


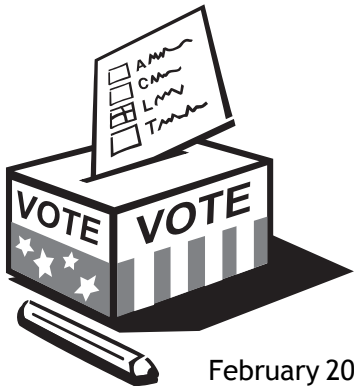
I was convicted in another state.

Each state has its own rules about voting rights. You need to follow the ones from the state of your conviction. Contact the state elections office to learn the rules followed by your state of conviction. If it would be legal to vote in the state where you were convicted, you are eligible to register to vote in Washington. If your right to vote has not been restored in the state in which you were convicted, you can request the Washington State Clemency and Pardons Board to restore your right to vote. To request the Board to restore your right, call (360) 902-4111, ask for the Clemency and Pardons Board, and follow the Board's  procedures.

Can the ACLU help me?

The ACLU wants to help you! Contact the ACLU if you have served your time and . . .

- you want to register to vote but don't know how;
- you want to vote but still owe money for fines, restitution, or other financial obligations imposed at sentencing, or
- you want to vote and have completed all sentence requirements, but have not received a certificate of discharge.



February 2006

Why does the ACLU care about restoring voting rights?

The ACLU opposes taking the vote away from any citizen. In states that do disenfranchise felons, the ACLU believes that the right to vote should be restored when the individual is released from prison. In Washington state, however, individuals who have served their time in prison are not allowed to vote until they have paid all court-imposed fines and monetary penalties. The ACLU believes that an individual's right to vote should not be conditioned upon one's economic status or financial ability to pay fines or penalties.

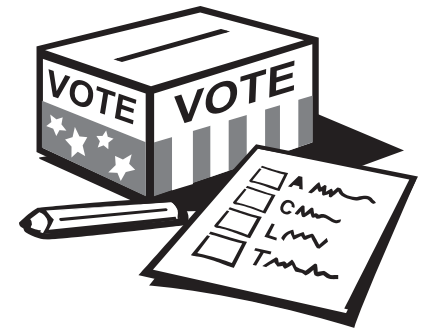
For the past three years, the ACLU-WA has been working to pass legislation that would restore ex-felons' right to vote in Washington once they have completed their punishment, even though they may still be paying off monetary debts. The legislative proposal ensures that an individual's right to vote, the most important role and responsibility one has as a citizen, is not conditioned upon economic status. Under the bill, ex-felons would still be required to pay court-imposed financial obligations; those obligations, however, would no longer bar them from registering and exercising the right to vote.

We want to hear from you!

Contact the ACLU by calling (206) 624-2184 or e-mailing legal@aclu-wa.org

This page was produced by the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington Foundation, the legal and educational arm of the ACLU-WA, devoted to protecting and extending the civil liberties for all people in Washington.

How Ex-Felons Can Restore their Right To Vote in Washington



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Persons convicted of a felony in Washington lose their right to vote until they have completed all the conditions of their sentence, including their legal financial obligations.

What you need to do to regain the right to vote depends on **where** you were convicted and **when** you were convicted. The following information explains how to get your right to vote back.

How can I get my right to vote back?

I was convicted by a state court in Washington after 1984 and . . .

. . . I have satisfied all of my legal financial obligations (LFOs).


If you paid your LFOs while you were still in Department of Corrections (DOC) custody or under supervision, the DOC will notify the sentencing court that all terms of the sentence have been completed, and the court then will issue a certificate of discharge. The court sends a copy to you at the address listed in the court file.


Your right to vote is restored, and you do not need to take any further action. Your right to serve on a jury, sign initiatives, and run for office is also restored. The certificate does not restore the right to possess firearms and does not clear your conviction for employment background check purposes.

If you paid your LFOs after the DOC terminated their supervision of you, you have a right to petition the court to issue a certificate of discharge. To petition the court for a certificate of discharge, follow these steps:


1 Find the petition form for obtaining a certificate of discharge online at www.courts.wa.gov/forms, or by contacting the ACLU-WA.

2 Go to the county courthouse where your criminal case occurred and look at the file for your case. *Be sure to bring the blank petition form with you.* In King County, computers are available to pull up your file. In other counties you may have to ask the court clerk for the file. If it is difficult for you to travel to the courthouse, contact the ACLU for alternative suggestions.

3 Once you have your court file, make copies of the following documents: a) the Judgment and Sentence; b) the Satisfaction of Judgment (if there is one); and c) any Orders modifying the sentence or terminating supervision. 


4 If you find a Satisfaction of Judgment, ask the court clerk to sign and date the second page of the Petition form on the appropriate signature line. If you do not find a Satisfaction of Judgment, ask the clerk to look up your LFO account to confirm that you have satisfied your obligations. If the clerk refuses to sign the petition even though payment has been confirmed, contact the ACLU. 

5 Completion of non-financial conditions can be proven either by DOC verification or by an offender providing his or her own documentation showing completion of such things as community service hours and treatment programs.

6 If you choose to get DOC verification, call the DOC office which last supervised you to inform staff that you are petitioning for restoration of your voting rights. Ask what 

arrangements you need to make to get a CCO to sign the petition to confirm you have completed all court-ordered requirements of your sentence. Keep notes of your conversation.

7 If DOC agrees to sign the petition and requests that you mail it to the office, be sure to keep a copy for your files. If DOC declines to sign the petition, contact the ACLU to discuss how best to proceed.

8 You also must obtain the signature of the county prosecutor prior to filing the petition in court. If the prosecutor refuses to sign, contact the ACLU for assistance. 

9 After you obtain the required signatures, file the petition in the county superior court in which you were convicted. After the judge has signed the petition and issued a certificate and order of discharge, you must file the original with the county clerk/Department of Judicial Administration. Be sure to retain a copy of the certificate for your personal records.

I was convicted by a state court in Washington prior to 1984.

You can request the Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board (ISRB) to restore your right to vote. To request the ISRB to restore your right, call (360) 493-9266 and follow the Board's procedures.

I was convicted in Federal Court.

You can request the Washington State Clemency and Pardons Board to restore your right to vote. To request the Board to restore your right, call (360) 902-4111, ask for the Clemency and Pardons Board, and follow the Board's procedures.