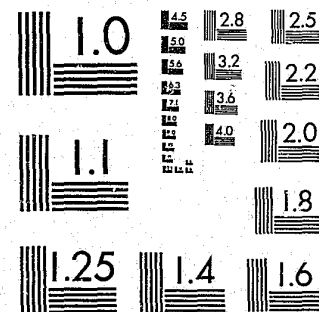


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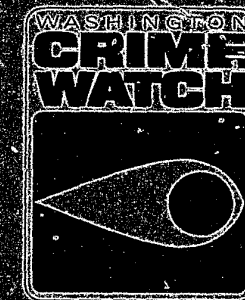
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National Institute of Justice  
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Washington, D. C. 20531

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# Retailer's Shoplifting Prevention Guide



Prepared by  
Washington Crime Watch  
Office of the Attorney General

In cooperation with  
Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs  
Association of Washington Business



## The Problem : An Introduction

Shoplifting by customers and professional thieves costs Washington merchants more than \$60,000,000 each year and accounts for as much as 40% of a store's theft loss. This guide is designed to acquaint the retail manager with the prevention techniques available, and to provide a clear understanding of the civil penalty and the laws dealing with the apprehension and arrest of shoplifters.

## Preventing Shoplifting

### Remove the Opportunity

Many of the best crime prevention suggestions are nothing more than good business. Some of the most effective methods are:

- Employee awareness of customers - Customers should be personally greeted as they enter the store. An exchange of pleasantries serves to remove the shoplifter's cloak of anonymity, while increasing customer goodwill. Shoplifters avoid stores with friendly, attentive sales people.
- Training - Special shoplifting prevention training for both new and continuing employees will guarantee that all salespeople are aware of the shoplifting problem and know what steps to take should they see a shoplifter.
- Prosecution - Adopt a clear, evenly enforced shoplifting policy. Post this policy to make sure that both staff and customers are aware of it. An attractive Crime Watch poster is available for this purpose.
- Adequate sales staff - Hire enough sales clerks to guarantee effective coverage and personal attention to customers. Breaks and lunch hours should be staggered.
- Store layout - Shelves and displays should be low for good visibility. Lighting should be adequate so that the sense of privacy is removed. High value and small item displays are ideally located near a cash register. Aisles which can be viewed from the register provide few opportunities to shoplifters.
- A neat store - A messy store lets the shoplifter know that the store management is inattentive. Empty hangers should be removed,

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## SHOPLIFTING PREVENTION

depleted displays refilled, discarded sales receipts picked up, price marking materials kept off the floor, and fitting rooms kept clean.

- Customer awareness - Enclosing pamphlets in shopping bags and posting shoplifting awareness signs are two good ways to enlist customer support for your anti-shoplifting efforts. Crime Watch materials are available to help you with your customer awareness program. Also, if a customer reports a shoplifter, such action should be followed up by a "thank you" letter or call from the store management or owner.

There are many useful but sometimes resisted procedures which can dramatically reduce shoplifting losses:

- Fitting room controls - Either checkers, or a limit on the number of items, or a tag system to verify the number of pieces brought into the fitting room.
- Securing bags - Tape or staple the receipt to the outside of the bag.
- Signs - Identify displays of frequently shoplifted items. Such signs make the shoplifter feel that he is under observation.
- Mirrors - By removing the sense of privacy in out-of-the-way corners, convex mirrors deter shoplifters.
- Price tags - Disintegrating adhesive tags can limit price switching. An extra, concealed second tag is also a good idea.
- Clothing hangers - Alternate the direction of hanger hooks to prevent grab-and-run losses from clothes racks near entrance/exit doors.

If shoplifting losses cannot be brought under control using these recommendations, then special devices and security personnel may be in order.

- Store detectives monitor suspicious persons and apprehend shoplifters. The store security officer can be a major component in an apprehension-oriented program of deterrence, but the store owner should be aware that poorly paid and inadequately trained detectives are a liability -- they are likely to be involved in more violence, expose the store to false arrest suits and catch few shoplifters. Off-duty police officers are used successfully by some stores because of their arrest experience and police commissions. Others use well-trained private security personnel.
- Observation booths and two-way mirrors are usually built into a store but can sometimes be added. They make observation of the floor area possible.

