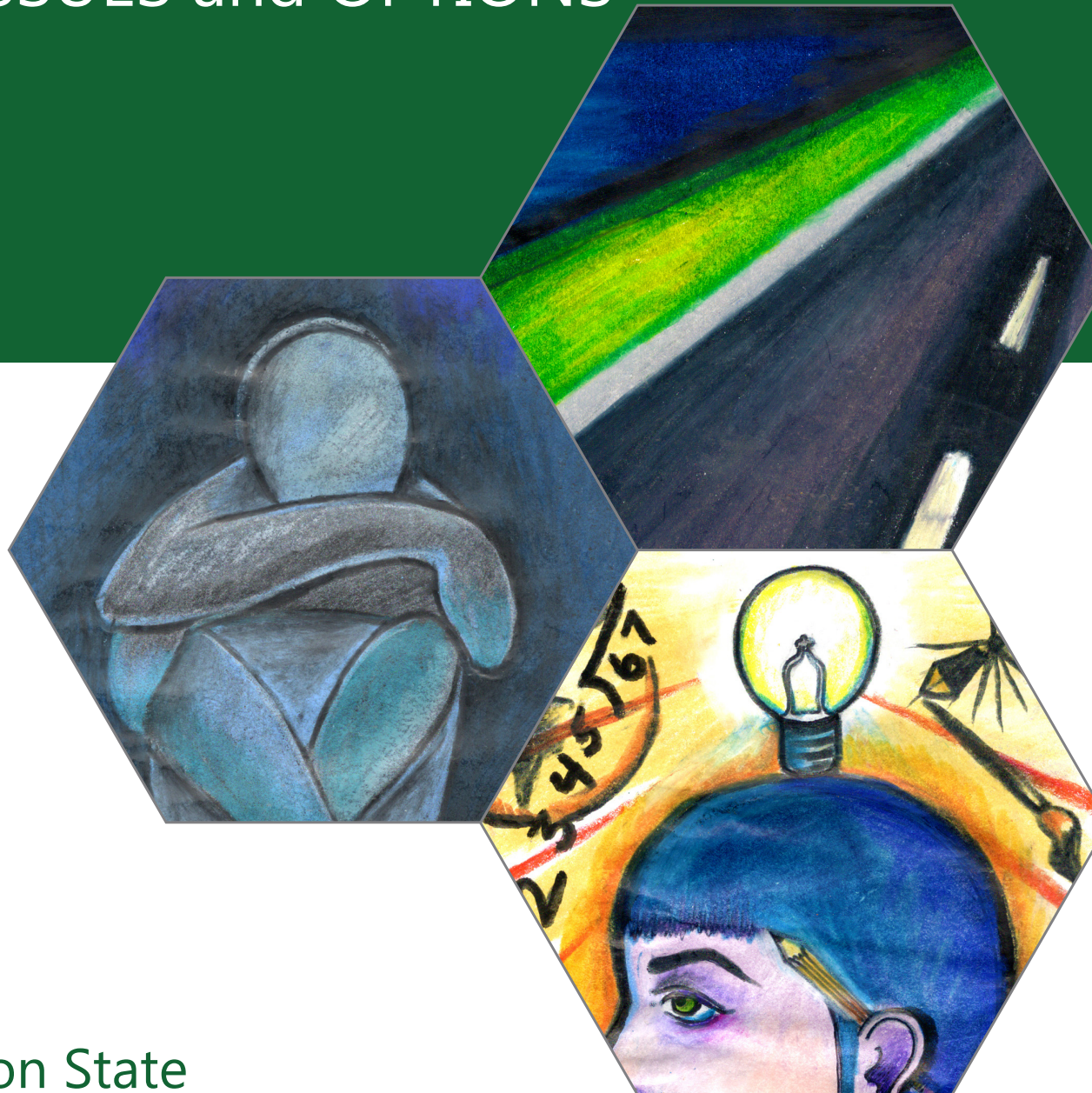


HOMELESS YOUTH Handbook

LEGAL ISSUES and OPTIONS



2013
Washington State

Columbia Legal Services 



BAKER & MCKENZIE

Homeless Youth Handbook - Legal Issues and Options

Washington State
2013

Forward

By Columbia Legal Services, Starbucks Law & Corporate Affairs Department and Baker & McKenzie

Today, two-thousand unaccompanied homeless youth attend Washington's schools. Thousands more young adults have nowhere to sleep at night. These are our youth – and they need help.

Because reliable statistics are difficult to obtain, the full extent of youth homelessness is largely unknown. What we do know is that the problem is real and growing. Many youth find themselves homeless and alone after having been discharged from public institutions – foster care and juvenile detention among them -- or because they ran from a dysfunctional family. In fact, 25% of former foster youth nationwide reported that they had been homeless at least one night within two-and-a-half to four years after exiting foster care.

Without a home, family support or other resources, and opportunities for work and housing, homeless youth experience circumstances where they are threatened, isolated, fearful, unprotected, undernourished, emotionally unstable and, sometimes, in danger of losing their lives. The legal issues they face can range from education to emancipation, from foster care to family law, from delinquency to domestic violence. The solutions do not come easy and the always scarce resources to support those solutions shrink further in the face of economic downturns, budget cuts and other factors outside their control. These youth need the best our legal profession has to offer and the most any of us can give.

The work of Columbia Legal Services (CLS) to address the legal needs of low-income people in need of access to justice is consistent with the views of others who respect the rule of law and understand the importance of providing access to justice to society's most vulnerable members. Through community education and empowerment, research, policy advocacy, and litigation, the Children and Youth Project at CLS works to improve opportunities for Washington's youngest citizens to have safe and stable families and homes, quality education, health care and economic stability.

This vision has inspired dozens of the lawyers and legal staff at Starbucks and the law firm of Baker & McKenzie to partner with CLS's Children and Youth Project in their work by contributing to the creation of this *Homeless Youth Handbook*. It has been not just an opportunity but also a privilege for these teams to combine their skills, legal know-how and energy to help CLS create this much needed resource.

Starbucks is committed to making positive impacts and strengthening the communities in which it does business. As part of this commitment, Starbucks Law & Corporate Affairs Department (L&CA) provides pro bono legal assistance in the communities Starbucks serves. The attorneys, paralegals and staff of Starbucks L&CA volunteer hundreds of hours of pro bono service each year on topics such as children's and veterans' rights, estate planning for first responders and debt and credit counseling for low income families, often partnering with other companies and local agencies. In addition to pro bono services, Starbucks L&CA partners (employees) support non-profit organizations that aim to increase access to justice to underserved communities. Starbucks L&CA is proud of this heritage and continuing commitment to pro bono service to the community and its contribution to this *Handbook*.

The global law Firm of Baker & McKenzie shares this commitment to the communities in which the Firm lives and practices. Baker & McKenzie engages in a robust pro bono and community service practice that inspires attorneys across the world to team with clients on important issues facing underserved and disadvantaged individuals, families and communities. Specifically, the Firm's efforts in advocacy for children and youth have engaged professionals in every type of service from legal work before the highest courts and governments of several nations, to local projects bringing books and mentoring to at-risk and orphaned youth. In legal work alone, the Firm provides over 25,000 hours of pro bono legal service a year to address the legal needs of the poor and to help narrow the social justice gap.

We owe our deepest gratitude to the many professions and professionals who serve the homeless youth of Washington each and every day. We sincerely hope that this *Handbook* provides a valuable resource to our state's youth and to those social workers, counselors, teachers, police officers, health care professionals and the many others who provide daily support in the fight for justice for our homeless youth.



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Law is generally described as of May 29, 2013.

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Homeless Youth Handbook

Contributors List as of May 16, 2013

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I. OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY

OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY	BEING A HOMELESS YOUTH
<p>When can the police take me into custody?</p>	<p>If I am a runaway, when can I be picked up by the police?</p> <p>The police can take you into custody under a number of circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The police have been told by your parents that you have run away from home without their consent/approval; • The police reasonably believe when considering your age, location, and the time of day, that you are in circumstances which are a danger to your safety, or that you are violating a local curfew law; • The police have been notified by an agency legally responsible for your supervision (e.g., foster care, Crisis Residential Center) that you have run away; • The police have been notified and ordered by juvenile court to pick you up; or • The police have reasonable suspicion that you are being unlawfully harbored. Unlawful harboring generally means that your parents have not consented or approved of where you are staying.
<p>What are my rights?</p>	<p>What are my rights if a police officer picks me up because I am a runaway?</p> <p>First, an officer must inform you of the reason why you have been taken into custody. The officer will explain that you are being taken into custody to be returned to your parents or to other people who can care for you. This is not the same as being arrested for a crime. If you don't understand why you are being taken into custody, you may ask the officer. But don't argue, run away, or speak disrespectfully to the officer. You don't want to give the officer a reason to arrest you.</p>
	<p>If I am picked up by a police officer, where can the officer take me?</p> <p>The officer can take you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to your parent's home; • to your parent's place of employment if a parent is not at home; or • at the request of the parent: to an adult family member, a responsible adult, a Crisis Residential Center, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), or a licensed youth shelter, if the officer believes that the requested place is a reasonable distance from the parent's home.

	<p>An officer can transport you to a designated Crisis Residential Center when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the officer has attempted but was unable to contact your parents;• the officer believes that you are experiencing some type of abuse or neglect at home;• it is not practical to transport you home or to a parent's place of employment;• a parent is not available to accept custody of you; or• a parent requests that the officer take you to a Crisis Residential Center. <p>The "Washington State Coalition for the Homeless" website lists options for homeless, foster and runaway youth.</p>
	<p>Can I be picked up by the police if I ran away from my foster home?</p> <p>Yes. The same laws apply to runaways from foster homes as to runaways from other homes and living situations.</p>
	<p>Can I be picked up by the police for being in violation of the Becca Laws, a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) Petition, an At-Risk Youth (ARY) Petition or a dependency order?</p> <p>Yes. Any school district official, sheriff, deputy sheriff, marshal, police officer, or any other officer authorized to make arrests may take you into custody without a warrant if you are required to attend school and are absent from school without an approved excuse.</p> <p>You may be delivered to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your parent(s) or parental guardian(s);• the school from which you are absent; or• a program designated by the school district. <p>For more detailed information on the Becca Laws, see the "Laws" section of this chapter.</p> <p>For more detailed information on CHINS Petitions, ARY Petitions, and dependency orders, see Chapter 2 of this handbook.</p>
	<p>What are my rights if the police enter a shelter/drop in center/friend's place/relative's place looking for me?</p> <p>In addition to your general rights listed above, the following apply specifically to entering a shelter:</p> <p>If you are listed as a runaway and the police have a warrant to enter a shelter, they are allowed to do a reasonable search for you but they are not allowed to search or question other youth or look in other areas of the shelter.</p>

<p>Where can I go if I am a homeless youth?</p>	<p>The only other situation in which police can search for you in a shelter is if "exigent circumstances" exist. Exigent circumstances means that a police officer is in a situation where someone is in immediate danger, evidence is going to be destroyed very soon, or a suspect will otherwise escape. For example, there may be exigent circumstances if a police officer is chasing you for a crime and you run into a shelter. However, if there are no exigent circumstances and the police do not have a warrant for you, then they must be given permission by the shelter staff to access the building.</p>
	<p>What happens if the police ask for me and the shelter/drop in center/friend's place/relative's place tells them I'm not there? Fails to disclose my location? Helps me escape?</p> <p>Regardless of the type of shelter (shelter/drop in center/friend's place/relative's place), a person commits a gross misdemeanor - the crime of unlawful harboring of a minor - if the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not release you to the police after the police have asked; • does not disclose your location to the police after the police have asked; • obstructs the police from taking you into custody; or • assists you in avoiding or attempting to avoid the custody of the police.
	<p>If I'm homeless, where can I go to take a shower? Do my laundry? Eat?</p> <p>The following are locations where you can seek refuge if you are homeless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shelter; • shelter specific to pregnant or parenting teens; • Crisis Residential Center (CRC) – a short-term, semi-secure facility for runaway youth and adolescents in conflict with their families; • Secure Crisis Residential Center (SCRC) - physically secure, short-term residential facility; or • home of a relative or friend. <p>The Washington State Coalition for the Homeless has an extensive compilation of shelters and residency requirements, listed by area.</p> <p>You may stay in an empty building only under the following circumstances: the building is abandoned, is not fenced or enclosed in any manner, is open to the public and you have followed the rules regarding access to the building, or you believe that the owner would give you permission.</p> <p>Homeless Youth Prevention/Protection and Education (HOPE) Centers – there are nearly 30 beds across 9 facilities/shelters in the state, designated for street youth. There are no specific HOPE Centers – instead there are HOPE-designated beds in various shelters.</p> <p>Responsible Living Skills Program (RLSP) – across the state, there are nearly 40 RLSP-designated beds. Youth in this program are often state dependents who have had unsuccessful placements in the past, and they often need help with daily living and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>For additional information, please see the Guide's section on Housing.</p>

	<p>What are the requirements for staying in a shelter? Crisis Residential Center?</p> <p>Shelter – The requirements will vary by shelter.</p> <p>CRC – The requirements will vary by center.</p> <p>SCRC – You can be held here for up to 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) without getting parental consent, proceeding under the dependency statute, or filing a Children in Need of Services (CHINS) Petition. With parental consent, you can be held for up to 5 days. Your parent(s) can remove you from a SCRC at any time, unless the administrator of the center has reason to believe that you are in danger of being abused if returned to your parent's custody.</p> <hr/> <p>Is an adult at the facility/residence required to report my presence? If so, to whom and by when?</p> <p>Shelter – If the shelter knows that you are away from home without your parent's permission, it will be required to report your presence to your parents, the police or Child Protective Services within 8 hours after finding out that you are a runaway. This law will change on July 28, 2013 to state that if a licensed overnight youth shelter, or another licensed organization with a stated mission to provide services to homeless youth or runaway youth and their families, shelters a known runaway it must notify the minor's parent within 72 hours, but preferably within 24 hours, after admitting the minor to the shelter or other licensed organization's program. At least once every 8 hours after learning that a minor receiving services or shelter is a runaway, the shelter or organization staff must look at the Washington State Patrol website. If the minor is listed as a runaway, the shelter or organization must immediately notify DSHS.</p> <p>If you want to stay in a shelter, do not volunteer your name, your age, that you are a runaway or that your parents want you home. If you are asked about any of those details, politely decline to answer until you are required to give the information in order to receive services. If you are required to provide the information, ask the shelter to wait 8 hours before telling anyone, and ask that the shelter disclose the information to DSHS and not your parents.</p> <p>If the shelter has reasonable cause to believe that you have been abused or neglected, the shelter must make a report of the incident to the police or DSHS.</p> <p>CRC – Upon admission to the CRC, the CRC is required to contact your parent(s), as well as DSHS.</p> <p>SCRC – You will have likely been placed here and police or social services will know of your presence.</p> <p>Home of a relative or friend – If your relative or friend knows that you are away from home without your parent's permission; he or she has to report you within 8 hours of finding out that you are away from home without permission. Any person who provides shelter to you and who knows at the time of providing the shelter that you are away from your parents' home without their permission is required to report your location within 8 hours of becoming aware of it to a parent, police or DSHS. Once a person has reported your location, he or she cannot be sued for sheltering you, except in cases of intentional misconduct or gross negligence by the person providing shelter.</p>
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Laws	<p>How long can I stay?</p> <p>Shelter – Will vary by shelter.</p> <p>CRC – Up to 15 consecutive days.</p> <p>SCRC – Up to 5 consecutive days in a detention-based facility or 15 days in a non-detention-based facility. You may transfer between a SCRC and CRC but the total length of stay may not exceed 5 consecutive days.</p> <p>Home of a relative or friend – Will vary.</p> <p>HOPE-designated bed at a shelter – Up to 30 days.</p> <p>RLSP-designated bed – Will vary as this is a long-term residential program.</p>
	<p>What is the Becca Bill?</p> <p>The Becca Bill is designed to protect you from endangering yourself, to provide treatment services and tools to keep you and your family together, to keep you in school and to strengthen court orders by holding both you and your parents accountable. If appropriate, the Becca Bill facilitates counseling to reconcile you with your family.</p> <p>The Becca Bill allows you to seek short-term support or for your parents to request help to ensure you are receiving the necessary assistance and care. The Bill also allows a police officer to pick you up and take you to a CRC, which will be discussed in more detail below.</p> <p>The Becca Bill guarantees that the CRC cannot withhold information from you regarding your rights. The facility is required to provide you with a statement that outlines the department's services and your rights.</p>
	<p>How does the Becca Bill affect me?</p> <p>If you are under the age of 18 and not emancipated from your parents and either you have run away from home or your parents are homeless, you may be impacted by the Becca Bill. The Becca Bill is intended to preserve, strengthen and reconcile families. It provides your parents with a legal avenue for trying to get you the appropriate care and supervision needed. It also provides you with an outlet in case you are the victim of abuse or neglect. The counselors at the crisis centers will talk to you and perform an assessment of your needs to identify which placement options will help you thrive and protect you from being in a dangerous situation or from endangering yourself.</p> <p>One of the most important outcomes of the Becca Bill is that it established SCRCs, which provide a safe haven for you. These centers are short-term residential facility that is a detention-based secure facility, a non-detention-based secure facility or a semi-secured facility. If you are placed in a secure facility located in a juvenile detention center, you must remain there for at least 24 hours and may stay at the facility for a maximum of 5 consecutive days. If you are placed in either a secure facility that is not located in a juvenile detention center or a semi-secure facility, you may stay at the facility for a maximum of 15 consecutive days. During this time period, counselors will try to reconcile you with your family or find appropriate alternative housing.</p> <p>If you are at a secure facility, the counselor will determine within 24 hours whether you should be transferred to a semi-secure facility or to DSHS. If you are at a semi-secure facility, the counselor may transfer you to a secure facility if he or she thinks you may attempt to leave the facility.</p>

