



October 2023

Commercial Shellfish Fees —Export Certificates



Current Fund Balance

\$20,125 end of fiscal year 2023.



Fee Forecast

We project a deficit in FY 2024. General Fund State funding subsidized the export fee program 35% in FY 2023.



Deficit Drivers

- Fee analysis delays. The last fee increase was 8 years ago in 2015.
- Annual inflation.

We work to protect and improve the health of all people in Washington state. Part of what we do is regulate Commercial Shellfish Operations ([Chapter 69.30 RCW](#)).

We currently certify over 300 operations with over 6,000 harvest sites and 100 growing areas. These operations provide shellfish for human consumption. The Export Certificate Program provides export certificates for commercial operations that ship shellfish to countries that require a certificate from a governmental health authority.

The Export Certificate Program works in collaboration with the Testing and Licensing programs. These programs are further described in corresponding fact sheets.

Funding the Program

[RCW 43.70.250](#) requires the cost of each profession, occupation, or business be borne by the members of that profession, occupation, or business through fees.

We charge fees monthly based on the number of certificates requested by the operation. To set fees appropriately, we consider the financial forecast of the program and set a fee amount that aligns revenue with the cost of providing certificates.

We set the current fees in June 2015 in response to the program’s growing debt and annual shortfall. In fiscal year (FY) 2014, the program implemented a 175% increase on certificate fees.

The program ended FY 2023 with a fee balance of \$20,125. This balance would have been depleted without support of general fund state (GFS) funding. GFS Funding subsidized the fee program until in-depth cost analysis determined true cost and corresponding fee rates. This analysis was completed in 2023.

Cost Drivers

We project total program costs of \$169,597 in FY 2024. Costs for staff (required to issue certificates) primarily drive program costs. Staffing and staffing related costs account for 85% of program expenditures and include 1.04 full time equivalent (FTE) staff.

The second major program cost is Information Technology System Support for the database that supports the necessary data and tracking to run the program (15% of costs).

Fee Forecast

In fiscal year 2024, we anticipate increasing fees to bring revenue into alignment with annual operating expenses. With the below fees, we expect to gradually increase revenue to fully support the program. This fee increase will be fully implemented effective 2024.

Fee Category	Current Fee	Draft Proposed Fee
Export Certificates	\$ 55	\$ 75

The Commercial Shellfish program is intending to conduct a program audit on all services and associated costs. As a result, it is possible that additional fee eligible costs could be added to a future fee adjustment.

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