

OUTSIDE KING COUNTY

Southwest Washington Lawyer Referral Service

(Clark, Cowlitz, and Skamania Counties)
360.695.0599 Monday – Friday, 12-4pm

Tacoma-Pierce County Lawyer Referral Service

www.tpcba.com
253.383.3432

Kitsap County Lawyer Referral Service

www.kitsaplegalservices.org/ars/index.html
360.373.2426

Snohomish County Bar Referral Services

www.snobar.org
425.388.3018

Lewis County Lawyer Referral Program

360.748.0430

Spokane County Bar Association Online Lawyer Referral Service

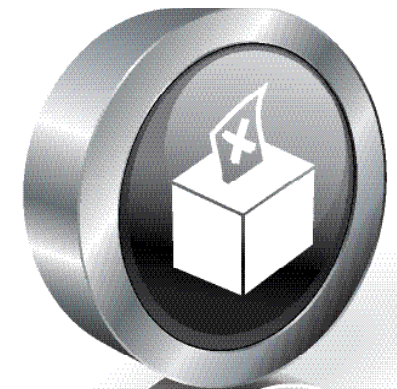
www.spokanebar.org

Thurston County Bar Association

www.thurstoncountybar.com

*The Thurston County Bar Association does not
provide an attorney referral service, but its website
does list all TCBA members by practice area.*

VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION



in Washington State



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF WASHINGTON FOUNDATION
901 FIFTH AVENUE #630, SEATTLE, WA 98164
WWW.ACLU-WA.ORG

8/2011

In 2009 the Washington legislature passed a law that automatically restores the right to vote to individuals convicted of felonies when they have completed their time in prison and have served any required community custody supervised by the State Department of Corrections. This law took effect on July 26, 2009.

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
Weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
www.kingcounty.gov/elections
206-296-VOTE (8683)
TTY: Relay: 711

What if I experience misunderstandings about the new law?

Contact the ACLU:
206-624-2180
www.aclu-wa.org
(click on “get help”)

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 the 2009 law passed, 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 the new law, the 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.