	<p>If within 72 hours your parents do not remove you from the facility, then DSHS may file a dependency petition to approve an out-of-home placement for you. In rare circumstances, you or your parents can also file a petition for out-of-home placement for you (or an At-Risk Youth Petition, described below); however, usually a counselor must perform an assessment before a court will hear the petition.</p>
<p>Police Custody</p>	<p>Can a police officer take me into custody if I am in violation of the Becca Bill?</p> <p>A police officer can take you into custody under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your parents contact the police and say you have run away without consent; • If a police officer reasonably believes you are in danger or violating curfew. The police officer must base this determination on your age, location and the time of the day; • If an agency that is supervising you has notified the police that you have run away; • If an agency has been informed by the court that probable cause exists to believe that you have violated a court placement order or that a court order has been issued to pick you up; or • If the police officer has a reasonable suspicion that you are being unlawfully harbored.
	<p>If I am picked up by a police officer for violating the Becca Bill, what is the officer required to do?</p> <p>Once the police officer takes you into custody, the police officer must either transport you and place you at an authorized destination or release you. The police officer may not keep you in custody beyond the amount of time that is reasonably necessary to transport you to your destination.</p> <p>While in custody, the police officer must inform you of the reasons you are in custody and transport you to a parent's home or place of employment or, at your parent's request and if within a reasonable distance, to a responsible adult or a CRC.</p> <p>After trying to reach your parents, the police officer may take you to a SCRC or semi-secure CRC if a SCRC is not available if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is not practical to take you to your parents; • your parents are not available; or • you are afraid to return to your parents and the officer believes you are experiencing abuse or neglect. <p>After trying to reach your parents, if the CRC is full or not available, the police officer can ask DSHS to take custody of you. If DSHS refuses to accept you, then the police officer may release you from custody if an adult extended family member, a responsible adult or a licensed youth shelter is not available to take custody of you.</p> <p>A police officer must inform you of the reason you are in custody and also provide you with a written statement that explains your rights to you.</p>

	<p>What should I do if I am picked up by a police officer as either a reported runaway or suspected runaway?</p> <p>A police officer is only required to read you your rights once you are under arrest. It is always best to cooperate with police while also asserting your rights. You should avoid any actions that could make the police suspicious of your behavior. It is important for you to remember that a police officer is allowed to ask questions and talk with you. You should not run away from police since running away may provide police with reasonable suspicion to conduct a pat down search or search of belongings or provide probable cause for an arrest.</p>
<p>Petition</p>	<p>What is a CHINS Petition?</p> <p>A CHINS (Child in Need of Services) Petition is a way for you or your parents to request help when conflicts between you have become so severe that you are no longer able to live in your parents' home. When the petition is filed, a judge will consider whether you should be placed in a residence other than your parents' home. If the judge grants the petition, you will be temporarily placed in a new home. The judge may also impose other requirements on you or your parents. For more detailed information on CHINS Petitions, see Chapter 2 of this handbook.</p> <p>What is an ARY Petition?</p> <p>An ARY (At-Risk Youth) Petition is similar to a CHINS Petition, but it has a few differences. An ARY Petition is a way for your parents to request help from the juvenile court to resolve family conflicts or substance abuse problems, or to prevent you from engaging in self-destructive behavior. Unlike a CHINS Petition, an ARY Petition can only be filed by your parents (you cannot file it by yourself), and your parent may withdraw it at any time. However, you must still follow the requirements that the judge imposes on you. For more detailed information on ARY Petitions, see Chapter 2 of this handbook.</p>
<p>CHINS PETITIONS</p>	<p>How can I protect myself if my parents are not keeping me safe?</p>
	<p>What if the conflict between my parent and me is so serious that it can't be resolved while I am living at home?</p> <p>You can file a Child In Need of Services (CHINS) Petition with the court. When counseling, living with relatives or similar efforts has failed to resolve conflicts between you and your parents and you or your parents want you placed outside the home, you or your parents may be able to file a CHINS Petition.</p> <p>What is a CHINS Petition?</p> <p>It is a petition filed in court requesting that you be placed in a residence other than the home of your parents or legal guardians.</p> <p>Who can file a CHINS Petition?</p> <p>If you are under the age of 18 and not emancipated, either you, your parent or the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) can file a CHINS petition.</p>

How do I qualify for a CHINS Petition?

You can file a CHINS petition if you are under the age of 18 and not emancipated. You must show that your parent or legal guardian has tried but cannot successfully keep the family together or that they are unwilling to continue to try. You must also show you do not have one or more of the following:

- Food;
- Shelter;
- Health care;
- Clothing;
- Education; or
- Services designed to maintain or reunite the family.

In the CHINS Petition, you or your parent must show that one of the following three situations is occurring:

- (1) You are beyond parental control such that your behavior endangers your health, safety, or welfare or that of another person; or
- (2) You have been reported to law enforcement as absent without consent for at least 24 consecutive hours from either your parent's home, a crisis residential center, an out-of-home placement, or a court-ordered placement on two or more separate occasions; **and**
- (3) You either, have exhibited a serious substance abuse problem; **or** have exhibited behaviors that create a serious risk of harm to the health, safety, or welfare of the child or any other person; or
- (4) You are in need of necessary services, including food, shelter health care, clothing, educational, or services designed to maintain or reunite the family; and
- (5) You lack access to or have declined to utilize these services; and
- (6) Your parents have shown continuing but unsuccessful efforts to maintain the family structure or are unable or unwilling to continue efforts to maintain the family structure.

How do I show that one of three situations above is occurring?

You must confirm that one of the three situations listed above is occurring through a *Verification of Family Assessment*. In order to obtain a *Verification of Family Assessment*, contact the Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) office at DSHS and make an appointment for intake and assessment. After the appointment, the intake caseworker will prepare a Family Assessment, which needs to be filed with the CHINS petition. However, you may file the CHINS petition two days after contacting FRS even if they have not set an appointment or finished the Family Assessment.

	<p>Where do I file a CHINS Petition?</p> <p>You file a CHINS Petition (including all supporting documents) with the Clerk of the Juvenile Court’s Office. The documents need to be filed at the Juvenile Court Clerk’s Office. You will automatically be assigned your own attorney for all hearings. The Court must have a copy of the Verification of Family Assessment before proceeding with the hearing, unless it has been more than two days since you asked for the Family Assessment.</p> <p>What happens after I file a CHINS Petition?</p> <p>You will automatically be assigned your own attorney for all proceedings. You will also receive a court date for a fact-finding hearing where the court will decide whether to grant your CHINS petition. After the facts have been determined, the court may impose conditions of supervision for you. The court may also order your parent to participate in certain services. This may be done at fact-finding or at a separate hearing.</p>
<p>ARY Petitions</p>	
	<p>What is an ARY Petition?</p> <p>It is a petition filed by your parents or legal guardian requesting help from the court to resolve family conflicts, treat substance abuse problems, or to prevent you from engaging in self-destructive behavior.</p> <p>It is a petition filed by your parents or legal guardian requesting help from the court to resolve family conflicts, treat substance abuse problems, or to prevent you from engaging in self-destructive behavior.</p> <p>Who can file an ARY Petition?</p> <p>Unlike a CHINS Petition, only your parents or legal guardian can file an ARY Petition (you cannot file it by yourself). In the ARY Petition, your parents or legal guardian must show that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You have runaway from home for at least 3 consecutive days without permission from your parents or legal guardian; 2. You have displayed behavior that is a danger to yourself or others; or 3. You have a substance abuse problem (for example, you abuse drugs or alcohol). <p>What happens after the ARY Petition is filed with the court?</p> <p>First, you must be notified about the ARY Petition by an adult who is at least 18 years old and is not involved in the case. Next, a Family Assessment will be completed by a DSHS caseworker. After the Family Assessment is completed, the court will schedule a date for a hearing to review the facts of the case and determine if one of the situations discussed above applies to you. If the court determines you are an At-Risk Youth, the court will issue an order that must be followed by you and your parents or legal guardian.</p> <p>Do I need an attorney to represent me in court?</p> <p>The court will automatically assign an attorney to represent you in all court proceedings.</p>

	<p>What happens after the court issues an order?</p> <p>You and your parents or legal guardian must follow the court's order. A court can punish you or your parents or legal guardian for not following the order. If your parents or legal guardian do not follow the order, you should tell your attorney so he can inform the court.</p>
<p>OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY</p>	<p>EMANCIPATION</p>
	<p>What if I want to be completely independent from my parents?</p> <p>You might be able to take steps to become "emancipated," and be legally declared an adult.</p> <p>What does it mean to be emancipated?</p> <p>If you are emancipated, your parents are freed of any responsibility towards you and you are completely independent of them.</p> <p>What are the rights and responsibilities of emancipation?</p> <p>Emancipation gives you <i>most</i> of the rights of an adult. But, it also gives you <i>all</i> of the responsibilities of an adult. Your parents will not have to support you. You will need to provide yourself with food, a place to live and clothing. You will also be responsible for your own education and medical care.</p> <p>What does emancipation allow me to do?</p> <p>Emancipation <u>allows</u> you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish your own place to live. • Keep the money that you earn. • Give informed consent for decisions about your health care. • Enter into contracts. <p>Emancipation does <u>not</u> allow you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink legally before you are 21. • Vote before you are 18. • Be treated as an adult for the purpose of firearms possession or health and safety regulations. • It also does not mean that you will automatically be treated as an adult if you are charged with a crime. <p>How do I know if I qualify for emancipation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must be at least 16 years old. • You must be a Washington State resident.

	<p>What steps do I need to take to become emancipated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a set of required emancipation documents that you must complete. You must also attend a court hearing with your parents or guardians. At the hearing, you must show that you have the ability to manage your own financial, personal, social, educational and non-financial affairs. • If your parent, guardian, or custodian opposes your petition for emancipation, you must also prove to the court that denying emancipation would harm you. • You must pay the \$50.00 filing fee, however, this fee can be waived if you cannot afford it. <p>Is emancipation the right decision for me?</p> <p>Emancipation is a serious decision with both benefits and drawbacks. For instance, your parents will no longer have to support you, or provide you with food, clothing or a place to live. You should talk with someone who can help you decide if this is the right decision for you.</p>
<p>OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY</p>	<p>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</p>
	<p>How do I know if I am a victim of domestic violence?</p> <p>Washington State law defines domestic violence as virtually any criminal act committed by one "family or household member" against another. If a family or household member is harassing you, threatening you, hitting you, restraining your freedom of movement, stalking you, or destroying your property, you are a victim of domestic violence.</p> <p>Who is considered a family or household member?</p> <p>A family or household member can include your parent, your step-parent or grandparent, your sibling, your spouse or former spouse, or someone you live with or have lived with in the past. Family or household relationships also include individuals that have been or are presently in a dating relationship, so long as both parties are at least sixteen years of age.</p> <p>What should I do if I am a victim of domestic violence?</p> <p>You can get help by calling the police. You can also seek help from your local domestic violence shelter, which provide services such as safety planning, temporary shelter, legal advocacy and counseling. To find the program nearest you, call the Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 562-6025.</p> <p>What are the responsibilities of the police after I report an incident of domestic violence?</p> <p>The police <u>must</u> make a report and inform you in writing of your rights as a domestic violence victim. They must also make sure you are not in continuing danger.</p>

	<p>Will the police arrest my abuser?</p> <p>The police <u>must</u> arrest the abuser if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) You have a family or household relationship with them, and(2) There is reason to believe the domestic violence occurred within the last four hours. <p>If you did not call the police at the time of the incident, you may still do so. Ask them to take a Police Report and file charges. Reports taken are usually sent to the City Attorney or Prosecuting Attorney who will review the police report to determine whether or not to file charges. If charges are filed, only the prosecutor has the authority to drop them. A judge must approve the prosecutor's request to dismiss a case. If they decide not to file charges, you are entitled to written notice and to information on how to request the filing of charges yourself.</p>
	<p>What happens after the police arrest my abuser?</p> <p>A person arrested for a domestic violence offense will normally be held in jail until he or she appears before a judge, usually the following day. However, the abuser may be out of jail in a few hours, <u>so it is important that you take steps to protect yourself</u>. Have someone come stay with you or take you to a family or friend's home, or a domestic violence shelter. The court may require an abuser charged with domestic violence to sign a "No Contact Order" as a condition for release from jail prior to trial. This is an order signed by the judge stating that the abuser cannot contact you while awaiting trial. If you report a violation of the order, the police must immediately arrest the abuser. If your abuser is arrested, you can sign up on the internet or by phone to get information about whether your abuser is still in jail or has been released. Once you register with SAVIN (Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification) you will receive telephone and e-mail notification when the abuser is moving to another jail or is released. To register, call toll free at (877) 846-3492 or register online at http://www.vinelink.com/vinelink/initMap.do.</p>
	<p>What happens after criminal charges are filed against the abuser?</p> <p>If charges are filed, you will likely be subpoenaed to come to court to tell what happened. The prosecuting attorney or city attorney do not represent you. They represent the "State". Therefore you would participate in the criminal case as a witness for the State. They should spend some time with you before trial discussing your testimony. Call them if you have any questions. In many cases, they will prosecute a case even if you refuse to testify.</p>
	<p>Can I be evicted from my housing if I am a survivor of domestic violence?</p> <p>No. Survivors of domestic violence have protections under the Washington Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RLTA) and the fair housing laws. A landlord cannot deny renting you a place to live because you were a victim of domestic violence. You may not be evicted as a result of being a victim of domestic violence. If you were the victim of domestic violence with the last 90 days, you may end your lease early.</p>

	<p>What if due to the injuries from the abuse I need medical care or I cannot work?</p> <p>If you have received injuries that require medical care or cause loss of income, you may be entitled to benefits under the Washington State Crime Victim Compensation Program (CMVP). To qualify for CMVP, you must file a report with law enforcement within 1 year of the date the crime occurred and the crime must be classified as a gross misdemeanor or felony. You must provide reasonable cooperation with law enforcement. This includes giving information to help in the investigation and prosecution of the alleged offender. You must also file an application for CMVP within 2 years of the crime being reported.</p>
<p>OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY</p>	<p>THE CIVIL LEGAL SYSTEM & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</p>
	<p>How can I use the civil legal system to combat domestic violence?</p> <p>If you have been assaulted or threatened by your abuser, you can get an Order for Protection. Protections can range from absolutely no contact to some allowed contact, depending on your needs.</p>
	<p>How does an Order for Protection help me?</p> <p>An Order for Protection can protect you in the following ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can order your abuser to stop threatening, harassing, stalking, or molesting you or your children, including harassment in person, by telephone, or mail. • The order can prevent the abuser from having any contact with you or your children and prevent the abuser from going to your home, workplace, school, or the school or daycare of your children. • The order can give you custody of your children and order counseling or drug and alcohol evaluation for the abuser. <p>It can provide for the use or possession of essential personal effects or a vehicle</p> <p>Who can I get an Order of Protection against?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can get an Order of Protection against a blood or legal relative such as a parent or step-parent, a spouse, ex-spouse, someone you have had a child with, someone you live with or used to live with, or someone with whom you have or had a dating relationship. If you are 16 years old or older you may petition for an Order of Protection on your own behalf (you do not need to have an adult petition for you). If you are under 16, a parent, guardian or “next friend” (an adult you know who will help you) must file for the protection order on your behalf. <p>What steps do I need to take to get an Order for Protection?</p> <p>You do not need a lawyer and there is no charge for filing an Order of Protection. Many counties have domestic violence advocacy programs that may help you.</p>

	<p>How long does an Order for Protection last?</p> <p>Once you make a request for protection, you may be issued a Temporary Order for Protection, which usually expires in 14 days. You will have a hearing for a permanent order two weeks later. Your abuser will be notified of the order and it is valid throughout Washington. Your Order for Protection will be entered in a state wide computer system and is enforceable throughout the state. It will be entered for a fixed period, usually one year, or on a permanent basis. Orders restraining an abuser from contacting their minor children may only be entered for a period not to exceed one year.</p>
	<p>What happens if my abuser violates an Order for Protection?</p> <p>The police <u>must</u> enforce your order and arrest your abuser if the abuser violates the order by abusing, threatening, attacking, stalking or molesting you. The abuser also cannot come to a residence he or she has been ordered to stay away from.</p>
	<p>What is a Restraining Order?</p> <p>If you have filed a family law action (such as a dissolution of marriage, paternity, legal separation, non-parental custody petition, or a parenting plan modification) you may request a Restraining Order. It may order an abuser to stay away from you and your children and exclude them from the home, workplace, daycare, or school. An abuser can also be ordered not to remove the children from the jurisdiction of the court. Additionally, parties may be ordered not to get rid of property. Other restraints may be added if appropriate.</p>
	<p>What happens if my abuser violates a Restraining Order?</p> <p>A Restraining Order is enforced in the same way as an Order for Protection. If you report that your abuser has threatened or harmed you, or has returned to a residence that he/she has been ordered to stay away from, the police must enforce the Order and arrest the abuser.</p>
	<p>What steps do I need to take to get a Restraining Order?</p> <p>There is no charge for filing a Restraining Order. The forms are available in the District, Municipal and Superior Courts throughout Washington. Many counties have domestic violence advocacy programs that may help you.</p>
	<p>How long does a Restraining Order last?</p> <p>Restraining Orders are initially entered on a temporary basis, but may be made permanent in a final decree, such as when a divorce is final, or an order or decree of parentage is signed by the Judge.</p>
	<p>How should I use these orders?</p> <p>You should carry a certified copy of your order with you at all times. Your orders can only be enforced if you call the police to report a violation. Your abuser has no right to harass you, hurt you, or come onto your property without your permission.</p>