## SHOPLIFTING PREVENTION

- Video cameras are useful if monitored regularly. They also have some deterrent value. Dummy cameras are not recommended because their nature is soon public knowledge.
- Garment cables and chains require the sales clerk to unlock the clothing before it is tried on.
- Special locking holders are made for items such as calculators and cameras. These allow the customer to operate and inspect a display item which is secured to the counter.
- Locked display cases are necessary with many small expensive items.
- Alarms - Pressure sensitive mats and switches can be used to set off an alarm when the display merchandise is picked up. Plug monitor alarms are useful where the display operates on AC current. Merely unplugging the display will set off the alarm.
- Electronically sensed tags may be affixed to merchandise by rivets, plastic string or by concealment. If the tags are not removed before the customer exits, then an alarm will sound. This type of system has several drawbacks, including erratic use of tags, failure to remove tags, and high cost. However, several department stores are using this system on a large scale with considerable success. It seems to work best on "exit" rather than "department" coverage.
- A cable or loop alarm is strung through some part of the article. If the cable is cut or unplugged the alarm is triggered.

## Refund Fraud - A growing problem

A refund control policy should require a sales slip. Also request the name, address and phone number, plus driver's license verification. A card file should be maintained on returns to cross-check frequent refunders. Refunds should be followed up by phone or mail to verify legitimacy of information given. In questionable circumstances, you might consider mailing large refund checks rather than paying cash. Locate the refund desk near the store entrance to prevent "refunding" of unpaid-for merchandise.

# THE SHOPLIFTER

Don't make the mistake of thinking that only certain types of people will steal from you — shoplifters are of every age, sex and race. Some of your regular customers are "beating inflation" by stealing a little each time they shop.

The shoplifter may appear to be just another customer, so look for deviations from normal shopping patterns:

— Eye movement

The shoplifter will be handling merchandise but not looking at it. The eyes will be watching everyone and everything except the item being handled.

— The wandering shopper

Suspect the customer who goes from item to item, but never really shows much interest in merchandise and always examines the other customers.

— Seeking privacy

Watch the customer who takes merchandise into isolated areas of the store where observation is difficult.

— Shoplifting tools

Look for large empty purses, backpacks, empty boxes, a coat slung over one shoulder, bags from other stores, old wrinkled shopping bags, a newspaper under the arm, bulky over-clothing such as coats or sweaters when worn out of season.

Shoplifting methods, amateur or professional, can be broken down into three categories:

1. Concealment

- Shoplifters most commonly conceal stolen merchandise on their person or in their clothing, inside shopping bags, purses, hats or umbrellas.
- Another method of concealment is palming an item and keeping it in the hand until out of the store.
- Small items are often stripped of their packaging, price tags and other identifiers to disguise the newness of the product and reduce bulk.

# THE SHOPLIFTER

- Shoplifters also hide items within another package which is then purchased.

2. Subterfuge

- Shoplifters may use an accomplice to distract the merchant.
- Shoplifted articles may also be handed off to an accomplice.
- Price tag switching and fraudulent refunding are variations of shoplifting which may be hard to detect.
- The refunder may take merchandise directly from your shelves to the refund desk; or the shoplifter may steal the item from another store and return it to you.

3. Speed

- Desperate vagrants, alcoholics or juveniles often make no attempt to conceal merchandise — they "grab and run."
- Self-assured professionals, while they may not run, will walk into your store, pick up an item and walk out, knowing that few people will react quickly enough to stop them.

# WASHINGTON SHOPLIFTING LAWS

Stores which encourage both civil and criminal penalties can expect a reduction in shoplifting. The amateur shoplifter, once arrested and penalized, seldom shoplifts again. Conversely, the apprehended shoplifter who discovers that there are no real penalties is likely to continue shoplifting.

