

# Roger Williams University Law Review

---

Volume 26  
Issue 3 *Vol. 26: No. 3 (Summer 2021)*

Article 31

---

Summer 2021

## 2020 RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC LAWS

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/rwu\\_LR](https://docs.rwu.edu/rwu_LR)



Part of the [State and Local Government Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(2021) "2020 RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC LAWS," *Roger Williams University Law Review*: Vol. 26 : Iss. 3 , Article 31.

Available at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/rwu\\_LR/vol26/iss3/31](https://docs.rwu.edu/rwu_LR/vol26/iss3/31)

This Survey of Rhode Island Law is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Law at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Roger Williams University Law Review by an authorized editor of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact [mwu@rwu.edu](mailto:mwu@rwu.edu).

## 2020 RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC LAWS

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 003, 004.** An Act Relating to Labor and Relations—Minimum Wages. This Act raised the minimum wage to \$11.50 per hour, commencing on October 1, 2020. The minimum wage was previously set at \$10.50 per hour.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 007, 008.** An Act Relating to Elections—Registration of Voters. This Act made special exceptions for the number of signers required for nomination papers for the 2020 election only. Normally, the nomination papers of a candidate for the party nomination or an independent candidate for a United States senator must be signed by at least one thousand voters. For the 2020 election only, the nomination papers needed to be signed by at least five hundred voters. Similarly, the nomination papers of a candidate for the party nomination or an independent candidate for representative in Congress needed to be signed by at least five hundred voters. Again, for the 2020 election only, the nomination papers needed to be signed by at least two hundred fifty voters.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 009, 010.** An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses—Weapons. This Act provides definitions relative to 3D printed firearms and undetectable firearms. The Act prohibits the manufacturing, importation, sale, shipment, delivery, possession, or transfer of any gun, including 3D printed firearms, which lacks a unique serial number from a licensed manufacturer, maker, or importer and which is undetectable by metal detectors commonly used at airports and public hearings.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 012, 017.** An Act Relating to Taxation—Sales and Use Taxes. This Act expands the definition of sales to include any license, lease, or rental of prewritten or vendor-hosted computer software and specified digital products. The Act also defines “end-user” for specified digital products.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 014, 019.** An Act Relating to Towns and Cities—General Powers. This Act allows a city, town, or fire district to appropriate monies, levy taxes, and expend funds during any declared local and/or statewide emergency in the absence of an annual or biennial financial town meeting and allows for virtual town, city, and fire district meetings during state or local emergency declarations.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 029, 036.** An Act Relating to Towns and Cities—General Powers. This Act authorizes the town council of the town of South Kingstown to create a municipal court and housing court and defines the respective jurisdiction of those two courts.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 045, 056.** An Act Relating to Towns and Cities—Historical Area Zoning. This Act amends the definition of “Commission” for the purposes of the state historical residence tax credits to include the Cumberland local historic district commission. Such local commissions would be authorized to compile a list of buildings and structures for town council approval as having historic or architectural value. This Act also provides that demolition of properties on this list would be delayed to provide time to evaluate alternatives to demolition.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 046, 057.** An Act Relating to Taxation. This Act authorizes the city of Woonsocket to adopt, by ordinance, tax amnesty periods during its 2021 fiscal year. Pursuant to this Act, the city of Woonsocket can enact two separate sixty-day periods during the 2021 fiscal year during which a waiver of interest and penalties on overdue tax payments may be made if the taxpayer requests a waiver in writing, signed, and dated.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 059, 060.** An Act Relating to Domestic Relations—Uniform Parentage Act. This Act, the Rhode Island Parentage Act, repeals the Uniform Law on Paternity. The Act repeals current state law regarding paternity and replaces it with a Uniform Parentage Act that provides procedures establishing parentage, genetic testing, surrogacy agreements, and assisted reproduction. In particular, the Act allows for LGBTQ couples to establish parentage through a Voluntary Acknowledgement of Parentage; creates protections for children born through surrogacy; and expands paths to legal parentage via adoption, acknowledgment, adjudication, genetics, assisted reproduction, and surrogacy.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 061, 068.** An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses—Weapons. This Act is referred to as the Julie Lynn Cardinal, Robin Moss, and Donna Thornley Act. This Act provides that applications to purchase certain firearms be sent by the seller of the firearm to the Rhode Island state police and the police department of the city or town in which the purchaser resides, or to the state police if the purchaser resides in Exeter or in another state and would provide for the use of electronic mail in forwarding the application to the police department. The purpose of this law is to improve communication between law enforcement agencies and notify local police stations of purchases, which is more likely to have information regarding the purchaser. The Act was introduced after a man with a long history of incidents with his local police department was able to purchase a gun in another municipality and injured Lynn Cardinal, Robin Moss, and Donna Thornley, three women after whom the Act is named.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 062, 069.** An Act Relating to Towns and Cities—Cancer Benefits for Firefighters. This Act clarifies the presumption of occupational cancer applying to firefighters. If any type of cancer is found in a firefighter, then it is conclusively presumed to be an occupational cancer arising out of their employment as firefighters. The Act provides three exceptions to this presumption. The Act does not apply if (1) a physical examination was conducted at the time the firefighter was hired and such the examination revealed that person had cancer; or (2) the firefighter has completed less than two years of employment

with their fire department; or (3) the firefighter has regularly or habitually used tobacco products during the five years prior to any diagnosis of cancer.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 064, 074.** An Act Relating to Elections—Mail Ballots. This Act permits emergency mail ballot applications to be processed at voter's board of canvassers in person on electronic poll pads. The Act allows the voter to cast an emergency in-person mail ballot and place the ballot in the state-approved voting machine. The voter would need to present a valid proof of identity.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 065, 071.** An Act Relation to Labor and Labor Relations—Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action. This Act creates a new process with standards to be utilized when deciding whether an applicant's past conviction of a crime should disqualify the applicant from receiving an occupational license, permit, certificate, or registration issued by the state.

**2020 R.I. Pub. Laws ch. 066, 072.** An Act Relation to Labor and Labor Relations—Workers' Compensation. This Act is the annual workers' compensation omnibus bill. It slightly alters the process and type of benefits for which work-related injured employees of uninsured employers may seek compensation. The Act also reduces the frequency, from every twelve weeks to every ten weeks, with which an employee's medical provider must render a status report concerning their actual and anticipated medical treatment plans with an itemization of any of their work restrictions and capabilities, and whether they have reached maximum medical improvement.