	<p>What if I need a Restraining Order or an Order for Protection immediately?</p> <p>Most orders can be obtained on an emergency basis to be effective as soon as the judge or court commissioner signs them. To get such an emergency order, you will have to show the judge or court commissioner why waiting to notify the other party would cause harm to you, your children, or your property. The emergency orders last 14 days or until a hearing where a judge or commissioner will decide whether or not to extend the order. The abuser has to get notice of the hearing, and may attend the hearing to tell his or her side of the story. If the abuser does not attend the hearing, and you cannot prove he or she got enough notice, be sure to ask the judge to extend the emergency order until the abuser can be notified and another hearing scheduled. Otherwise, the order will not be effective, and you will be unprotected until a more permanent order is entered.</p> <p>FILING DEPENDENCIES</p>
<p>OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY</p>	<p>What is a Dependency Petition?</p> <p>A Dependency Petition starts the legal process to determine if you are "dependent" meaning that your family needs services to help it be healthy and. If the court finds you "dependent" at the end of the process, the state or court becomes your legal custodian until your family is safe and healthy enough to take care of you again. If your parents fail to fix the problems that led to you being found "dependent", then your parents' rights to you may be terminated or substantially restricted . For more information, see the Chapter on Foster Care.</p>
	<p>Where is a Dependency Petition filed?</p> <p>A dependency petition must be filed in Juvenile Court with the local clerk's office at the Court..</p> <p>Who can file a Dependency Petition?</p> <p>Any person, including you, or a relative of yours, can file a Dependency Petition. Usually, dependency petitions are filed by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The forms are available online at the Washington Courts. http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/?fa=forms.contribute&formID=7</p> <p>Why was I removed from my home?</p> <p>The law allows anyone to seek protection of a child suffering from abuse or neglect at the hands of a parent or legal guardian or legal custodian, including the child seeking protection. You may also ask the state to step in to protect you if there is evidence that your parent has abused or neglected you. This occurs in a court procedure known as a "dependency action."</p>

	<p>Where will I live after I am removed from my home?</p> <p>The judge decides where you will live. Preference will be given to your relatives, like a grandparent, an aunt or an uncle. You might also be able to live with a family friend. You should tell your caseworker, your Guardian Ad Litem (GAL)/Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or your attorney if you think that there is someone who might let you stay with them. It is possible that you may not get to live with the person you choose and that you may be placed in a foster home or a group home.</p>
	<p>Can I see my parents or brothers and sisters?</p> <p>You have the right to see your parents as long as it is safe. These visits can be supervised by another approved adult to ensure your safety. You should feel free to tell you caseworker, GAL/CASA or attorney whether you would like to visit your parents or if you feel a visit would be unsafe. You have a legal right to visit with your brothers and sisters too. In most cases, you will be able to see your brothers and sisters. If one of you has hurt the other, however, the court may decide it is unsafe for visits to occur. Make sure to let your attorney, caseworker or GAL/CASA know that it's important to you to have contact with your siblings. If you cannot see your parents or siblings in person, you may be able to call them on the phone, write them letters or send them emails. Visits cannot be taken away as a punishment for you behavior</p>
	<p>Who can be declared a "dependent of the state" in a dependency proceeding?</p> <p>You can become a dependent of the state if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have been abandoned by your parent, guardian, or other custodian;• have been abused or neglected by a person who is legally responsible to take care of you; or <p>have no parent, guardian, or custodian who can take care of you so that if you were left with your parent(s), guardian or custodian you would be in a situation that posed a danger of serious damage to your psychological or physical development.</p>
	<p>What is Child Protective Services (CPS)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPS is part of DSHS. It is a department tasked with investigating claims of abuse, neglect or abandonment of children in Washington state. The people who work at CPS are called caseworkers or social workers.
	<p>What is the role of CPS in a Dependency Petition?</p> <p>CPS has a legal duty to investigate abuse and neglect allegations. If CPS feels that their involvement is necessary to keep you safe, they can file a Dependency Petition on your behalf even if you are living with your parents. If CPS files a Dependency Petition, it will be responsible for that case at least until a dependency action is filed.</p>

	<p>What is the role of the State in an in-home Dependency and one which occurs outside the home?</p> <p>Regardless of whether you are removed from your parent’s home or not, a Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) worker will be assigned to the case after the petition is filed. CFWS is responsible for the long-term monitoring of your case.</p> <hr/> <p>What happens in a Dependency case?</p> <p>There will be a <u>hearing within 72 hours</u> (“the 72-hour shelter care hearing”) after a Dependency Petition is filed. At the hearing, the court will decide whether you can remain in your home or if you need to be removed for your safety.</p> <p>The <u>next hearing will be 30 days</u> after the filing of the dependency. At the hearing, the court will consider requests to have you returned home, or whether more services or visitation are necessary. The case can be dismissed at this point but only under very rare circumstances.</p> <p><u>No more than 75 days after this second hearing</u>, there is a fact-finding trial. At the fact-finding trial, the court will decide whether or not you are "dependent" (a dependent of the state). DSHS, your parents, a CASA /GAL, and you can present testimony and evidence.</p> <p>If you are found dependent, your case will be reviewed by the court every 6 months. This hearing allows the court to check up on how you are doing and if there is anything else that needs to be done. DSHS will put out a report, called an Individual Service and Safety Plan (ISSP). If the state is not involved in your dependency case, these reports are filed by the person who started your dependency action. If someone in the case disagrees with any of the proposals in the ISSP, that person can ask for a contested court hearing. All parties must be told of the hearing at least 14 days before.</p> <p>The permanency planning hearing (PPH) happens within twelve months of your out of home placement episode. At this hearing, the main issue will be what the long term plan will be regarding your placement – whether you should return home or in long-term foster care, whether your parents’ rights should be terminated, or whether a guardianship should be put in place. A PPH will be held every year after that.</p> <hr/> <p>Can I have a lawyer during a Dependency case? And if so, how do I get a one?</p> <p>In King County, the court will appoint you a lawyer if you are at least 12 years old. In Benton-Franklin County, you are appointed an attorney if you are at least 8 years old. In most other counties, you will have to ask for an attorney. Anyone, including your GAL/CASA, can ask the judge to appoint a lawyer for you regardless of your age. In most counties, the judge is not required to give you a lawyer (unless you are 18 years old or asking to undo the termination of your parents’ rights) but may grant you a lawyer if he or she wants. If you do not have a GAL/CASA, the court is supposed to appoint you a lawyer or a GAL/CASA. You should remind everyone in your case that it is important that someone speaks for you.</p>
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Who are the parties involved in a Dependency action?

- **Judge/Commissioner** – The judge or commissioner works in the courthouse and decides what should happen to you after listening to everyone involved in your case.
- **Attorney for the State (Assistant Attorney General)** – The attorney who helps the social worker/caseworker understand the law and explain things to the judge from the perspective of DSHS.
- **Court Worker/Court Specialist** – A court worker or a court specialist serves in Juvenile Court as a liaison in dependency proceedings among the GAL, the court, agency social workers, parents, and attorneys.
- **GAL** – The GAL tells the judge what he/she thinks is in your best interest. The GAL is required to tell the judge what you want but doesn't have to agree with you in his/her recommendation to the court.
- **CASA** – A trained volunteer who learns as much as they can about you and tells the judge what they think would be best for you. They are also required to tell the judge what you want to happen in your case.
- **Child's Attorney** – The attorney is appointed by the judge to protect your legal rights, advise you as to the law, and tell the court what you want. This attorney only represents you and must keep your information secret unless you say it is okay for the attorney to tell them or unless you are going to cause serious bodily harm to someone.
- **Your Parents** – The parents, if known, are involved in the case, must be told about the court's actions, and has a right to an attorney.
- **You** – You have a right to be present at court hearings and to speak directly to the judicial officer. You may ask to speak to the judge/commissioner privately in chambers but some judges/commissioners will speak to you in an empty courtroom.

Caseworker/Social workers - The caseworker/social worker is responsible for helping you and your family. They must visit you every month and tell the court what he/she thinks you and your family need.

What if I am a Native American and a dependency petition has been filed?

- Under state and federal law, special rules apply to Native American children in dependency actions. The court will ask if the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applies at the 72-hour shelter care hearing. ICWA affects dependency cases in different ways. Depending on the residence of the tribal member, the case may have to be heard in a tribal court instead of the state court. Your tribe must also be given notice of the case and may have the right to "intervene in" (join in) the case as a party. ICWA makes it more difficult to remove a Native American child from home and also makes it more difficult to take custody away from the child's parents or to terminate their parental rights. The law gives a list of preferences for you to be placed with relatives or in Native American foster care approved by your tribe rather than non-Native American foster care unless there is a good reason not to do so.

	<p>What if I am not a United States citizen and I am put in foster care?</p> <p>If you were not born in the United States, you may not be a U.S. citizen. If anyone asks you where you were born, you have the right not to tell them. You also have the right to refuse to answer questions about your citizenship or immigration status or the citizenship and immigration status of your parents. If you are put in long-term foster care and you can't be returned to the country you came from (or where you were born), you might be eligible to get legal immigration status. Talk to a lawyer to find out your rights. See more information in the Immigration Chapter in this Handbook.</p> <p>You have the right to contact your foreign consulate or embassy located here in the United States for assistance. Depending on your country of origin there may be treaties in place to assist you moving to a parent or relative in your country of origin also, even if that person is deported and regardless of your citizenship.</p> <p>What are the possible outcomes of the Dependency process?</p> <p>Many dependencies are dismissed after the court feels that the judge no longer needs to monitor the process and after the youth has been home with her/his parents for at least six months. When reunification with a parent does not happen, the State may decide to file a separate case seeking to terminate your parents' rights. If a court grants the State's request to terminate after a trial or if the parents agree to give up their rights, then youth are eligible (legally free) to become adopted by someone else. Youth over the age of 13 must agree or consent to the adoption.</p> <p>Because terminations of older youth are often not in the child's best interests, other options are available. Some youth and their caregivers agree to establish a third party custodianship or court-ordered guardianship. Other youth can choose to stay in long-term relative or foster care under a written agreement. See Foster Care chapter in this Handbook.</p> <p>GUARDIANSHIP, TEMPORARY PARENTAL CONSENT FORM, POWER OF ATTORNEY</p>
OTHER OPTIONS	<p>What is a guardian?</p> <p>A guardian is a person appointed by the court to take care of you.</p>
	<p>What are the duties of a guardian?</p> <p>It depends on what the court appointed the guardian to do. However, the guardian must look out for your best interests. A guardian is subject to court supervision. A guardianship can be set up when it is inappropriate to continue trying to reunite you with your family, but it is also inappropriate to terminate your parents' rights.</p> <p>How do I obtain a guardian?</p> <p>A court appoints a guardian after someone files a petition asking the court to determine that you are not able to care for yourself and to appoint a guardian. There are two categories of guardian responsibility. The guardian of the person is responsible for arranging your personal affairs, such as food, clothing, shelter, and medical decisions. The guardian of your estate is responsible for managing your assets.</p>

	<p>What if someone is trying to give me a guardian but I don't want one?</p> <p>You can object to having a guardian. If you object, you are entitled to have your objections considered at a hearing. You may be represented by your own lawyer at the hearing. If you want a lawyer and can't afford to hire one, the court will appoint a lawyer for you. A guardian may only be appointed if the court is convinced, after the hearing, that a guardian is needed.</p>
	<p>What is a Temporary Parental Consent Agreement?</p> <p>A Temporary Parental Consent Agreement is a written agreement between the parents and another person stating that the parents have agreed to let that person have temporary custody of their child.</p>
	<p>What kind of authority does a Temporary Parental Consent Agreement provide?</p> <p>This agreement can give the caregiver temporary permission to make medical, educational or other care decisions affecting the child. The child's parent and the caregiver can be as general or as specific as they wish in this agreement. For example, the parent may allow the caregiver to make most educational and medical decisions, but state that only the parents can approve any medical situations involving surgery for their child.</p>
	<p>Will the Temporary Parental Consent Agreement be accepted by schools and other agencies?</p> <p>Once presented with this agreement, schools, doctors, government agencies and other people may accept the caregiver's authority to act on the child's behalf. However, they also have the option to not accept that authority. When the agreement is signed, you should have it notarized. Although notarization is not legally required, third parties are more likely to accept a notarized agreement. Please understand that this agreement is useful only as long as both sides honor the agreement and third parties recognize it.</p>
	<p>Who prepares the Temporary Parental Consent Agreement?</p> <p>You do not need a lawyer to draft a Temporary Parental Consent Agreement. Both the parents and the caregiver can prepare this agreement. If you can afford it, a lawyer with knowledge of family law can prepare this agreement. Both the parents and the caregiver will need to sign this agreement. However, if one parent is absent or unknown at the time this agreement is prepared, only one parent will need to sign this agreement. In this case, this agreement should state that the other parent is absent or unknown.</p> <p>How long does a Parental Consent Agreement last?</p> <p>This agreement can last as long as the parent(s) and the caregiver want it to last. The time period should be stated in the agreement. However, this agreement should not be considered a permanent custody solution. For example, if the caregiver wishes to care for the child longer than one year, a more formal solution should be sought.</p>

	<p>Can the Temporary Parental Consent Agreement be cancelled by the parent?</p> <p>Yes, the parent can cancel the agreement at any time. This agreement is not a court order. It also does not restrict a parent's parental rights. The parent can ask to have the child back at any time.</p> <hr/> <p>What is a Power of Attorney?</p> <p>When you give someone the authority to act for you, you give them a <u>power of attorney</u>. If you give a power of attorney, you are called the <i>principal</i> and the person you give it to is called the <i>agent</i> or the <i>attorney-in-fact</i>.</p> <hr/> <p>What kinds of things may I authorize an agent to do for me under a Power of Attorney?</p> <p>Many things that people do may be done through agents. An agent may be authorized to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make health-care decisions for you or your minor children• buy or sell things• manage a business• collect debts• invest money• cash checks• manage financial matters generally <p>sue on your behalf.</p> <hr/> <p>Are there risks involved in giving someone a Power of Attorney?</p> <p>Yes. With a power of attorney, an agent is often entrusted with important decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• And the agent may have access to some or all of your money or other property. If the agent is not trustworthy, serious problems can result. For example, if the agent is dishonest and runs away with your money, it may be difficult or impossible to get the money back. Also, you will be responsible for what the agent does. For example, if an agent signs a contract to purchase something on your behalf, you will have to pay for it, whether you want to or not. <hr/> <p>Can the Power of Attorney be cancelled?</p> <p>Yes. However, you must give written notice of this cancellation to the agent and anyone else who is relying on the Power of Attorney. It is important to keep a list of who is relying on the Power of Attorney so that you can notify them if you decide to cancel it.</p> <hr/> <p>The forms for Applicable Sources / Legislation: of Washington.</p>
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II. STATUS OFFENSES

STATUS OFFENSES	GENERALLY
<p>Status Offenders</p>	<p>What is a status offender? Could I be considered a status offender?</p> <p>You may be considered a juvenile status offender if you have been charged with violating, or a court has decided that you have violated, a law or rule that only applies to minors in Washington State. This means that the same conduct would not be considered a crime if you were an adult.</p>
<p>Status Offenses</p>	<p>What are some examples of status offenses?</p> <p>The most common examples of status offenses are chronic or persistent truancy (constantly missing school), running away from home, being ungovernable or incorrigible (difficult or impossible for your parent or guardian to control), violating curfew laws (staying out too late), or possessing alcohol or tobacco.</p>
STATUS OFFENSES	AT RISK YOUTH (ARY)/CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (CHINS)
<p>ARY/CHINS Generally</p>	<p>What are ARY and CHINS Petitions?</p> <p>At Risk Youth (ARY) petitions and Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petitions give parents and children a way to get help from the courts if they are experiencing serious issues that cannot be settled within the family.</p>
<p>At-Risk Youth</p>	<p>Washington state law defines an At-Risk Youth as a juvenile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) who is absent from home for at least 72 consecutive hours without consent of the youth's parent; (b) who is beyond the control of the youth's parent such that the youth's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the youth or any other person; or (c) who has a substance abuse problem for which there are no pending criminal charges related to the substance abuse.
<p>Child in Need of Services</p>	<p>Washington state law defines a child in need of services as a juvenile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) who is beyond the control of the youth's parent, such that the youth's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the youth or other person; (b) who has been reported to law enforcement as absent without consent for at least 24 consecutive hours on two or more separate occasions from the home of either parent, a Crisis Residential Center, an out-of-home placement, or a court-ordered placement; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) has exhibited a serious substance abuse problem; or (ii) has exhibited behaviors that create a serious risk of harm to the health and safety, or welfare of the child or any other person; or

<p>Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)</p>	<p>(c) (i) who is in need of necessary services, including food, shelter, health care, clothing, or education; or services designed to maintain or reunite the family;</p> <p>(ii) who lacks access to, or has declined to utilize, these services; and</p> <p>(iii) whose parents have evidenced continuing but unsuccessful efforts to maintain the family structure or are unable or unwilling to continue efforts to maintain the family structure.</p> <p>What is Family Reconciliation Services?</p> <p>Family Reconciliation Services(FRS) is part of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), which is a government agency responsible for protecting children and providing services for them and their families. FRS is responsible for providing casework services and counseling to families in crisis before the courts get involved. The first step in filing either an ARY or a CHINS petition is to go to FRS for an assessment.</p> <p>You can contact your local FRS office at the following numbers: (800) 609-8764 (8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) or (800) 562-5624 (4:30 p.m.-8 a.m.)</p>
<p>At Risk Youth (ARY) Petitions</p>	<p>What is an At-Risk Youth petition?</p> <p>An ARY petition is a petition filed in court by a parent that asks the court to intervene in a family situation to help the parent maintain the care, custody and control of a youth. The parent can ask the court to make the youth do a number of things, including attending school regularly, getting counseling or attending anger management classes, and even reporting on a regular basis to an agency or a person.</p> <p>Who can file an ARY petition?</p> <p>ARY petitions can only be filed by your parent, guardian, or someone who has legal custody over you. A step-parent or a parent's "significant other" cannot file a petition alone.</p> <p>When can my parent file an ARY petition?</p> <p>Your parent must get assistance from FRS to file an ARY petition. An ARY petition cannot be filed if there is already a dependency petition pending.</p> <p>The ARY proceeding is a voluntary process and a parent may request dismissal (ask the judge to stop the process) at any time.</p> <p>Why would somebody file an ARY petition against me?</p> <p>Your parent, guardian or somebody with legal custody over you may file an ARY petition if they are trying to get the juvenile court to help them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintain your care and their custody and control over you and/or• resolve family conflict after they have already tried other methods outside of the courts.