While the legal information in this booklet is as current as possible, there is no substitute for consultation with local police, prosecutors, and private attorneys. These professionals are equipped to provide specific recommendations for the factual situations you encounter.

## Criminal Law

In Washington state law there is no specific crime called shoplifting; instead, retail theft is included in the statutory definition of theft. Most shoplifting incidents involve merchandise worth less than \$250 and are classified as theft in the third degree. This is a gross misdemeanor carrying a maximum penalty of up to \$1,000 and/or a jail term of up to one year. Actual sentences for adults are at the discretion of the court, and for juveniles are administered by special courts or "conference committees."

## Civil Law - An Additional Deterrent

Washington's civil shoplifting law, RCW 4.24.230, became effective in September, 1975 (a copy of the law is appended). This law creates a civil cause of action which the merchant may bring directly against the apprehended shoplifter, or the parents or guardians of shoplifting minors. It is not intended to supplant the criminal law, nor should it be used as a substitute for vigorous law enforcement action. The civil law is an additional deterrent.

Retail outlets in Washington are using this law successfully, and have discovered that its implementation is relatively simple. Money received from the use of the civil penalty law allows retailers to price merchandise more competitively, maintain profit margins and defray costs of security programs.

Basically, the law allows the victim (merchant) to recover:

- Actual damages. This is the retail value of stolen items if they are not recovered. If the stolen items are recovered but damaged, then actual damages are computed by subtracting the reduced saleable price from the retail price. Damage done to store property or employees may also be claimed. (Parents or guardians of shoplifters are not liable for actual damages.)

# SHOPLIFTING LAWS

- A penalty equal to the retail value of the stolen merchandise (whether or not the item is recovered). The maximum penalty is \$1,000 for adults and \$500 for parents and guardians of shoplifting juveniles.
- An additional penalty of not less than \$100 and not more than \$200.

While criminal action remains the prerogative of the local prosecuting authority, this civil action is brought only at the discretion of the merchant. It is vital that you develop a reasonable policy on implementing the civil penalty, and enforce it consistently.

Although the use of the civil penalty does not depend on the filing of a corresponding criminal charge, most merchants demand the civil penalty only when the shoplifter has also been arrested. There are several advantages to this policy:

- The shoplifter will be brought into the criminal justice system so that repeat offenders can be identified and corrective action taken.
- The shoplifter cannot accuse the merchant of extorting money for the promise that there will be no criminal prosecution.
- The civil case will be much stronger if a police officer has already found reasonable cause to arrest the suspect.

Experience by retailers indicates that if correct procedures are followed, up to 80% of shoplifting suspects will pay the penalty upon demand by letter.

Also important: It is not necessary to retain a lawyer to begin action. You can use the form letters included in this manual merely by retyping them on store letterhead. In those instances where it may be necessary to go to court to request a judgment, a lawyer is rarely required unless the shoplifting civil penalties exceed the \$1,000 small claims court limit. Small claims court action is easy to file and attorneys are usually prohibited from representing the parties. Judgments from this court are assignable for collection like any other debt.

## Using the Civil Penalty

Adhere to the following suggestions and you can use the civil penalty safely, legally, and effectively:

- Wait until the day after the shoplifter has been arrested before sending the first letter demanding payment of civil penalty. Do not hand a demand letter to the suspected shoplifter at the time of apprehension. This could be construed as a demand for payment from the shoplifter based upon an inference that you would not pursue criminal prosecution.



## SHOPLIFTING LAWS

- Compute the civil penalty as in the following example:

The shoplifter (an adult) was stopped with a stolen \$25 shirt. The police were called and they made an arrest. Since the shirt was recovered undamaged there are no actual damages. However, the penalty is in the amount of the stolen item, \$25. And there is an additional penalty of \$100 (this additional penalty can be any amount between \$100 and \$200 at the merchant's discretion.) The total amount demanded in this example is \$125.

