

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICES

King County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service
www.kcba.org/lrs
206.267.7010

Tacoma-Pierce County Lawyer Referral Service
www.tpcba.com
253.383.3432

Kitsap County Lawyer Referral Service
www.kitsaplegalservices.org
360.373.2426

Snohomish County Bar Referral Services
www.snobar.org
425.388.3018

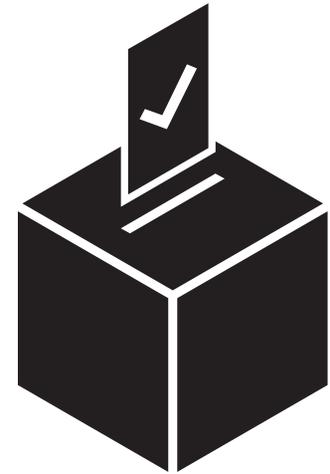
Lewis County Lawyer Referral Program
360.748.0430

Southwest Washington Lawyer Referral Service
(Clark, Cowlitz, and Skamania Counties)
360.695.0599

Spokane County Bar Association Online Lawyer Referral Service
www.spokanebar.org

Thurston County Bar Association
www.thurstoncountybar.com

VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION



in Washington State



Under Washington law, individuals convicted of felonies that have their right to vote automatically restored as soon as they have completed incarceration and any community custody required by the Department of Corrections. (*While voting rights restoration is automatic, eligible individuals still need to register, as described below.*)

When is my right to vote restored?

- If you were convicted in **federal court or state court outside Washington**: Once you are no longer in prison, your right to vote is restored automatically.
- If you were convicted in **Washington state court**: Once you are no longer under the authority of the Department of Corrections (DOC), your right to vote is restored automatically.

Not being under the authority of the DOC means you are not in prison and you are no longer on community custody.

If you are unsure whether you are on community custody, you (or a person acting on your behalf) should call the DOC at 1.800.430.9674 on Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Ask if DOC has an “open” or “active” file on you. If they say no, you are eligible to register to vote. If they say yes, ask for the name and phone number of your CCO’s supervisor, and call the supervisor. Ask the supervisor if you are currently on community custody. If they say yes, your right to vote is not restored until you are done with community custody.

Who do I contact to register to vote:

The Washington Secretary of State’s office has information about how to register, or call your county auditor or elections office, or check

with voting rights organizations such as the League of Women Voters.

Secretary of State’s office:

www.secstate.wa.gov
360.902.4151

League of Women Voters:

www.lwvwa.org
Phone: 206.622.8961
Toll Free: 800.419.2596

King County Elections

919 SW Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057-2906
www.kingcounty.gov/elections
206.296.VOTE (8683)
TTY: Relay: 711

What if I experience misunderstandings about the law?

Contact the **ACLU**: call 206.624.2180 or email www.aclu-wa.org.

If I was convicted of a misdemeanor or a juvenile offense in juvenile court, do I lose the right to vote?

No. You lose the right to vote only if you are convicted of a felony. People who have misdemeanor convictions or who were convicted of a juvenile offense in juvenile court can register to vote.

Can I lose the right to vote after it has been restored?

Yes. If you are convicted of another felony offense, you again will lose the right to vote until you have completed the new prison term of incarceration and any new required period of community custody. Also, if you owe legal financial obligations, such as court fees, costs, or restitution, **and** fail to make three payments in a calendar year **and** the court determines that you have intentionally failed to comply

with your financial obligations, the court **may issue a court order revoking** your right to vote. To regain the right to vote again after a revocation order, you have to show the court you are making a good faith effort to pay, or that you have fully paid off your debt.

If you have questions about how the law affects your situation, you should consult an attorney. Information about free legal clinics and attorney referral services is provided on the back of this pamphlet.

If I have my voting rights, should I still try to get a Certificate of Discharge?

Before voting rights restoration became automatic, voting rights were restored by having the court issue a “Certificate of Discharge” (COD). A COD has important benefits beyond restoring the right to vote. If you want to vacate your felony criminal record for background check purposes, getting a COD “starts the clock” on a waiting period that must occur before you may ask the court to vacate your record. **If you have questions about vacating your conviction, please feel to call the ACLU Criminal Records project at 206.624.2180.**

Under new law, the automatic restoration of voting rights does not mean that a COD has been entered in your case. Obtaining a COD still requires fulfilling all requirements of your sentence (except a no-contact order) and obtaining a separate court order, either by petition to the court or request to the prosecuting attorney. If you wish to obtain a COD, please consult an attorney or one of the resources listed on the back of this brochure.

Do you have a record and are unsure whether you can vote? See the ACLU’s easy-to-use online guide at canivote.aclu-wa.org.