Child in Need of Services (CHINS) Petitions	<p>Do I or do my parents have a right to be represented by a lawyer in an ARY proceeding?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have a right to be represented by a lawyer in an ARY proceeding. If you choose to have a lawyer, your lawyer will be appointed and paid for by the court.• Your parent does not have the right to have a lawyer appointed and paid for by the court in an ARY proceeding, even if your parent cannot afford to hire a lawyer. However, your parent always has the right to be represented by a lawyer if he or she can pay for the lawyer by him or herself. <p>What is a Child in Need of Services petition?</p> <p>A CHINS petition is a petition filed in court that requests that a child be placed in a residence other than the home of his or her parents or legal guardians.</p> <p>When is a CHINS petition necessary?</p> <p>A CHINS petition is necessary if you and your parents have a serious conflict that can't be solved by other means while you are still living in their home.</p> <p>If you file a CHINS petition, you must show that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• you have made an effort to make things work in your parents' home and• the only reasonable alternative is for you to be removed from your parents' home. <p>Am I a "child in need of services"?</p> <p>To show that you are a child in need of services, you or your parent must show that <u>at least one</u> of the following three situations is occurring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. You are considered beyond parental control and your behavior is endangering your or your parent's safety or welfare, or2. You have been reported to the police as absent without consent for at least 24 hours from your parent's home, a crisis residential center, an out-of-home placement or a court-ordered placement on two or more separate occasions and you:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are exhibiting a serious substance abuse problem or• have exhibited behavior that can be considered as creating a serious risk of harm to your, or someone else in your home's, health or safety.3. You need services, including food, shelter, health care, clothing, education, or services designed to maintain or reunite your family, and either<ul style="list-style-type: none">• can't get these services yourself, or• have declined to use these services and your parents have shown that they<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ have tried but cannot successfully keep the family together or○ that they are unwilling to continue to try keeping the family together.
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Filing a CHINS Petition	<p>How do I show that I am in need of services?</p> <p>To show that you are in need of services, a caseworker from the FRS office at DSHS must assess the situation at your home and make a decision about whether it is a situation like any one of the three described above. To get this assessment, which is known as a Verification of Family Assessment, you must contact the FRS office at DSHS to make an appointment to talk to a caseworker. If a caseworker does not complete an assessment within two working days following your request for the assessment, you or your parent may file a CHINS petition directly with the juvenile court. A working day means a day falling on Monday through Friday.</p> <p>What do I need to file a CHINS petition?</p> <p>You need the following documents to file a CHINS petition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A CHINS petition2. A CHINS notice and order to show cause for hearing3. A Declaration of Service4. A Case assignment form5. An identification information form <p>You can get all of these documents, fill them out and file them at the Court Clerk's Office, or with your FRS caseworker. Be sure to make copies of all of your documents and keep the copies and file the originals. After you file your documents, you will receive a legal number and a date to appear in court for a Fact-Finding Hearing.</p> <p>How do I file a CHINS petition with the court?</p> <p>To file a CHINS petition in court, you must have a copy of the petition served to your parents in person. To be properly served, a person must have been handed a copy of the petition by a server. A server can be any nonparty (someone other than you) who is over the age of 18. If you try this approach and it is unsuccessful, service can also be made by sending a copy of the petition to your parents via certified mail with return receipt requested. Keep a copy of the returned receipt. When a CHINS petition is filed, as the child, you will be automatically appointed an attorney to assist you at all of the hearings.</p> <p>After the server delivers the court papers to your parents, the server should complete a Declaration of Service form. That form requires the server to make a sworn statement to the court (under oath) that he or she served your parents with the necessary court papers. The server should sign and date the Declaration of Service at the bottom and return it to the person who is filing the petition. That form is the proof of service that must be taken to the hearing.</p> <p>If you, the child, are the one filing the petition, you must show that there is a suitable place for you to live outside of your parent's home.</p>
The Role of the Court	<p>Do I or my parents have a right to be represented by a lawyer in a CHINS proceeding?</p> <p>As a child, you always have the right to a lawyer appointed by and paid for by the court. A parent has a right to be represented by a lawyer appointed by and paid for by the court if he or she meets certain financial requirements. A parent always has the right to be represented by a lawyer if the parent pays for the lawyer's services himself or herself.</p>

What happens after my ARY or CHINS petition is filed?

After a petition has been filed with the Court Clerk's Office, the person who filed the petition (the "petitioner") receives a court date for a fact-finding hearing. At the fact-finding hearing, the court will grant the petition if the petitioner claims that the youth fits into one of the necessary categories (for a description of these categories see the definition of ARY and CHINS described above in "[ARY/CHINS Generally](#)") and if those claims are proven by a "preponderance of the evidence" (this means that the court decides the claims are more likely than not to be true).

After the facts have been decided, the court may impose conditions of supervision on you. The court may also order your parent to participate in certain services. This may be done at fact-finding or at a separate "dispositional" hearing. No condition of supervision can include involuntary commitment for substance abuse or mental health treatment.

Upon filing of a CHINS petition, you may be placed, if you have not already been placed, by DSHS in a crisis residential center, foster family home, licensed group facility, or any other suitable residence determined by DSHS. If you are ordered to live outside of the home, the court may order visitation between you and your parents.

At the end of the first "dispositional" hearing, the court will schedule the matter for a review hearing within 90 days. At this hearing, the court reviews the conditions of supervision previously imposed and makes any necessary additions or changes. If services have been completed and it is safe for you to return home, the court can order that you return home at this hearing.

What will happen when I go to Court?

There will be a hearing in front of a commissioner (judge). Your parents will sit at one table with their lawyer (if they have one) and you and your lawyer will sit at another table. Sometimes other people will be allowed in the courtroom, like FRS caseworkers. The commissioner will ask your parents questions and then the commissioner will ask you questions. You do not have to testify if you don't want to, but it is always better if you do. If you are afraid to talk in front of your parents you should tell your lawyer. Sometimes the commissioner will let you speak to him or her in private.

What happens if the commissioner approves my or my parents' petition?

If you filed the petition, the commissioner can place you outside of your parents' home.

If your parents filed the petition, the commissioner can order you to do things like obey a curfew, go to school, go to counseling, participate in a drug and/or alcohol evaluation, and live with your parents. The court may order your parents to do some things also, like not drink in the house, not take drugs, not physically abuse any family members, and go to counseling. The commissioner will then warn both you and your parents that if the court orders are violated you or they can be found in contempt of court and sanctions (punishment) will be imposed.

Contempt of Court	<p>What if I or my parents don't obey the court's order?</p> <p>If you or your parents fail to comply with a court order, it is called contempt of court.</p> <p>If the court's order granting a CHINS or ARY petition has a list of things you must do, including things like attending school or obeying your parent's rules, you must follow those rules or risk being found in contempt of court. It is very important to be sure that you understand all of the things you're required to do to avoid contempt charges, and to do all of those things. If the court makes a finding of contempt at a contempt hearing, the court may impose confinement in juvenile detention for up to seven days or a fine of up to \$100 or both.</p> <p>If your parents are required to do certain things by the court's order, like attending parenting classes, and they fail to do so, the court could also find them in contempt. Violations of the court order should be reported to the court through the filing of a contempt motion. Your lawyer, your parent, or a person/agency having custody over you may file a contempt motion. Do not wait for a scheduled review hearing to report violations of the court's orders.</p> <p>In practice, youth are found in contempt of court and put in juvenile detention frequently. Parents are not found in contempt very often.</p> <p>What if I run away from home?</p> <p>If you run from your house (or whatever placement the commissioner ordered you to reside at) you will be in violation of the court's order and your parents can ask the court for an order for your arrest. The police would then try to find you and arrest you. If you are arrested you will immediately be taken to juvenile detention and booked. You will have a hearing sometime during the twenty-four hours following your arrest.</p>
Parental Abuse	<p>What if I have to run away because my parents are abusing me?</p> <p>If your parents are abusing you and you are in danger, call 911. If you cannot use a phone then leave your house immediately and go somewhere where you can be safe. Try to go somewhere where an adult can either take you to Child Protective Services (CPS) or put you in contact with the agency. Once CPS assigns you a caseworker, tell the caseworker what is happening and ask them to put you in contact with your lawyer. Tell your lawyer what is happening. DO NOT just run away without telling your lawyer or your caseworker why you left the court ordered placement.</p> <p>What if I don't want CPS to know that my parents are abusive?</p> <p>Call your lawyer if you have been assigned one and explain the situation. Your lawyer is bound by rules of professional conduct not to repeat anything you say in confidence, unless you are at serious risk of harm. Your lawyer will advise you about the best course of action for you. If you don't have a lawyer yet, it may be best to file a CHINS petition. Other times it is best not to file anything but simply to find a temporary place to stay on your own, like a friend's house or a relative's house. If you have a lawyer, the lawyer can help you find housing and can also help you sort things out with your parents once you are living in a safe environment.</p>

If I call CPS will they put me in a foster home?

Not necessarily. If you are in danger and the CPS caseworker determines that it is not safe for you to stay in your parent's home, the caseworker will try to find you another place to stay temporarily. First the caseworker will try to place you with a member of your family, like a grandparent, aunt/uncle, or adult sibling. If no relatives are available, the caseworker might be willing to place you with a friend who has been licensed as a foster care provider. If no one you know has a foster care license, the caseworker will try to place you at a temporary/receiving home for a few days until he or she can find a better place for you. If you decide to file a CHINS petition the court might allow you to stay with friends but it is important that your friend's parents come to the hearing and talk to the commissioner

directly. The court will generally not let you stay with your boyfriend or girlfriend (especially if they are older than you are) and the court will not let you stay with friends if there is no responsible adult living in the home.

What if I don't show up to court?

The worst thing you can do is to not show up for a hearing. If you have a problem getting to court, call your lawyer and let him or her know what is happening. Anytime you do not come to court for a hearing, the court can issue an order for your arrest. If you go to court on your own, even if you have no defense for not showing up the first time, the court will be less likely to impose harsh sanctions. It is always better to go to court.

How long does an ARY petition last?

An ARY petition should end six months after the first review hearing. The review hearing is usually held one month after the finding that you are at risk. If you or one of your parents doesn't follow the court's orders and there is a contempt hearing, the case can last longer. If there are compelling reasons to do so, the court will extend the petition from six months to nine months.

Which is better for me: a CHINS petition or an ARY petition?

A CHINS petition is usually filed by the child or by DSHS against the parents, while an ARY petition can only be filed by parents against a child. The CHINS petition assumes that the child will live in a home other than the parent's home during the petition's life. This can be good for you if you want to live with your parents eventually but believe that you need to live somewhere else until some problems are resolved at home. If you file a CHINS petition, you can ask the court to dismiss it, but an ARY petition can only be dismissed if your parent asks the court to do so, or if the petition runs out (usually after six months, but can be extended to nine months). Also, if your parents are not following the court's order, you can request that the ARY petition be dismissed.

Involuntary Commitment Criteria	<p>Under what circumstances might I be considered for involuntary commitment?</p> <p>You can be considered for involuntary commitment for mental health issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is a substantial risk, based on written or verbal threats or actual physical actions, that you will cause serious harm to yourself, or if you have attempted suicide or inflicted physical harm on yourself;• If you have behaved in a way that causes harm to others or places others in reasonable fear of being harmed by you; this determination may be based on written, verbal, or actual assaultive acts;• If you have caused substantial loss or damage to the property of others;• If you are gravely disabled. <p>You can be considered for involuntary commitment for substance abuse or chemical dependency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you present a likelihood of serious harm;• If you are gravely disabled. <p><u>RCW 70.96A.140</u></p> <p>What does gravely disabled mean?</p> <p>It means you are in danger of serious physical harm resulting from the failure to provide for your basic needs of health and safety or you have shown a deterioration in routine functioning which is evidenced by a repeated and escalating loss over your actions and you are not receiving necessary care for health and safety needs.</p> <p><u>RCW 70.96A.020(12)</u></p> <p>What is an inpatient facility?</p> <p>An evaluation and treatment facility, certified by DSHS, that provides 24-hour-per-day care within a hospital or residential treatment facility.</p> <p><u>RCW 71.34.020(9)</u>; <u>RCW 70.96A.020(26), (27)</u></p> <p>Can my school refer me for commitment?</p> <p>Yes, your school can refer you for commitment. If they do, they must notify your parent or guardian of their referral within 48 hours.</p> <p><u>RCW 70.96A.096</u>; <u>RCW 71.34.305</u></p>
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Your Rights	What are my rights if I'm committed?	
	<p>YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY</p> <p>Unless you are a risk to yourself or others, you have the following rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To wear your own clothes and keep and use your personal possessions; • To keep and be allowed to spend a reasonable sum of your own money for canteen (cafeteria) expenses and small purchases; • To have individual storage space for private use; • To have visitors at reasonable times; • To have reasonable access to a telephone, both to make and receive confidential calls; • To have ready access to letter-writing materials, including stamps, and to send and receive uncensored correspondence through the mail; • To discuss treatment plans and decisions with mental health professionals; • To have the right to adequate care and individualized treatment; • Not to consent to the performance of electro-convulsive treatment or surgery, except emergency life-saving surgery (electro-convulsive treatment is the administration of a strong electric current that passes through the brain to induce convulsions and coma); • Not to have electro-convulsive treatment or nonemergency surgery unless ordered by a court under certain conditions; and 	<p>YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY</p> <p>You have the following rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have opportunities for adequate consultation with legal counsel, and for continuing contact with family and friends, subject to reasonable rules regarding hours of visitation and consistent with an effective treatment program; • To not have your mail or other communication to or from intercepted, read, or censored; and • To use the telephone if allowed. <p><u>RCW 70.96A.160</u></p> <p>You also have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be admitted to treatment without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability; • Be reasonably accommodated in case of sensory or physical disability, limited ability to communicate, limited English proficiency, and cultural differences; • Be treated in a manner sensitive to your needs and which promotes dignity and self respect; • Be protected from invasion of privacy except that staff may conduct reasonable searches to detect and prevent possession or use of contraband on the premises; • Have all clinical and personal information treated in accord with state and federal confidentiality regulations;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to have psychosurgery performed on you under any circumstances (psychosurgery is brain surgery, such as a lobotomy, used to treat a mental disorder). <p>The treatment facility must post these rights in a prominent place.</p> <p><u>RCW 71.34.355</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the opportunity to review your own treatment records in the presence of the administrator; • Have the opportunity to have clinical contact with a same gender counselor, if requested and determined appropriate by the supervisor, either at the agency or by referral; • Be fully informed regarding fees charged, including fees for copying records to verify treatment and methods of payment available; • Be provided reasonable opportunity to practice the religion of your choice as long as the practice does not infringe on the rights and treatment of others or the treatment service; you also have the right to refuse participation in any religious practice; • Be allowed necessary communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With your custodial parent or legal guardian; ○ With an attorney (a public defender if the patient cannot afford private counsel); or ○ In an emergency situation; • Be protected from abuse by staff at all times, or from other patients who are on agency premises, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sexual abuse or harassment; ○ Sexual or financial exploitation; ○ Racism or racial harassment; or ○ Physical abuse or punishment: • Be fully informed and receive a copy of counselor disclosure requirements; • Receive a copy of patient grievance procedures upon request; and • In the event of an agency closure or treatment service cancellation, you must be:
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given thirty days' notice; ○ Assisted with relocation; ○ Given any refunds to which you are entitled; and ○ Advised how to access any records to which you are entitled. <p>The facility administrator must make sure a copy of patients' rights is given to you both at admission and in case of disciplinary discharge, and must post a copy of patients' rights in a conspicuous place in the facility accessible to patients and staff.</p> <p>WAC 388-805-305</p>
<p>STATUS OFFENSES</p>	<p>INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENT</p>	
<p>Admission, Evaluation and Inpatient Treatment</p>	<p>MENTAL HEALTH</p>	<p>SUBSTANCE ABUSE/CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY</p>
	<p>Can my parent have me committed without my consent and without court intervention?</p> <p>Yes. If you are under 18 years old and your parent or guardian brings you to the facility, then it is not necessary for you to consent to being committed or for the court to intervene to have you committed for admission, evaluation, and treatment. However, you will have to be examined by a professional to determine whether you are in need of inpatient treatment.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.600; RCW 70.96A.245</p> <p>How long can I be kept in the inpatient facility?</p> <p>The initial evaluation must be completed within 24 hours, unless the professional doing the evaluation determines that your condition requires more time for evaluation. However, you cannot be held longer than 72 hours for evaluation.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.600; RCW 70.96A.245</p>	