- When sending a letter to a minor's parents, use a form which specifies that the parent or guardian is liable for the civil penalty. Examples of both the demand letter to an adult violator and a demand letter to the parent of an unemancipated minor appear in the appendix.
- If the payment is not received in a reasonable time specified in the demand letter, a second letter should be sent stating that a court filing will follow if payment is not received shortly. A sample follow-up letter is included in the appendix.
- If payment is not received in response to the second letter, then you should file your case in court. Unless your claim against the shoplifter is over \$1,000, file with the small claims department of the district court in whose jurisdiction the defendant resides. The court will provide you with a filing form and instructions on serving the notice of claim on the defendant. Remember that in small claims court lawyers are unnecessary, so the expense of filing and appearing in court is minimized.
- Only if a claim in excess of \$1,000 appears collectible should you proceed to file in district or superior court. Attorney fees may sometimes be recovered by the prevailing party in a district or superior court if the amount claimed is less than \$1,000. Consult with an attorney on any legal action other than a small claims filing.
- Your business must be represented in small claims court by the owner or other corporate officer, but not an "attorney at law" or "legal paraprofessional." The civil shoplifting law prohibits the assignment of claims to a collection agency or other third party. However, an employee may represent you in court. In most courts this may be done by completing a notarized "delegation of authority" form (see appendix). File this form with the court when filing the civil complaint. Contact your local court to determine what procedure they require.
- If the civil case goes to court, all witnesses, a completed copy of the shoplifting report (see appendix), and all evidence (stolen articles, shoplifting devices, photographs, a copy of the police report, etc.) must be presented to the court. Take a copy of this manual and/or the shoplifting statute to court for reference.

## SHOPLIFTING LAWS

- Once the civil penalty has been paid, some stores provide a receipt or letter as acknowledgement and release from liability. If you decide to send a letter, please consider the language carefully, since it could compromise the separate criminal action. A suggested acknowledgement letter appears in the appendix.

### Detaining the Shoplifter

Before either the civil or the criminal penalties can be used, the retailer must first apprehend the shoplifter. If done correctly, the retailer exposes himself to little risk of false arrest suits.

State law allows you to detain a suspect if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person shoplifted in your store. The following are the critical elements to consider before making an apprehension:

- Did you or another reliable witness see the suspect conceal merchandise or remove it from the store? Before taking action on a witness report, verify that the witness will appear in court if necessary.
- Are you positive that the merchandise concealed or taken was store property and not the property of the suspect?
- Are you sure that the merchandise was not replaced on the shelf?
- Had the suspect possibly already paid for this merchandise?
- Was the suspected shoplifter acting in a suspicious manner?

Although the law does provide that concealment of merchandise creates an inference of intent, and that such concealment justifies detention, other suspicious actions will reinforce your position in court. "Criminal intent" can be inferred if the suspect's movements are evasive or furtive.

Keep the suspected shoplifter in sight from the time that merchandise is concealed until you confront the suspect. The law does not require continuous surveillance, but this policy can prevent stopping a suspect who has already disposed of the stolen items.

It is also a good idea to let the shoplifter pass the last possible point of payment or exit before detaining. Again, state law does not require this, but it can strengthen your case in court since it removes the possible defense that the suspect was going to pay for the merchandise.

There are some situations in which it would be a mistake to let the suspect exit the store. For instance, juveniles are likely to run once they are outside the store, and professional shoplifters can become dangerous when removed from a crowd of witnesses. Washington state law does allow you to detain a suspect at any time after you have witnessed concealment of your merchandise.

