlighting, some colors copy dark, obscuring text. *Dot-matrix printers generally produce unacceptable results.*

2) **MARGINS:**

- a) 1st page 3" top margin, 1" sides and bottom margin – or 1" on all sides with a cover sheet.
- b) The top, left-hand side of the page shall contain the name and address to whom the instrument will be returned
- c) Subsequent pages of same document must have 1" margin on all sides
- d) *Incidental* writing and notary seals in margins are allowed.

3) **FIRST PAGE:**

- a) Title
- b) Reference # for assignments and releases
- c) Grantor(s) and Grantee(s)
- d) Legal description (not needed on assignments, releases, etc.)
- e) Tax parcel ID# required if there is a legal description (not needed on assignments, releases, etc.).

4) Certified copies of previously recorded or filed documents may be recorded with a completed cover sheet.

5) **EXCEPTIONS:**

- a) The following exceptions for formatting standards can be recorded without a cover sheet:
 - i) IRS Tax Liens and releases
 - ii) UCC terminations in which the original UCC fixture filing was completed prior to January 1, 1997 and the termination statement is on the fixture filing
 - iii) Documents previously recorded (in any recording office) may have recording information in the margins.
- b) The following exceptions for formatting standards can be recorded with a properly completed cover sheet (RCW 65.04.047):
 - i) Documents which are formatted to meet court requirements
 - ii) Certified copies of death certificates
 - iii) documents signed prior to 1997
 - iv) military discharges
 - v) National UCC Forms
 - vi) Marriage certificates from outside the state of Washington
 - vii) Any document, one of whose original signer is deceased or otherwise incapacitated
 - viii) Documents executed outside of the United States
 - ix) Certified copies of documents