<p>The Commitment Hearing</p>	<p>What about after the evaluation is done?</p> <p>If the facility staff decides that further inpatient care is necessary, they must petition the court and a commitment hearing will take place. If you cannot afford an attorney, then you have a right to have one appointed to represent you before and at the hearing. At the hearing, a Superior Court commissioner or judge hears the evidence presented by witnesses, and makes the decision. The commissioner/judge may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order you to remain for up to 14 additional days of involuntary treatment in a facility; the facility may release you whenever they think treatment is complete; or • Order you to 180 days of "less restrictive treatment;" this means you have to enter outpatient treatment as the court order dictates (most often the court order will specify you have to participate in treatment at a mental health center and must take such medication as is recommended by the mental health center); or • The commissioner/judge may accept your agreement to enter treatment voluntarily; or • The commissioner/judge may dismiss the case and let you go free. <p>RCW 71.05.320; RCW 70.96A.140; RCW 71.34.750</p>	
<p>Medical Necessity</p>	<p>What is a "medical necessity"?</p> <p>"Medical necessity" for inpatient care means you need a service that is expected to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnose, correct, cure, or alleviate a mental disorder or chemical dependency; or 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevent the worsening of a mental or chemical dependency condition that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) endangers life or causes suffering and pain, orb) results in illness or infirmity, orc) threatens to cause or aggravate a handicap, ord) causes physical deformity or malfunction, andthere is no adequate less restrictive alternative available. <p><u>RCW 71.34.020(12); RCW 70.96A.020(19)</u></p> <p>What if DSHS decides that placing me in inpatient treatment is a medical necessity?</p> <p>You will be admitted to a facility for treatment. DSHS will make sure that an independent professional periodically reviews your situation to determine whether it is a medical necessity to continue your treatment on an inpatient basis. In making a determination whether to release you, the department will consider the opinion of the treatment provider, your safety, and the likelihood your mental health will deteriorate if released from inpatient treatment. The department will consult with your parent or guardian in advance of making its determination.</p> <p><u>RCW 71.34.610; RCW 71.34.620</u></p> <p>What if DSHS decides it is no longer a medical necessity for me to get inpatient treatment?</p> <p>If DSHS determines it is no longer a medical necessity for you to receive inpatient treatment, DSHS will immediately notify your parent or guardian and the facility. The facility will release you to your parent or guardian within 24 hours of receiving notice.</p>	<p>If the professional in charge and your parent or guardian believe that it is a medical necessity for you to remain in inpatient treatment, you will be released to your parent or guardian on the second judicial day following DSHS's determination in order to allow your parent or guardian time to file an at-risk youth (ARY) petition.</p> <p><u>RCW 70.96A.097</u></p>
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<p>Leaving the Treatment Facility</p>	<p>If the professional person in charge and your parent or guardian believe that it is still a medical necessity for you to remain in inpatient treatment, you will be released to your parent or guardian on the second day that the courts are open following DSHS's determination in order to give your parent or guardian time to file an at-risk youth (ARY) petition.</p> <p>If DSHS determines it is a medical necessity for you to receive outpatient treatment and you decline to obtain such treatment, your parent or guardian can file an ARY petition.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.610; RCW 71.34.620; RCW 70.96A.097</p>	
	<p>Can I be forced to take medication if I don't want to?</p> <p>It is possible for the treatment facility to medicate you against your will for up to 30 days as long as there is a second, concurring medical opinion approving medication. Beyond 30 days, a special court hearing is required to determine if there is legal justification for compelling the continued administration of medications.</p> <p>RCW 71.05.215</p>	
	<p>Can I leave the inpatient facility at any time?</p> <p>No. You can't leave the facility just because you want to. You can petition the superior court for your release from the facility. The court will decide if it is medically necessary for you to stay at the facility.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.600; RCW 70.96A.245</p>	
	<p>What if my parent requests that I be released?</p> <p>If your parent or guardian requests in writing that you be released, then the facility must let you leave immediately.</p> <p>RCW 70.96A.245; RCW 71.34.650</p>	

Your Rights	<p>Who has access to any information, records or files related to my commitment?</p> <p>The registration, records and files of treatment programs are confidential and available only to you, your parent or guardian, and your attorney.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.335; RCW 70.96A.150</p> <p>Who has to pay for my treatment?</p> <p>You and others who are responsible for you (such as a parent or guardian) must pay for the costs of treatment, care, and transportation to the extent of available resources and ability to pay, as determined by DSHS. However, you may be eligible for full or partial funding assistance or other arrangements if your family is considered poor or low income. Generally, for purposes of eligibility for medical assistance, you are considered part of your parent or guardian's or legal guardian's household, except under certain circumstances.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.405; RCW 71.34.400</p> <p>Can I be detained in an inpatient facility once I turn 18?</p> <p>Once you have turned 18 years old, you cannot be detained unless you have applied for admission to an appropriate evaluation and treatment facility or unless involuntary commitment proceedings have been initiated through the filing of a petition by a designated chemical dependency specialist. However, you may be detained after your 18th birthday for purposes of completing the 14-day diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.360</p> <p>What happens when I'm released by the facility?</p> <p>You will be released into the custody of your parent or guardian or other responsible person. If necessary, the facility will provide transportation for you to your residence or other appropriate place.</p>
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	<p>If you are released to someone other than your parent or guardian, the facility must attempt to notify your parent or guardian of your release as soon as possible.</p> <p>You can't be released to a less restrictive alternative treatment or setting or discharged from inpatient treatment without suitable clothing, and DSHS has to provide this clothing if your family can't afford to.</p> <p>RCW 71.34.365</p> <p>What can I do if I think my rights have been violated?</p> <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• File a grievance with the facility where you have been receiving treatment• File a grievance with the Mental Health Ombudsman for your home region (you can find the ombudsman for your region at DSHS' Regional Support Network Services Information website)• Apply for a fair hearing<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A "fair hearing" is a formal hearing that is heard by an Administrative Law Judge.○ You may request a hearing orally to a DSHS or Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) employee in person or by telephone or voice mail or you may send a written request by mail to OAH WAC 388-02-0095○ The address for mailing a request to an OAH office in your region can be found here• Seek the assistance of your attorney	
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STATUS OFFENSES	VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT	
	MENTAL HEALTH	SUBSTANCE ABUSE/ CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
<p>Voluntary Commitment Generally</p>	<p>Can I voluntarily commit myself? If you are age 13 or older: You may admit yourself for inpatient treatment. If you are under age 13: Parental authorization, or authorization from a person who may consent on your behalf, is required for inpatient treatment. RCW 71.34.500; RCW 70.96A.235</p>	
<p>Inpatient Treatment</p>	<p>Does anyone need to agree to my commitment? Yes. A professional in charge of the facility must agree that you need inpatient treatment and that there is no appropriate less restrictive setting for your treatment. RCW 71.34.500; RCW 70.96A.110</p>	
<p>Notifying Parents/Guardians</p>	<p>Does the treatment facility need to notify my parent if I commit myself voluntarily? Yes. The facility must let your parent or guardian know within 24 hours of your voluntary admission. The notice has to let your parent or guardian know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you have been admitted to inpatient treatment; • the name, location and telephone number of the facility providing treatment; • the name of a staff member who is designated to discuss your need for inpatient treatment with your parent or guardian; and • the medical necessity for admission. <p>RCW 71.34.510</p>	<p>No. You can refuse to have your parent or guardian notified of your admission. However, if you are age 13 or older and sign a written consent authorizing the notification, or if the director of the facility determines that you lack the capacity to make a rational choice regarding consenting to disclosure, the facility must let your parent or guardian know within 7 business days of your request for voluntary admission. The notice has to let your parent or guardian know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you have been admitted to inpatient treatment; • the name, location and telephone number of the facility providing treatment; and • the name of a staff member who is designated to discuss your need for inpatient treatment with your parent or guardian. <p>RCW 70.96A.230</p>

<p>Leaving the Facility</p>	<p>How often do I need to renew my consent to treatment?</p>	
	<p>At least once every 12 months. You must renew in writing.</p>	
	<p>Once I have been admitted, can I leave the facility at any time?</p>	
	<p>If you are 13 or older and were voluntarily admitted to a facility, you can give notice of your intent to leave at any time. You must provide this notice in writing. The professional in charge must let you leave immediately after receiving your written notice. RCW 71.34.520</p>	<p>If you are 13 or younger or an incompetent person, the request for discharge must be made by your parent, legal guardian, or other legal representative. RCW 70.96A.110</p>
<p>STATUS OFFENSES</p>	<p>OUTPATIENT TREATMENT</p>	
<p>Outpatient Treatment</p>	<p>MENTAL HEALTH</p>	<p>SUBSTANCE ABUSE/ CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY</p>
	<p>Can I request outpatient treatment without the consent of my parent?</p> <p>If you are age 13 or older:</p> <p>You can request and may receive outpatient treatment without the consent of your parent or guardian.</p> <p>If you are under age 13:</p> <p>You need parental authorization for outpatient treatment. RCW 71.34.530; RCW 70.96A.095</p> <p>Does my parent have to be notified if I request outpatient treatment?</p>	
		<p>If you are age 13 or older the provider of outpatient treatment must notify your parent or guardian within 7 business days of your request for outpatient treatment if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have signed a release allowing notification of your parent or guardian; or The agency determines you are unable to sign a consent form. <p>RCW 70.96A.230</p>

	<p>Can my parent bring me to an outpatient treatment without my consent?</p> <p>Yes. Your parent or guardian can bring you to an outpatient chemical dependency treatment center and request that a professional examine you to determine if you have a chemical dependency and are in need of outpatient treatment. Your consent is not required.</p> <p><u>RCW 71.34.650</u>; <u>RCW 70.96A.250</u></p>
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III. FOSTER CARE

HOMELESS WHILE IN FOSTER CARE	UNDERSTANDING DEPENDENCIES
<p>Dependencies</p> <p><i>If I tell my caseworker something, is it kept confidential?</i></p> <p>The judge, attorneys, CPS or DSHS representatives, your caseworker and anybody else involved in the case are not allowed to talk about your case outside of court.</p> <p>Discussions with your attorney, if you have one, are privileged, which means that he or she cannot tell anyone else what you have told him or her. If your attorney told someone something you said without your permission, he or she could get into very serious trouble.</p>	<p>What does dependency mean?</p> <p>A dependency is a type of legal proceeding during which, if you are under the age of 18, a judge can make a determination whether you have been abused, neglected or abandoned by your parent or guardian. The judge will determine whether you and your family will receive services to correct the issues while you stay in your home, or the judge may decide it is safer for you to be taken out of your home while services are provided. If you are removed from your home, you will live with a foster family, relative, or in another living situation decided by the judge.</p> <p>Am I in trouble if a dependency is filed?</p> <p>No, you are not in trouble. If a dependency is filed, it means that the caseworker believes that it is in your best interest to be away from your parents for a while. Your parents will have the ability to obtain services, such as medical attention, counseling, parenting classes, etc., to help them address the problems that caused the dependency to be filed. You will also have access to medical care, counseling, etc., to help you with the effects of your parents' behavior on you. It could also mean that you can stay at home and receive those services.</p> <p>How long does a dependency last?</p> <p>Sometimes a dependency can last for a while if the judge decides that it is not safe for a you to return home in the near future. If this happens to you, the judge and your caseworker will have a permanency planning hearing (PPH) to determine the best way to meet your needs for stability and permanency.</p> <p>Which agencies/departments will I come in contact with?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)</i>: DSHS oversees all of the social services provided to the citizens of Washington State. All other agencies or departments listed in this section are constituents of DSHS. 2. <i>Children's Administration</i>: The department within the DSHS that is responsible for coordinating services for children and families. Within the Children's Administration, the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is the provider of client services 3. <i>Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS)</i>: (DCFS): DCFS is part of Washington State's social services programs and is an agency within the Children's Administration. Child Protective Services, Child and Family Welfare Services and Family Reconciliation Services report to DCFS.

The only time your attorney can reveal what you told him or her without your permission is if telling someone would prevent you from causing death or serious bodily harm, or from committing a crime.

Dependencies and the Legal System

4. *Child Protective Services (CPS)*: CPS has a legal duty to investigate abuse and neglect allegations. If they find a minor to be in danger, they will file a [dependency petition](#) on behalf of that minor. CPS will be responsible for carrying the dependency petition forward at least until a dependency is put in place.

If the minor will stay in the family home, called an "in-home dependency", CPS will continue to work on that case. Services will be made available to the family to resolve the issues that brought the family to the attention of CPS.
5. *Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS)*: A CFWS worker will be assigned to a case where a minor is removed from the family home.
6. *Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)*: FRS is an agency of DSHS that is responsible for providing casework services and counseling to families in crisis before court involvement. See Section XVI (Status Offenses).

Who are the people involved in my case and what do they do?

1. *Judge/Commissioner*: The judge or commissioner is the one who decides whether the minor stays in foster care or goes home. They also make important decisions about what services the minor and family will receive.
2. *Court Worker/Court Specialist*: A court worker or a court specialist who serves in Juvenile Court as a go-between among the *guardian ad litem*, the court, agency caseworkers, parents, and attorneys during the dependency proceeding. The court worker handles private agency matters, while the court specialist deals exclusively with matters from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).
3. *Guardian ad Litem (GAL)*: The GAL or CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) represents the minor's "best interest" in the courtroom proceedings by conducting an independent investigation and providing all relevant information to the judge/commissioner in a written report. The GAL may or may not be an attorney. The GAL also appears in the courtroom to answer questions, expand on the written report, and reinforce his/her recommendations. *The GAL should recommend to the court that an attorney be appointed to represent a minor's personal opinion if the GAL and the minor have significantly different opinions about what represents the minor's best interest.*
4. *Parents*: the parents, if known, are named as respondents in the dependency petition. Each of the parents is entitled to receive notice of all hearings and trials and to be represented by legal counsel.
5. *Minor*: Whether the minor appears in court varies from county to county. The minor may speak to the judge/commissioner privately in chambers (also called "*in camera*").
6. *DSHS/CPS*: See previous section.
7. *Private Minor Care Agency*: A private minor care agency may petition the court on behalf of an allegedly abused or neglected minor. The court may designate a private agency, rather than DSHS, as the supervising agency for the minor and family. The role assumed by the private agency caseworker is essentially the same as that of the DSHS caseworker in providing all the services necessary to facilitate the return of the minor to the family.

8. *GAL for an Incompetent Parent:* If a parent in a dependency proceeding is not competent to participate the court can appoint a GAL to assist the parent in comprehending the proceedings and making recommendations in the best interests of the parent.

Legal Counsel/Attorney: All of the parties to the proceedings can be represented by counsel. If the minor disagrees with the GAL about what would be the minor's best interests, the court can appoint an attorney to represent the minor's opinion. A parent is entitled to appointed counsel if he or she cannot afford to hire an attorney.

Can I have an attorney?

Yes, you have the right to *request* an attorney if you are 12 or older. The adults assigned to your case are required to inform you that you have the right to request an attorney if you are 12 or older. However, if you do not have a GAL/CASA, you have the right to be appointed an attorney by the court, regardless of your age. Furthermore, the GAL/CASA, your caseworker, or your parent can ask for an [attorney for you](#) regardless of your [age](#). If you are in Extended Foster Care, you will be assigned an attorney for free.

If you are involved in a **reinstatement** case, a free attorney is automatically available to you. See "*Reinstatement of Parental Rights after Termination*" below, regarding reinstatement cases.

What if I'm arrested?

How does an arrest affect my dependency status? The biggest concern the adults in your life will have about your arrest is what you will do afterward. Studies have shown that youth arrested while in foster care are much more likely to end up homeless as adults or living below the poverty line. Your caseworker and the other adults in your life want you to be successful as an adult. If you are having problems in school or if you feel sad, lonely or angry a lot, talk to your foster family and caseworker so they can find the right help for you.