## SHOPLIFTING LAWS

Although you may be upset at discovering a shoplifter in your store, you should remain professional and calm. Treat every shoplifting suspect as a potential future customer and you will not need to fear false arrest suits. The following suggestions can be the foundation for a safe store apprehension policy:

- The initial contact with the suspect should be verbal, not physical. Catch the suspect's attention and identify yourself with a phrase such as, "Excuse me, I am the manager of the store. I noticed that you removed (stolen item) from the shelf and did not replace it or pay for it. Would you please come to my office so that we may clear up this matter?" In the ideal situation only the suspect hears the words that you speak.
- If the suspect refuses, explain that you wish to avoid embarrassment and would prefer to discuss the matter in a private office. Do not force the suspect to accompany you. Instead, try to gather information from the suspect and call the police immediately if the shoplifter continues to refuse to cooperate.
- If the suspect tries to flee, you may use reasonable force to detain. "Reasonable force" in a shoplifting incident is an amount of force which is not likely to seriously injure the suspect. The amount of force used may escalate with the suspect's efforts to escape, but should always stop short of potentially deadly force (unless the use of deadly force is necessary to protect yourself.)
- If the suspected shoplifter agrees to accompany you to your office, follow rather than lead, to make sure that this person does not have a chance to dispose of the stolen merchandise.
- When in your office, tell the suspect that you saw the concealment of the items and request that he or she give them to you. If the person refuses, do not search. Instead, let the police make that decision. A search may be legally defensible, but runs a risk of a suit for assault or invasion of privacy if you turn out to be wrong.
- During the detainment or interrogation of a suspect, there should always be a witness present who is the same sex as the suspect. Female suspects should never be detained in private solely by a male. Thus, in some situations, you may be forced to detain the suspect in the sales area.
- When interrogating the suspect do not accuse or threaten with an arrest to obtain a confession. Such tactics are unnecessary and expose you to liability.
- The law allows detention for a reasonable time, so call the police immediately. You can detain the shoplifter while giving the opportunity to make or refuse to make a statement, and while examining any employees and store records to determine who owns the merchandise in question. A recent Washington Appellate Court decision

## SHOPLIFTING LAWS

indicates that you may hold the suspect until the police arrive. [State v. Gonzales, 24 Wn. App. 437, 604 P.2d 168 (1979)]

- It is your responsibility to record all facts about the incident, and if the suspect admits wrongdoing, to get a statement to that effect. An example of a shoplifting report is attached. Before using the form, check with your local police to verify that it is acceptable to them.

### Evidence

Even though many arrested shoplifters forfeit bail and never appear in either criminal or civil court, it is still vital that you have all necessary evidence for the police or for any subsequent court proceedings. The following are some evidence collection guidelines:

- Collect all stolen articles from the shoplifter along with related materials such as discarded packaging and price tags.
  - Call the attention of the responding officer to any special shoplifting devices used for concealment so that they may be preserved for evidence.
  - If goods are perishable, remove and keep the labels or containers, or take a color photograph of the evidence.
  - Label, initial and date each stolen item. If the shoplifter paid for some, but not all, merchandise, then save the cash register tape to prove that all items were not purchased. Turn all evidence over to the police officer making the arrest if he will accept it. If the police officer prefers that you keep the evidence, place it in a locker or room to which only designated personnel have access. All evidence for a given case should be sealed in a paper bag, envelope or other container.
- If after a reasonable period there has been no court action, then contact the prosecutor's office to determine the status of the case. Once a case has gone to court, both civil and criminal, or after bail has been forfeited, you may either destroy the evidence or return saleable items to stock. Check with your local prosecutor to determine if the criminal conviction may be used as evidence in the civil case. If it may then there is no need to retain physical evidence for the civil trial. Always retain a copy of the shoplifting report so that you have a permanent record of the incident.

APPENDIX OF SHOPLIFTING LAWS AND FORMS



NOTE: This is for retailers' information only and is not to be enclosed with a demand letter.

DETAINMENT OF SHOPLIFTER BY MERCHANT

RCW 4.24.220

A civil defense:

In any civil action brought by reason of any person having been detained on or in the immediate vicinity of the premises of a mercantile establishment for the purpose of investigation or questioning as to the ownership of any merchandise, it shall be a defense of such action that the person was detained in a reasonable manner and for not more than a reasonable time to permit such investigation or questioning by a peace officer or by the owner of the mercantile establishment, his authorized employee or agent, and that such peace officer, owner, employee or agent had reasonable grounds to believe that the person so detained was committing or attempting to commit larceny or shoplifting on such premises of such merchandise. As used in this section, "reasonable grounds" shall include, but not be limited to, knowledge that a person has concealed possession of unpurchased merchandise of a mercantile establishment, and a "reasonable time" shall mean the time necessary to permit the person detained to make a statement or to refuse to make a statement, and the time necessary to examine employees and records of the mercantile establishment relative to the ownership of the merchandise.