Do I get the same attorney for the arrest as I do for my dependency case? Probably not. You should ask the attorney helping you with your arrest if you can also get a dependency attorney to help with your foster care case.

What if I don't agree with the judge that a dependency is right for me?

Talk to your caseworker or GAL/CASA and attorney, if you have one, to see what options are available to you. If you don't have an attorney, you should ask for one. You can also write a letter to the court if you don't have an attorney.

What Happens in Court	<p>What if I don't agree with a decision made by DSHS/my caseworker?</p> <p>Talk to your caseworker and attorney, if you have one to try to find the reason for the decision. If you still don't agree, or think the caseworker is not doing his or her job, you can talk to the caseworker's supervisor. If the conflict is still not resolved, ask to talk to the Area Administrator, and then the Regional Administrator. If the conflict is still not resolved, the Children's Administration Office of Constituent Relations can help; call (800) 723-4831. If the complaint or conflict is not being addressed or resolved, The Family and Children's Ombudsman can help; call (800) 571-7321. If you do not have an attorney, you can also write a letter to the court telling them the problem.</p> <p>What happens in court?</p> <p>During a court hearing, your caseworker will talk to the judge about the items on the agenda. They will review your case and anything new that has happened since the last time your case was discussed. The caseworker will make a recommendation for action and then the judge will look at all of the materials and the caseworker's recommendation and make a decision on what should happen next. DSHS will have an attorney present. If you have an attorney, he or she will be there also. Sometimes other people will talk to the judge, for instance, your parents or their attorney(s), your CASA/GAL, or medical and mental health professionals that may have insight about what you need and is in your best interest.</p> <p>Can I appear in Court?</p> <p>You can attend court hearings. Ask your attorney, if you have one, if you have any questions about what will be talked about and what will happen during the hearing.</p> <p>Can I speak to the judge during court?</p> <p>Yes. Talk with your attorney, if you have one, about what you want to discuss with the judge. Things you could talk about with the judge might be where you want to live until you're 18, if you want to see your siblings and haven't been able to, or if you need help with other problems.</p> <p>Do I have to live with a foster family?</p> <p>If the judge decides that your home is not safe for you, the judge will place you with a relative, foster family, or in some cases, in group living arrangements.</p> <p>Can I live with a relative?</p> <p>If a relative is willing to care for you and the judge agrees that it is appropriate for your situation, you may be able to live with a relative. Ask your caseworker or attorney or GAL/CASA for information about your options.</p>
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Living with the Foster Family	While I'm in foster care, can I see my parents? What about my siblings?
	<p>Unless the court decides that visits are not in your best interest, you are entitled to regularly scheduled visits with your parents and siblings. You are also entitled to be placed in the same foster care home with some or all of your siblings, if it appropriate. The judge decides this. The judge also decides if a foster care home can be found that is able to care for you and some or all of your siblings.</p>
	If my siblings have been adopted can I still see them?
	<p>If your siblings have been adopted, be sure to talk to your caseworker, attorney, or GAL/CASA about wanting to have visits with them. Sometimes the judge for your siblings' adoptions can emphasize the importance of visits and maintaining contact with them.</p>
	What if my parents' parental rights are terminated?
	<p>Your caseworker should keep you informed about the permanency plan being developed for you. This planning should begin soon after the dependency begins. Most of the time, visits with your parents will not continue after termination of rights; and most of the time, you will not be able to live with them again. <i>Permanency planning</i> may include looking at a long term foster home, a group home for youth, adoption, developing independent living skills, education planning, what will happen when you turn 18, and other issues. If you have any questions about what your options are, talk with your caseworker.</p>
	Where do I go to school?
	<p>You have the right to stay at the same school that you attended before you were removed from home, if it is practical and in your best interest. If you are moved from one foster home to another, you do not have to change schools if it is practical to stay at the same one. Ask your caseworker, CASA/GAL or attorney if you can stay in the same school if you move to a new foster home. If you are concerned about changing schools, you can call (866) 297-2597 which is the Office of the Education Ombudsman.</p>
	If I get sick, can I go to the doctor?
	<p>Yes, you can receive any health care you need, including a doctor, dentist, optometrist (eye doctor), mental healthcare providers, and emergency healthcare services if necessary. Talk to your foster parent or caseworker if you have questions or want to see a doctor.</p>
Special Circumstances in Foster Care	What if the foster family mistreats me?
	<p>Talk to your caseworker, CASA/GAL, and attorney right away. Your caseworker is supposed to help you resolve the problems with the foster family. The caseworker can also find a new foster family for you to live with, if that is necessary. <u>If you are afraid that someone is going to physically or sexually hurt you, call 9-1-1 immediately to get help.</u></p>
	What if I am an American Indian?
	<p>Tell your caseworker that you are American Indian. There are different rules that may apply to your foster care case.</p>

<p>Reinstatement of Parental Rights after Termination</p>	<p>What if I was born outside of the U.S.?</p> <p>If you were not born in the U.S., then you may not be a citizen. If you are not a citizen, then it is possible that you may be returned (deported) to the country where you were born. You have the right not to answer questions about where you were born or your citizenship status. You should talk to an immigration attorney as soon as possible, though. If you have an attorney assigned for your dependency proceeding, tell them if you were not born in the U.S. The attorney can help you find an immigration lawyer if one is necessary. If you do not have an attorney at all, these groups may be able to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP). You can click on the link or call (800) 445-5771 in western Washington; (888) 756-3641 if you are in Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Thurston, Wahkiakum or Whatcom counties; or (866) 271-2084 if you are in Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane or Stevens counties. <p>Volunteer Advocates for Immigrant Justice. (206) 359-6200, King and Pierce counties</p> <p>What do I do if I want my parents' rights reinstated after they have been terminated?</p> <p>A minor age 12 and over has the right to request reinstatement of parental rights if the rights have been terminated for three years or more and if a permanency plan has not been, or will not soon be, achieved for the minor. If you think you qualify and want to try to have your parents' rights reinstated, talk to your attorney (if you have one), your GAL/CASA, and your caseworker. If you do not have an attorney assigned to you, one will be assigned if you move ahead with the reinstatement request.</p>
<p>HOMELESS WHILE IN FOSTER CARE</p>	<p>BEING A RUNAWAY WHILE IN FOSTER CARE</p>
<p>Being homeless while in foster care</p> <p>Trying to resolve the situation that caused you to run</p>	<p>What does it mean to be a homeless youth while in foster care?</p> <p>An individual, less than 18 years of age, who cannot live in a safe environment with a relative and who has no other safe alternative living arrangement, despite having a foster home placement.</p> <p>Is there a connection between homelessness and foster care?</p> <p>There is a lot of overlap between homelessness and foster care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth may be placed into foster care because they are homeless, their family is homeless, they are living on the street or another unsafe location, and/or their families cannot take care of them • Youth may run away from placements to avoid the foster care system and conflicts with foster parents or relatives, and end up homeless; • Youth in foster care may run back to their biological families, and end up homeless if they cannot stay with their family; and • Youth may end up homeless because there is not enough transition services or housing for youth aging-out of foster care.

<p>Temporary centers</p>	<p>Why should I try to resolve the situation that caused me to run?</p> <p>Resolving your current situation is better for you than running away. Studies show that reducing runaway incidents can significantly improve physical and mental health, education, and employment outcomes for young people who have been placed in foster care.</p> <p>Where can I go temporarily if I need help in reconciling and reuniting with my foster parents or relative caregiver?</p> <p>Crisis Residential Centers (CRCs) are short-term, semi-secure facilities for runaway youth, and adolescents in conflict with their families. Youth cannot remain in a CRC more than 15 consecutive days. Counselors at the CRC will help the youth and family develop better ways of dealing with conflict in the future.</p> <p>Secure Crisis Residential Centers (SCRCs) are physically secure, short-term residential facilities for runaway youth. Youth may not remain in an SCRC longer than five consecutive days in a physically secure, short term residential facility or 15 days in a semi-secure short term facility. Youth may transfer between an SCRC and a CRC, but the total length of stay may not exceed five consecutive days. SCRC counselors work with families to resolve the immediate conflict, facilitate reconciliation between parent and youth, and provide referral to additional services.</p> <p>The "Becca Bill" authorizes law enforcement to pick up runaway youth, or youth found in "dangerous circumstances", and place them in SCRCs.</p> <p>Where can I go to find the best living situation for me?</p> <p>HOPE Centers provide temporary residential placements for homeless youth under the age of 18. Youth may self-refer to a HOPE Center for services and can remain in a HOPE Center for up to 30 Days. Entering a HOPE Center is voluntary. While residing in a HOPE Center, each youth will undergo a comprehensive assessment to develop the best plan for the youth.</p> <p>The assessment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the youth's legal status,• a physical examination,• a mental health evaluation,• a chemical abuse evaluation, and• an educational evaluation of their basic skills, along with any learning disabilities or special needs.
<p>Staying with a friend</p>	<p>The plan will focus on finding a permanent and stable home for the youth. This plan might include reunifying the youth with his/her (foster) parent(s) or legal guardian and/or getting the youth into a transitional living situation and off the streets.</p>

	<p>If my foster parents have reported me as a runaway and my friend provides me with "shelter", what is he/she required to do?</p> <p>Any person who provides "shelter" (i.e. a person's home or any structure over which the person has any control) to a minor, and who knows at the time of providing the shelter that the minor is away from the foster parent's home without their permission, is required to report the youth's location within eight hours to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the foster parent • a law enforcement officer, or • the Department of Social and Health Services <p>Once a person has reported the youth's location he or she cannot be sued for sheltering the youth, except in cases of intentional misconduct or gross negligence. Reporting by telephone is fine.</p>
<p>Staying at a shelter</p>	<p>If my foster parents have reported me as a runaway, will my friend get into legal trouble by letting me stay with him/her?</p> <p>Your friend could be charged with a gross misdemeanor offense called "unlawfully harboring of a minor" if he or she does all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides you shelter without your foster parents' consent, 2. Knows you have left your foster home without your foster parents' permission AND 3. Intentionally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not give you to a police officer when requested by the officer, • does not tell a police officer where you are when the officer asks, if the friend knows where you are and either took you there or helped you get there, • obstructs a police officer from taking you into custody, or • helps you to avoid or attempt to avoid the police officer.
<p>Reporting youths missing from care</p>	<p>Can I stay at a shelter on a long-term basis without getting reported to my parents, the police, or getting the shelter in trouble?</p> <p>The shelter, just like a friend or family who takes you into their care while you are on the run, can also be charged with a gross misdemeanor offense called "unlawful harboring of a minor", as discussed above.</p> <p>If you want to stay in a shelter, you might want to find out whether or not you need to state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your age, • your real name to get services, or • that you are a runaway.

If you are questioned about any of the above, you can politely decline to answer. If you do have to provide any of the above information, you can ask the shelter to wait eight hours before telling anyone, and ask that it disclose the information to DSHS only and not your parents or the police.

When must my foster parents and other caregivers notify law enforcement when they do not know where I am or I have left without their permission?

Law enforcement must be notified immediately in some circumstances, such as if the youth:

- has a serious alcohol or substance problem,
- is pregnant or parenting and the infant is believed to be with him or her,
- has a physical or mental health condition that requires daily treatment,
- has a severe emotional problem (including suicidal thoughts) that puts the youth at severe risk if untreated, or
- the youth is 13 years or younger.

If the above circumstances do not apply, the social worker must work with the foster parent or caregiver to ensure that local law enforcement is notified within six hours.

Further, the social worker must enlist other persons involved in the youth's life to staff a "missing from care" team within three business days of the youth leaving his or her foster home.

What is Extended Foster Care?

Extended Foster Care is a program that allows certain youth to remain in foster care beyond age 18. If you are in a dependency when you turn 18, you may be eligible to continue receiving foster care support, such as housing and medical care, until you turn 21. In order to be eligible for Extended Foster Care you must meet at least one of the following three requirements:

- (1) You are enrolled in high school or in a high school equivalency program, such as a GED program.
- (2) You are enrolled in a post-secondary education program (e.g. college or vocational school), or you have applied for such a program and shown that you intend to enroll within a reasonable time.
- (3) You are participating in a program or activity designed to promote employment or remove barriers to employment.

You may move from one category to another and still remain eligible for Extended Foster Care. For example, if you are still finishing high school when you start in Extended Foster Care, you can enroll in college after you graduate and still remain eligible.

Extended Foster Care is totally voluntary. Even if you meet all of the eligibility requirements, you do not have to participate, and you can stop participating at any time after starting. Also, even if you decide not to participate right away when you turn 18, you have until your 19th birthday to change your mind and enroll in the program.

What happens if I enroll in Extended Foster Care?

If you choose to participate in Extended Foster Care, DSHS will still be responsible for your well-being, and you will remain in a dependency. However, the purpose of Extended Foster Care is to assist you as you transition to life as an independent adult, and you are required to take steps toward helping you develop independent living skills, including meeting with your social worker. Additionally, you will be appointed an attorney to assist you in making decisions about your dependency and the Extended Foster Care program.

What are programs to promote employment or reduce barriers to employment?

The law does not specifically define what these programs are. However, because the goal of Extended Foster Care is to help you become an independent adult, this requirement could be fulfilled through a variety of different activities that help you develop job skills and make employers more interested in hiring you. For example, you might attend workshops that help you develop resume-writing and interviewing skills, or you might find an internship or volunteer work that allows you to develop skills useful in the workplace. Your social worker can help you find programs and activities that fulfill this requirement.

Are there any other options available to me when I turn 18 if I can't meet the requirements for Extended Foster Care?

If you have a disability — a physical or chronic condition, mental illness, or drug or alcohol dependency — and are not in school, other support programs may continue after you turn age 18. [See DSHS requirements.]

If you have been enrolled in school and are temporarily detained in a county detention center on your 18th birthday, you may be able to elect Extended Foster Care after you return to your foster home.

If, however, you have been enrolled in school and have been committed to a Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) facility, you are no longer considered to be in foster care, and you are not eligible to elect Extended Foster Care.

If you are part of a tribe, and that tribe's dependency code defines child to include a youth between the ages of 18 and 21, and you have been placed in foster care by the tribe, then you could participate in Extended Foster Care.

IV. TURNING 18

TURNING 18	SIGNIFICANCE
<p>What is the significance of turning 18?</p>	<p>Does turning 18 mean I can do whatever I want?</p> <p>Not entirely. When you reach your 18th birthday, you gain most of the rights and responsibilities of being an adult in Washington State. Instead of your parents, foster parents, judge or case workers making decisions for you, you become the primary decision maker. The sections below are designed to help you discover the options available and your legal rights in exercising those options.</p> <p>Your decisions about where to live and work, to continue to go to school, to marry or start a family, become your own choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although you are considered an adult, you still cannot purchase or possess alcohol or marijuana until age 21. [Note, DUI is considered a criminal offense for underage drivers.] • Legal age for gambling is 18 in Washington state.(WAC 230-06-010) <p>Am I still a dependent when I turn 18?</p> <p>In most cases, no. You may have been classified as a dependent (of the State of Washington) while you were <u>under the age of 18</u> if you were abandoned, abused, neglected, and without a parent, guardian or custodian</p> <p>However, if you were in foster care when you turned 18, you may be eligible for extended foster care, which may continue until you turn 21 (See Aging Out of Foster Care and Extended Foster Care sections below).</p> <p>If you were not in foster care when you were 18 (i.e., you were reunited with your parents prior to turning 18), you are no longer considered a dependent and are not eligible for extended foster care.</p>
<p>What about emancipation?</p>	<p>I was emancipated before I turned 18. Are my rights expanded?</p> <p>Even when you became emancipated some rights were limited. At age 18, you also have the right to vote and the right to gamble. Males also have a responsibility to enlist in selective service (see below)</p>
<p>Pre-existing legal claims</p>	<p>Can I pursue legal claims for something that happened before I was 18? For example, I was injured or disabled before I turned eighteen or I believe someone owes me money.</p> <p>If you feel you have a legal claim you should consult an attorney (See also Chapter 13). All legal claims are subject to a statute of limitation which means you only have a limited amount of time to pursue your claim. Until your eighteenth birthday your legal rights to pursue claims against others were preserved. Now that you have turned eighteen, your legal claims are subject to the statutes of limitations and may be lost, if you wait too long.</p>