Title 9A.16.080

A criminal defense:

(Title 9A.16.080 reads as above except for the substitution of the word "criminal" for "civil".)

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
CIVIL ANTI-SHOPLIFTING LAW

RCW 4.24.230

(1) An adult or emancipated minor who takes possession of any goods, wares or merchandise displayed or offered for sale by any wholesale or retail store or other mercantile establishment without the consent of the owner or seller, and with the intention of converting such goods, wares or merchandise to his own use without having paid the purchase price thereof, shall be liable, in addition to actual damages, for a penalty to the owner or seller in the amount of the retail value thereof not to exceed one thousand dollars, plus an additional penalty of not less than one hundred dollars nor more than two hundred dollars.

(2) The parent or legal guardian having the custody of an unemancipated minor who takes possession of any goods, wares or merchandise displayed or offered for sale by any wholesale or retail store or other mercantile establishment without the consent of the owner or seller and with the intention of converting such goods, wares or merchandise to his own use without having paid the purchase price thereof, shall be liable as a penalty to the owner or seller for the retail value of such goods, wares or merchandise not to exceed five hundred dollars plus an additional penalty of not less than one hundred dollars nor more than two hundred dollars: PROVIDED, That for the purposes of this subsection, liability shall not be imposed upon any governmental entity or private agency which has been assigned responsibility for the minor child pursuant to court order or action of the department of social and health services.

(3) Judgments, but not claims, arising under this section may be assigned.

(4) A conviction for violation of chapter 9A.56 RCW shall not be a condition precedent to maintenance of a civil action authorized by this section.

ADULT DEMAND LETTER

(Store Name)

(Store Address)

(Subject's Name)

(Subject's Address)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This store has a report showing that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), you took from us \_\_\_\_\_ (list stolen items)

without permission, without paying for them, and to use them as your own.

State law provides that we can demand that you pay these penalties:

for any damages \$ \_\_\_\_\_

the selling price of the stolen items (even if we have recovered the items) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

a penalty of no less than \$100 and no more than \$200 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT DEMANDED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This letter is our demand. A copy of the state law allowing this demand is attached.

Please send your check or money order to \_\_\_\_\_ (store name & address)

If you do not pay by \_\_\_\_\_ (date), we will take this demand to civil court.

This demand is made by this store. It is separate from any criminal prosecution by the city or county. This demand does not take the place of any fines or punishment which may be handed out by the criminal courts.

If you disagree with this demand, you may wish to contact \_\_\_\_\_ (store contact & phone). You may also wish to talk to a private attorney. If you do not pay this demand, we will file a court action. You will then have a chance to defend your position in civil court.

(Signed by store owner, manager or representative)



UNEMANCIPATED MINOR DEMAND LETTER

(Store Name)

(Store Address)

(Subject's Parents)

(Subject's Address)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This store has a report showing that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), your child  
\_\_\_\_\_ (subject's name) took from us \_\_\_\_\_ (list stolen items)  
without permission, without paying for them, and to use them as his/her own.

State law provides that we can demand that you pay these penalties:

the selling price of the stolen items \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(even if we have recovered the items)

a penalty of no less than \$100 and \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
no more than \$200

TOTAL AMOUNT DEMANDED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This letter is our demand.

The parent or legal guardian of a child is responsible for payment of this demand. A copy of the state law allowing this demand is attached.

Please send your check or money order to \_\_\_\_\_ (store name & address).

If you do not pay by \_\_\_\_\_ (date), we will take this demand to civil court.

This demand is made by this store. It is separate from any criminal prosecution by the city or county. This demand does not take the place of any fines or punishment which may be handed out by the criminal court.

If you disagree with this demand you may wish to contact \_\_\_\_\_ (store contact & phone number). You may also wish to talk to a private attorney. If you do not pay this demand, we will file a court action. You will then have the chance to defend your position in civil court.

(Signed by store owner, manager or representative)

SECOND DEMAND LETTER

(Store Name)

(Store Address)

(Subject's Name)

(Subject's Address)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This store has a report showing that on (date) \_\_\_\_\_, (subject's name) \_\_\_\_\_ took from us (list stolen items) \_\_\_\_\_ without permission, without paying for them, and to use them as your/his/her own.

You have not replied to our demand letter of (date of first demand letter) \_\_\_\_\_. We are again demanding payment. State law provides that we can demand that you pay these penalties:

for any damages \$ \_\_\_\_\_

the selling price of the  
stolen items (even if we  
have recovered the items) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

a penalty of no less than  
\$100 and no more than \$200 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT DEMANDED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This demand is made by this store. It is separate from any criminal prosecution by the city or county. This demand does not take the place of any fines or punishment which may be handed out by the criminal courts. You will not receive another notice before we file the civil court action.

(Signed by store owner, manager  
or representative)

NOTE: This form may be used to authorize a store employee, other than the manager or owner, to represent the business. However, claims cannot be assigned to a collection agency or other third party.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ (home address) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby delegate to \_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ (home address) \_\_\_\_\_, an employee of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company) \_\_\_\_\_, the performance of all undertakings in the pursuit of the recovery of damages and penalties against persons suspected of theft of merchandise from \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company or corporation) \_\_\_\_\_, including, but not limited to, the following actions:

- (1) The making of demands for payment of the civil damages and civil penalties authorized under state law;
- (2) The filing of complaints and, where allowed by law, representation of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company) \_\_\_\_\_ interests in the courts of this state;
- (3) Other representation of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company) \_\_\_\_\_ interests in regard to such alleged incidents.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_. (signature of official or owner)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(typed name)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(typed title)

Subscribed and sworn before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public in and for the  
State of Washington residing  
at \_\_\_\_\_.



SHOPLIFTING REPORT

Store: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Time statement started: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

This statement is made voluntarily of my own free will; no one has threatened or in any way enticed me with any promises to make it.

(Signature of Person Giving Statement)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (suspect's name), do reside at \_\_\_\_\_ (address). While in the above-named store, on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), I was stopped inside/outside the store, by \_\_\_\_\_ (name of employee, owner, manager, or security officer) who did identify himself/herself first.

While in the above-named store on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), at or about \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m., I did appropriate to my own use the item(s) listed below without first paying for, or intending to pay for, or obtaining the owner's permission:

Quantity	Item	Value

I fully understand this statement and realize that it may be used against me in a court of law.

(Signature of Person Giving Statement)

Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Time Statement Finished: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Race	Sex	DOB	Ht.	Wt.	Build	Compl.	Hair	Eyes	Scars/Marks

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle Used \_\_\_\_\_ Make \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Body Style \_\_\_\_\_ License No. \_\_\_\_\_

Juvenile (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_ School Attends \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardians \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Notified by Whom \_\_\_\_\_ How Notified \_\_\_\_\_ Date, Time Notified \_\_\_\_\_

STORE LETTER ACKNOWLEDGING PAYMENT

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

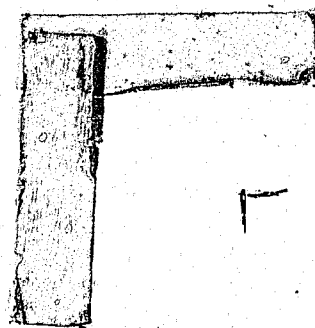
We have received \$\_\_\_\_\_ from you in payment of the claim asserted in our demand letter of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

Your payment is full satisfaction of your civil liability under the Washington State Civil Shoplifting Law in regard to the referenced incident.

As a matter of information, the satisfaction of the civil matter does not in any way affect or compromise any criminal action which may be brought against any person.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



**END**