Aging Out of Foster Care	I was in foster care prior to turning 18. Can I stay after I turn 18?
How does Extended Foster Care work?	<p>Yes, if you enroll in the Extended Foster Care Services program. If you were in foster care at age 18, and are in school or plan to continue to go to school (high school, GED, college or postsecondary vocational education program), you may stay in foster care until you graduate or age 21.</p> <p>The court will not dismiss your dependency for at least six months past your 18th birthday, to allow time for you to enroll in the Extended Foster Care Services program. This extension not only provides for continued housing and education, but also for extended health care and other social services.</p> <p>If you enroll in the Extended Foster Care program, you and your foster parents will continue to be supported until age 21 if you meet certain schooling and resident requirements. You will get an attorney to help you navigate the process and make sure you receive support while you remain in the program.</p> <p>The Extended Foster Care program in Washington State may allow you to remain a dependent (receiving foster care payments) while completing a high school diploma, General Education Development (GED) or attending college, post-secondary vocational or other training (RCW 74.13.031). You must sign up for the Extended Foster Care program with your caseworker within 6 months of turning age 18.</p> <p>Your benefits under the Extended Foster Care program can be terminated if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• you graduate high school or• you finish your GED and do not go on to college, or• you terminate your educational program, or• you move out of your foster home, or• you turn age 21. <p>If you were adopted or put in a guardianship after age 16, your benefits can continue.</p> <p>If you have a disability — physical or chronic condition, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency — and are not in school, other support programs may continue after you turn age 18. [See DSHS requirements.]</p> <p>If you have been enrolled in school and are temporarily detained in a county detention center on your 18th birthday, you may be able to elect extended foster care after you return to your foster home.</p> <p>If, however, you have been enrolled in school and have been committed to a Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) facility, you are no longer considered to be in foster care, and you are not eligible to elect extended foster care.</p> <p>If you are part of a tribe, and that tribe's dependency code defines child to include a youth between the ages of 18 and 21, and you have been placed in foster care by the tribe, then you could participate in extended foster care.</p>

<p>Do I have to stay in an abusive foster home?</p>	<p>My foster home has been abusive. Should I just leave, or should I seek legal assistance?</p> <p>Seek assistance! If you are or have been verbally, physically or sexually abused, immediately report the situation to a trusted adult such as a medical professional, teacher or case worker.</p>
<p>Can being in foster care affect my college opportunities?</p>	<p>If you turn 18, you may leave your foster home. If you are enrolled in extended foster care, the program does not require you to stay in the same foster home. You are allowed to find a new place to live, as long as the court approves it.</p> <p>It is important to report the abuse incident(s) to prevent further abuse to others and to prosecute the abusers if the abuse is substantiated according to state definition (RCW 26-44-020 (12)). The statute of limitations for child sexual abuse may extend three years past your 18th birthday, or three years past the "discovery" (when you remembered the childhood abuse).</p> <p>I've been in foster care and I'm now turning 18. Can foster care help me with college?</p> <p>Yes, if you have been in foster care at least one year past your 16th birthday, you may be eligible for the state's Passport to College program. See http://www.wsac.wa.gov/PayingForCollege/StateAid/Passport for eligibility requirements and program features.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, the College Success Foundation keeps track of various scholarships available in Washington State. For example, the Washington State Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth program specifically provides for students that have been in foster care, kinship or guardianship care. See http://collegesuccessfoundation.org/ for details. • If you are in an open dependency (foster care has not been terminated), you may be eligible for an Independent Living Program which includes assistance with continuing education. (See Housing section below.) <p>The school's registrar or financial aid office may provide additional information about resources available to youth from foster care. See the School Section of this handbook.</p>
<p>Can I visit my biological family?</p>	<p>I've been in foster care for years. When I turn 18, can I go visit my biological parents without limitations? My siblings?</p> <p>Yes, if there are no restraining orders or court-ordered limitations.</p> <p>If you have been in foster care, when you turn 18, your parents will be dismissed as parties to your dependency case. Prior court-ordered visitation schedule or parameters for you and your parents in that case will no longer apply once they are dismissed as a party. However, there may be other court orders prohibiting contact between you and your parents. Contact with your siblings may also be ordered in your dependency case, and if your siblings are still dependent, you may be required to follow a court ordered visitation schedule with them. If your siblings are not dependent, there would not be a court ordered visitation schedule with that sibling. You should ask your attorney or your GAL/CASA prior to turning 18 to assist you in finding out if contact with your parents or siblings is permitted.</p>

<p>Can I get into foster care after age 18?</p>	<p>NOTE: The issue here is jurisdiction: the court cannot order visitation for people not under its jurisdiction. The court would only have jurisdiction over parents until the youth turns 18, then parents are dismissed (i.e., no jurisdiction). The court only has jurisdiction over other siblings who are dependents even if those siblings are in home with a parent.</p> <p>The right to sibling visitation as among dependent siblings still exists for all dependent youth even after they turn 18.</p> <p>I haven't been in foster care, but my parent(s) want me to move out when I turn 18. Can I go to a foster home?</p> <p>Generally no. If you have not been declared a dependent, and have not been in the care of someone other than your legal parent, you do not qualify for foster care.</p>
<p>Am I still governed by a guardianship?</p>	<p>I haven't been in foster care, but I have been living with a legal guardian. Do I have to move out when I turn 18? Can I go to a foster home?</p> <p>It depends on the nature of the guardianship status. If you had a legal or relative guardian, that relationship expires at age 18 (or sooner, if the court so orders). If you had a subsidized guardianship, that subsidy may continue to age 21 if you are enrolled in school. You may need to move out, or you may be assigned a different living arrangement if the guardianship ends before age 18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were under a legal guardianship, granted by a court, that guardianship terminates when you turn 18, or when the court orders termination, whichever comes first. • If the guardianship was terminated before you turned 18, you may have been assigned a foster parent. At that point, you became eligible for the option of choosing extended foster care benefits noted above (age 18-21). • For those under age 18, there are subsidized and unsubsidized guardianship placements: • An unsubsidized guardianship means that your relative did not receive funds from the state, and there are no <u>dependent</u> benefits derived from the relationship. However, the guardian may request services through community resources. • A subsidized guardianship program (called R-GAP) comes with some state benefits which can continue for youth 18-21 years old whose guardianships were established after July 22, 2011. • For the guardianship subsidy to continue after you turn 18, you must be enrolled in high school, a GED program, or show intent to enroll in post-secondary (college or vocational) education. If continuously enrolled from ages 18-21, the guardianship terminates at age 21.

<p>What new rights and responsibilities do I gain at age 18?</p>	<p>Becoming an adult: what are my rights and responsibilities? When you turn 18, you gain both rights and responsibilities. In Washington State, these rights include voting, making contracts, a will, a power of attorney, making organ donation and end-of life arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have the right to vote, to sign a contract, and to apply for a loan.• Men are required to register for the draft within 30 days of turning 18 (see draft registration section below).• You have the right to make a will or power of attorney.• You have the right to make end-of-life decisions for yourself.• You have the right to be an organ donor.• You are responsible for fulfilling your obligations—abiding by contracts and agreements, and obeying the law.• If you have had any civil or criminal convictions before you turned age 18, there are steps you can take to seal the record permanently, or expunge (erase) the record entirely. Consult Chapter 3 of this manual for further information. Note that this is not based on turning 18, but is based on the number of years after being released.• After you turn 18, you are considered an adult in terms of civil or criminal infractions.• If someone sues you or if you want to sue someone else, you have the right to an attorney to represent you (See Chapter 13, Lawsuits in general).
<p>Where can I find advice?</p>	<p>Who can advise me if my parents can't?</p> <p>Regardless of whether you have been in foster care or not, you are encouraged to seek competent advice from a trusted adult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A foster parent or guardian is no longer legally responsible to provide assistance (unless you are in extended foster care), but may still be a good source of advice or direction.• Another mature adult, such as a former case worker, teacher, mentor, pastor or lawyer may be willing to advocate on your behalf. (A coworker who just turned 19 may not be knowledgeable enough.)• The State Department of Health & Social Services provides adult social services as well as those for children and youth. You may contact the Community Services Office near you for information about services and benefits available. See http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/findservice.shtml%20or%20call%201-877-501-2233.• If you are employed, there may be an Employee Assistance Program available through your workplace which provides confidential counseling for a variety of issues.

How do I get a lawyer?	<p>When you are sued, you will have a certain amount of time in which to respond to the complaint filed by the person suing you. If you do not respond to the complaint in time, then you can face a default judgment (the court would in that case believe the complaint to be true and rule without your response). Therefore, it is important to respond to the complaint in the specified time period.</p>
	How do I get a lawyer?
	<p>You can find contact information for lawyers in several places online. One particular source that may be of use is the Washington State Bar Association website, which provides resources for non-lawyers who are looking for legal assistance. You can find these resources here:</p>
	<p>http://www.wsba.org/The-Public</p>
	<p>Generally, you should look for a lawyer who has experience and/or expertise in the particular area of law applicable to your case (these are often referred to as "practice areas"). For instance, if you have trouble at your work, you will want a lawyer who specializes in employment or labor law. Once you have identified possible lawyers who have the right experience and expertise, you can contact them to set up an initial meeting to discuss whether your case has merit (could win in court), and whether that lawyer is the right lawyer for the job. See Chapter 13 for more information on civil suits.</p>
	<p>If you are facing criminal charges, you have the right to a lawyer (even if you cannot afford one) if you have been charged with a felony or if you have been charged with a misdemeanor that could possibly result in a jail or prison sentence. You may, however, choose to find your own criminal defense lawyer, instead of having the court appoint one for you. See Chapter 3 for more information on criminal law.</p>
	What if I don't like the lawyer assigned to me?
	<p>If the particular lawyer you're talking to doesn't have the right experience/expertise, or is otherwise not able to take your case, he or she should direct you to another lawyer or resource to find an appropriate lawyer. You should not be afraid to ask for a recommendation to another lawyer.</p>
	<p>In the event of criminal proceedings where you have been appointed an attorney by the court, you may ask the judge assigned to your case to replace that attorney if you do not like the attorney assigned to you or if you do not think that person is adequately representing you.</p>
	I was in trouble with the law a few years ago. Can I get my record erased? Sealed? (So my employer won't discover it?)
	<p>It may be possible to seal or destroy your criminal record from when you were under 18. In Washington State, your juvenile criminal record is not automatically sealed, so you will need to take steps to seal or destroy it. See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of options and considerations with respect to sealing your juvenile criminal record.</p>

GOVERNMENT REGISTRATIO NS

Can I register to vote? Do I need an address to register?

Yes, you may register to vote!

- You must be a U.S. citizen and have at least a temporary residence in order to register to vote. This residence determines which voting precinct and which candidates are submitted for your vote.
- Even if you are homeless, you are encouraged to register to vote in the precinct in which you most recently lived.
- You must be 18 years old by election day. (You may register before your 18th birthday, if desired.)
- You may register at a voter registration event, at the Department of Motor Vehicles, county registrar's office or online at www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/register.
- There is now a Facebook app, called MyVote app, sponsored by the Secretary of State, to assist you in registering.
- You must provide proof of citizenship and legal residency.
- If you were previously convicted of a crime, and have completed your sentence or community service, you are eligible to vote.
- For other voting eligibility information, see <http://wliha.org/sites/default/files/%20Who%20Can%20Reg%20and%20Voter%201%20pager%208-20-2012.pdf>.
- Once registered to vote, you are also eligible for jury duty.

[For men only]: Do I have to sign up for the draft now?

Yes, every man between the ages of 18 and 25 must registered for the Selective Service (military draft) within 30 days of turning 18 years old. This includes legal and illegal immigrants (non-US citizens), refugees, and persons with disabilities.

Registering with Selective Services does not mean that you are joining the military. It only means that your name will be on a list that the military will use if it needs to quickly add more personnel in a national emergency (this is very rare).

- Registration may be done online (www.sss.gov) or in person at a high school or nearby post office.
- If you apply for student financial aid, you may also register for the draft on that application.
- Failure to register for the draft may prevent you from receiving student financial aid, or make you ineligible for federal employment. You can also be fined for failure to register, and if you are not a U.S. citizen you may be barred from ever obtaining citizenship.
- You will need a social security number to complete this registration, although you may subsequently provide that number.
- Women are not required or permitted to register with Selective Service.

<p>Do I have to pay federal taxes?</p>	<p>Do I have to pay taxes?</p> <p>Yes, if you have income to report. Before you turned 18, the income you made from employment was most likely included on the tax return of your parents or foster parents. (In some cases, you may have already filed a return as an individual before age 18.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As an adult, if you have had federal income tax withheld from any pay, you must file an annual income tax return with the Internal Revenue Service before April 15 of each year for the previous year. It is against the law to evade (not file) payment of federal taxes. There are a number of different forms to help you calculate the tax owed or refund due. Please see www.irs.gov for full details on filing your tax returns.• When you have a job, your employer will ask you to complete a W-4 form to indicate how many deductions you are eligible for. At the end of the year, that employer will provide a W-2 form to confirm how much money has been withheld from your paycheck to pay federal income tax each period. Even if the employer does not provide a W-2 form, you must report the wages you were paid.• In addition to wages, you must report money received in other ways such as scholarships or unemployment compensation.• You may also qualify for some deductions from the income tax, for example, for tuition, or a dependent (child) of your own.• Volunteer tax advisors are often available at a public library or community center. These volunteers can help you determine which documents you need to prepare your tax return.• You may file your federal income tax online, through the mail, or through a professional tax preparer.• If you have not had sufficient tax withheld from your paychecks, you may have to pay income tax at this time. On the other hand, if you have had plenty of tax withheld or qualify for deductions, you may get a refund. Refunds can be sent electronically to your designated checking or savings account, or to whatever residence you list on your income tax return. <p>There is currently no state income tax in Washington, but you still need to file and pay federal income tax.</p>
<p>Where can I live? Is it against the law to be homeless?</p>	<p>Where can I live?</p> <p>No, homelessness is not against the law. However, if you are homeless, you know how important a stable living <u>situation</u> can be to the rest of your daily activities. Taking care to find a suitable housing situation—a room, an apartment, a mobile home, public housing or your own home—will minimize disruption in numerous ways. Being selective about roommates may save you problems in the future.</p> <p>However, there are circumstances or behaviors associated with homelessness which tend to draw attention from law enforcement officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you live or sleep in a park or in the doorway of another person's property, you may be subject to loitering or trespassing (civil) laws. (See Chapter 7 for clarification of these laws.)

<p>Can I move in with friends or friends' parents?</p> <p>Where is a safe place to stay? What about homeless shelters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some cities have specific laws regarding activities which appear to criminalize homelessness. Activities discouraged include vagrancy, begging, panhandling, and camping in some locations. These activities may lead to arrest. You are encouraged to avoid these activities. <p>Homeless advocates try to ensure that the homeless population maintains its right to free speech, safety and security of possessions. See www.nationalhomeless.org for a further discussion of these issues.</p> <p>Is it all right to move in with friends or with friends' parents?</p> <p>Yes. It is not against the law in Washington State. However, if the friend or family is not the owner of the premises (i.e., they rent the property), it may be a violation of the terms of their lease to provide housing for you.</p> <p>You and your friend should set forth at the outset how long you expect to stay, whether or not you will pay them "rent," whether or not you will share food, etc.</p> <p>Are there safe places to stay when homeless?</p> <p>Yes. Emergency homeless shelters provide "housing" for one night at a time. You usually cannot stay during the daytime.</p> <p>There are emergency shelters or crisis shelters available. Please see http://www.hud.gov/local/wa/homeless/shelters.cfm for a listing of shelters by county in Washington, including some shelters that specialize in serving young adults. Some shelters provide meals, laundry and shower facilities, and counselors to assist you in finding more stable, affordable housing. Shelters usually fill up quickly. Check in early to find out what's available and when you may come in for the night.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you suddenly become homeless, you may be able to stay with a friend or family member for a short time. Or, you may choose to live in your car (see information above).• Most counties offer emergency, short-term, long-term and transitional housing options from the first day through about 18 months of assistance. The crisis facilities and transitional housing programs have their own eligibility requirements.• For a list of agencies which serve housing needs for homeless adults, please see the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless directory, http://endhomelessnesswa.org/resources. Many of these agencies provide not only emergency or short-term shelter, but assistance with food, child development, day care, life skills, job training, etc. There are shelters designated specifically for men, women and families, including pregnant teens.
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<p>What is an independent living program and how do I qualify?</p>	<p>How can I qualify for an independent living plan and how do I find one?</p> <p>In some counties, whether or not you have been enrolled in the Extended Foster Care program, you may qualify for housing and other services through the Independent Youth Housing Program (IYHP).[MORE]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may receive financial assistance with rent, utilities, move-in costs, cost for credit checks and parking, as well as case management services. (See www.independence.wa.gov.) The program requires that you either work or go to school, and maintain accountability through an assigned case worker.
<p>What about transitional housing?</p> <p>Can I rent a place to live?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be eligible for the Independent Living Program you must be 15 years old or older (through 21 years of age), currently in foster care in an open dependency action through DSHS or a tribal child welfare agency for at least 30 days after your 15th birthday. Once initial eligibility has been met, you remain eligible until age 21. <p>Please note you are not eligible for independent living program services if you achieved a permanent plan of return home, guardianship or adoption before you meet the initial eligibility criteria above.</p> <p>Please see http://www.independence.wa.gov/programs/ and http://www.ilpseattle.com/ for information.</p> <p>What is transitional housing and how do I qualify?</p> <p>There is also a federal housing program called Supervised Independent Living Program) for young people transitioning in and out of foster care. The program provides counseling, employment training and shelter.</p> <p>Regardless of previous foster care, you may qualify for temporary housing which may extend as long as 18-24 months if necessary. For a current list of transitional housing programs available in Washington State, please see www.transitionalhousing.org. These programs often target special needs like chemical dependency, pregnancy, or domestic violence and may be available short-term or long-term. Many of them require counseling and that you pay a portion of your income as rent (on a sliding scale).</p> <p>Can I rent a room or lease an apartment?</p> <p>Yes. The lease or rental agreement is considered a contract. You must abide by the terms of the contract, which includes paying rent on time, keeping the property safe and clean, and keeping the noise level acceptable, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you rent a room, apartment, mobile home or house on your own, make sure you have the income to support not only the monthly rent, but the security deposit, monthly utilities, extra fees (like cleaning) and parking. Before you sign a contract, make sure you know the process for terminating the contract and/or moving out. If you share a room or apartment with someone else, and your name is not on the contract, you may still have an oral agreement regarding rights and responsibilities. If you have a dispute with a landlord, RCW Chapter 59.18 covers the rights and remedies of both tenant and landlord. More information can be found at the following websites:

<p>Can I sign a contract?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ http://washingtonlawhelp.org/documents/1593216300EN.pdf?stateabrev=WA/○ http://www.tenantsunion.org/● If you have a lease and you move out unexpectedly, without notice, or are evicted, this default may adversely affect your credit record for a few years.● You may be able to terminate a lease early if you enter the military, or if you are a victim of domestic violence, assault, stalking or other safety issues. However, you must notify the landlord in writing that you or a household member is a victim of domestic violence, or you must show evidence of a protection order on your behalf. <p>Can I sign a contract?</p> <p>Yes. In general, as an adult (after age 18), you are legally able to sign a contract. This may be an oral or written agreement. By definition, a contract is an agreement between people where each receives some benefit.</p> <p>If you apply for credit and the other party does not consider you credit-worthy at age 18, or you do not meet their financial qualifications (such as income), your application may be turned down. You have the right to know why your application has been rejected, and to receive a copy of your credit report if applicable</p> <p>As a minor you may have been able to get out of a contract on the basis of your age, but you can no longer get out of your responsibilities under a contract as an adult. In fact, you can be sued for failure to comply with the terms of a contract you have signed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● For housing (see the previous section), a lease is a contract between the landlord and lessee. If you sign it, you are legally bound to abide by its terms, including any requirement to pay the rent or to give notice prior to moving out.● For employment, you may be asked to sign a contract between Employer and Employee.● In finance, you may sign a loan application which serves as a contract between Lender and Borrower (to purchase a car, for example).● Under the terms of a contract, you are expected to pay in full and to pay on time. If you are sending funds online (electronic bank transfer) or sending through the mail, be sure to allow several days for transport and processing. A payment made on the exact due date may not be processed as an on-time payment, and may subject you to late fees or penalties. The fees and penalties in turn can affect your personal credit rating.● If you entered a contract before you turned eighteen, you may be able to avoid that legal obligation. It is also possible to ratify a contract you entered before you turned eighteen and lose your right to avoid the contract. In that case the contract will be enforceable against you as if you had signed the contract as an adult. You may want to consult an attorney, if this could apply to you. (See also Chapter 13).
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<p>Can I move to another state?</p>	<p>Can I move to another state on my own?</p> <p>Yes. However, if you are receiving state benefits or social services as a result of having been in foster care, or for other reasons, you may find it difficult to reestablish those services in another state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have registered to vote, you will need to re-register in your new state. • Before you move, consider establishing a mail-forwarding request with the post office. If you do not currently have a stable residential address, you might want to get a post office box, and then submit a forwarding request from there. A forwarding request is generally good for six months, and can be renewed for another six months. • If you are traveling out of state with a friend who is under 18 years of age, you must have a document signed by that friend's parent or guardian, and notarized, granting permission to travel. • If you have a child of your own, you must respect any court ruling regarding custody and visitation before you move.
<p>Can I go to a "soup kitchen" or food bank?</p>	<p>Am I allowed to go to feeding programs/food banks if I'm homeless?</p> <p>Yes. Some non-profit organizations, churches and senior centers, serve free meals one day a week, without needing prior registration or reservations. Check online by city for "community meals" or "soup kitchens" or ask at a homeless shelter nearby. These are not the same as food bank but may be supported by a food bank.</p>
<p>What about state and federal food assistance?</p>	<p>Many communities host food banks from which you can get a bag of groceries on a weekly or monthly schedule. For a map of food banks, please see http://agr.wa.gov/FoodProg/Map/.</p> <p>(See the Health and Welfare section below.)</p>
<p>TURNING 18</p>	<p>HEALTH AND WELFARE</p>
<p>What are my rights to medical care? Where do I go (resources) for medical, dental, mental substance abuse, domestic violence or abortion services?</p>	<p>Can I get medical care?</p> <p>If you are being claimed as a dependent by your parent or guardian, you may be eligible to be covered under their health care insurance up to the age of 26. If you have been in foster care until age 18, you are eligible for Medicaid until age 21.</p> <p>However, if you are not being claimed as a dependent, you were not in foster care up to the age of 18, and your family or guardian refuses to help you obtain health coverage, you must obtain your own health insurance or rely on programs provided by the government. For more information on medical care and related services, see Chapter 9. Also see the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services: http://www.dshs.wa.gov/health.shtml</p>

<p>Do I qualify for food stamps (or similar subsidy)?</p>	<p>Can I get food stamps?</p> <p>Maybe. You may be eligible for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called "Basic Food" in Washington, depending on your household income levels.</p> <p>You can find out more about Basic Food at: http://foodhelp.wa.gov/basic_food.htm and you can estimate your monthly Basic Food benefits using their benefit estimator found here: http://foodhelp.wa.gov/bf_benefit_estimator.htm</p> <p>There is also a Basic Food & Employment Training (BF&ET) program here, especially for those who are not participating in Extended Foster Care or an Independent Living Program. You are still eligible for a food stamp benefit if you are in a qualified vocational/college program.</p>
<p>Can I get unemployment / welfare?</p>	<p>If you are pregnant or have a child under 5 years old, you may also be eligible for a Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). More info on WIC can be found here: http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC.aspx</p> <p>In addition, see Chapter 12 for further information on food stamps.</p> <p>Can I collect welfare payments?</p> <p>Maybe. You may be eligible to receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). It is a form of public assistance that provides temporary cash and medical help for eligible families, and in some cases, individuals, such as teen parents or persons acting in the place of a parent, in need of financial support.</p> <p>More information can be found at http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/TANF_Support_Services.shtml.</p> <p>You may be eligible for unemployment benefits in Washington if you meet the qualifications set forth by the Employment Security Department: http://www.esd.wa.gov/uibenefits/apply/eligibility/am-i-eligible.php</p> <p>Also see the discussion of public benefits in Chapter 12.</p>
<p>Is it okay to be refused benefits?</p>	<p>It is against the law for staff administering various state benefit programs to discriminate on the basis of the following: "race, color, sex, religion, creed, age, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, disabled veteran, Vietnam era veteran, recently separated veteran and other protected veterans status or the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability." [WAC 357-01-005] You may, however, be refused benefits if you do not qualify for the particular benefit program.</p>
<p>Purchases and Credit</p>	<p>Can I buy a car? On Credit?</p> <p>Maybe. Depending on your credit history, credit score, and amount of money you have on hand to make a down payment, you may be able to buy a car on credit. For information regarding your credit history and score, see Chapter 17.</p> <p>When you buy a car, it is important to make sure the title to the car you are buying is good and that there is no lien against the car. You can check this with the Department of Licensing if you have the car's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and license plate number. The car must also meet Washington's clean air standards. If you buy a car out of the state, then you will need to make sure it is up to those standards (this may require getting an emissions certificate in some Washington counties) prior to registration.</p>

<p>I think I'm being discriminated against at work. What rights do I have?</p> <p>Can I be fired for no reason?</p>	<p>What about employer discrimination?</p> <p>An employer may not discriminate against you (including not hiring you) based on your age (with the exception of legally proscribed minimum ages), race, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. If you feel you are being discriminated against, see Chapter 5 for a discussion of the options available to you.</p> <p>Can I be fired?</p> <p>Generally, you will be an "at will" employee, meaning you can be fired for any (or no) reason at all, except for discrimination mentioned above. Common reasons for getting fired include being late, leaving work without telling anyone, absences, lack of courtesy to fellow employees or the public, failure to follow rules and regulations, lying on your employment application, and failure to perform your duties. If you are fired, you have a right to ask for the reasons for being fired, and your employer must provide it to you in writing within 10 days.</p>
<p>Can I take a leave if I need to?</p> <p>If I go into the military, are there certain laws/regulations for people who are not age 21 yet?</p>	<p>Can I take a leave or vacation:</p> <p>Your employer is not required to provide paid time off for holidays or vacations. Some companies do provide these benefits.</p> <p>However, if you have been at your current job for at least 12 months working at least 1,250 hours, and your employer has at least 50 employees, then the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows you to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid time off in order to (a) care for your newborn, newly fostered, or newly adopted child; (b) recover from being seriously ill; or (c) care for your child, spouse, or parent who is suffering from a serious health condition.</p> <p>Under Washington law, a woman who works for an employer with at least 8 employees is entitled to take time off for labor and delivery of a baby, and can remain on medical leave until she is released to work by her doctor.</p> <p>Can I go into the military before age 21?</p> <p>You may enlist in any branch of the military at age 17 (with parental consent) or age 18 (without parental consent), if you meet all eligibility requirements. Each branch has their own requirements for enlistment, which can be found on their website and from talking with recruiters.</p> <p>Note that the local laws (such as legal drinking age) where you live will still generally apply to you if you enlist in the military, unless you are in a foreign country with a Status of Forces agreement with the U.S. that modifies how the local laws are applied to you. In addition, you will be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (see, http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/subtitle-A/part-II/chapter-47) and the code of conduct and ethical standards set forth by the branch in which you enlist.</p>

TURNING 18	SCHOOLING
<p>I haven't finished high school yet. Can I stay in school? The same school?</p>	<p>Can I stay in school?</p> <p>Yes. In Washington State, you may remain in the high school of your residence until you complete the requirements for graduation, or through the school year in which you turn 21, so that you may receive a diploma from the high school where you have attended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are homeless, the McKinney-Vento Act allows you to stay in the local school through grade 12, and provides transportation. . There may also be funding for transportation to your school through the Fostering Connections Act. • If in foster care, yes. You may enroll in the Extended Foster Care program and continue in the same high school you have been in, until you graduate or receive your GED. If your enrollment is continuous (not counting holidays and vacation periods), you may continue with college or vocational training until age 21. • An alternative GED program may be offered through the educational service district's (ESD) or community college but a student must withdraw from the resident high school and enroll (sometimes at a cost), in the GED program at the local community college. • If you complete a GED program, but have not reached age 21, you may return to the resident high school to finish the graduation requirements and receive an actual diploma. • In some cases, the community college fee for students ages 19-21 who are enrolled in the GED program may be waived. • There is IV-e funding available for transportation costs under Fostering Connections Act. Under that Act, youth in foster care may also be entitled to special waivers for graduation requirements if they have changed schools due to placement changes. <p>See: Washington state graduation requirements toolkit at: http://www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements/pubdocs/GraduationToolkit.pdf.</p>
<p>I want to go to college. Can a homeless person go to college? (rights, resources)</p>	<p>Can I go to college?</p> <p>Yes. You can go to college if you meet the educational and financial requirements. Note that you can apply to a two-year or even four-year public college without a high school diploma or GED certificate, if you can qualify in other ways. However, you may not be eligible for federal, state or private financial aid—scholarships or loans—if you do not have the diploma or certificate.</p> <p>If you have registered for the Extended Foster Care program and maintain eligibility, you can continue to get foster care payments even if you go off to college.</p> <p>For those who have not been in foster care, there are support organizations. See for example, http://www.seattleeducationaccess.org/ for assistance in the Seattle area.</p> <p>See also http://www.ecampustours.com/payingforcollege/ which lists several sources of financial aid, including aid specifically for homeless or foster youth. Talk with the financial aid office of the school you would like to attend. There are counselors who will recommend and assist you in making applications for scholarships and loans.</p>

<p>I am the mother of child. What rights and obligations do I have?</p>	<p>You would also need to confirm paternity before you obtain sole custody of the child. A parenting plan which spells out custody, visitation and decision-making rights of each parent must then be arranged by the court. You may, however, make emergency decisions on behalf of that child. At that point, you may also be eligible for state health benefits for that dependent child, depending on your citizenship, income and resource limitations. See also the Washington State Fathers Network, fathersnetworking.org for information and support. For more information see Chapter Pregnancy & Parenting in this handbook.</p> <p>What rights do I have as a mother?</p> <p>If you are the <u>mother</u> of a child, you are considered the sole parent unless the father has signed the birth certificate or has filed for paternity.</p> <p>[MORE]You have the responsibility to protect your child from any abusive situation, whether abuse derives from the father or someone else. You have the right to collect child support and arrange a custody schedule for your child. You need to have the paternity confirmed either by an "acknowledgement of parentage" document or by paternity test, before you can file for child support.</p> <p>You may be eligible for health and welfare benefits which include the Women Infants Children (WIC) federal program. This program provides health screening and monitoring, nutrition and breastfeeding education and support, drug/alcohol treatment and Special Supplemental Nutrition for children.</p> <p>Custody or visitation rights may be withdrawn or curtailed by the court based on neglect or abandonment, or if the parent has perpetrated abuse or a crime.</p> <p>If you are the parent of a school-age child, your child has the right to an education up through completion of high school.</p>
<p>What is statutory rape, and how could it affect me?</p>	<p>What is statutory rape?</p> <p>Statutory rape is a criminal offense involving sexual intercourse with a minor. Each state has a different set of rules regarding when statutory rape applies, but it is important to note that in all states consent doesn't matter. You can be found guilty of statutory rape even if both people wanted to engage in sexual intercourse. You can also be found guilty even if you made an honest mistake about the other person's age.</p> <p>[MORE]</p> <p>In Washington, statutory rape depends on the age of the minor(s) involved. It would be considered statutory rape if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) there is at least a two-year age difference between participants if one participant is less than 12 years old; b) there is at least a three-year age difference between participants if one participant is less than 14 years old but at least 12 years old, or c) there is at least a four-year age difference between participants if one participant is less than 16 years old but at least 14 years old. <p>The age of consent in Washington is 16, so if both participants are at least 16 years old, it will not be considered statutory rape in Washington. It is very important to know that this is not the case in every state. To see a summary of different state laws on statutory rape, go to: http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/sr/statelaws/summary.shtml</p>

	<p>If you get convicted of statutory rape, you may be sent to jail and have to register as a sex offender. See Chapter 3 for more information on statutory rape.</p>
<p>TURNING 18</p>	<p>IDENTITY CONSIDERATIONS</p>
<p>I am an American Indian. Are there special laws or special resources that I need to know about?</p> <p>I had some trouble on an Indian reservation. Are there special laws that I need to know about?</p>	<p>Are there special laws for American Indian tribes?</p> <p>Yes, if you go onto or live on an Indian reservation. In that case, you will generally be subject to the laws of your tribe. See section below on trouble on an Indian reservation.</p> <p>[MORE]</p> <p>If you are a member of a tribe and are pregnant, there are special services available to assist the mother and child within the tribal culture.</p> <p>Are there special laws on tribal properties?</p> <p>Tribal police have the authority to arrest you if they believe you have committed a crime on tribal land. Where your case will be heard depends on the type of crime (major or non-major) and your status (a tribe member, a non-tribe member Native American, or a non-Native American).</p> <p>[MORE] Major crimes include murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, maiming, some sexual crimes, incest, some assaults, burglary, robbery, arson, and embezzlement. There are different jurisdictions for crimes on tribal properties, depending on whether the perpetrator or victim is a member of the tribe.</p>
<p>I came from another country. Can I still stay in the United States if I move out of my family's home?</p> <p>I identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. What support is there for me?</p>	<p>Possibly. See Chapter 18.</p> <p>See Chapter 19.</p>

TURNING 18	RESOURCES
Personal documents to gather and maintain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birth certificate• Social security card• Washington State identification card or Washington state driver's license• Immunization records• Health and education records• Passport (if you travel outside of the United States)

V. HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

HOUSING & CONTRACTS	TRESPASSING AND SQUATTING
<p>Trespassing and Squatting</p>	<p>What are my housing options if I am homeless?</p> <p>You have several possible choices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying in a shelter • Finding public housing or other cost-reducing options • Couch-surfing • Renting a room or apartment • Trespassing or squatting <p>Can I legally stay in an abandoned house or building?</p> <p><i>Possibly.</i> The general rule is that a person who knowingly enters a building without permission or remains unlawfully in a building commits criminal trespass. If the property is private or public property in which someone still lives or occupies, any entry without the owner's permission is trespassing. Signs or other warnings against trespassing, such as a fence or security system, indicate that trespassing is not allowed. A violation of this general rule may constitute a misdemeanor with a penalty of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 90 days in jail.</p> <p>However, it is generally not criminal trespass if the building is abandoned. To be abandoned, the owner must no longer be asserting his or her rights to the building. If there are no running utilities, the land is not fenced or enclosed in any manner, and the building is open to the public, it is likely the building is abandoned. To avoid committing criminal trespass, you must also follow the rules regarding accessing it or you believe that the owner would have given you permission.</p> <p>Will the property I'm staying in become mine if I stay there long enough?</p> <p><i>Nearly impossible.</i> In order for you to acquire property this way, you must satisfy some difficult requirements. Becoming the legal owner of a property this way is called adverse possession. Ownership by adverse possession is not granted quickly: you must be the exclusive occupant of the property for at least seven years and satisfy certain other requirements.</p> <p>There are other criteria, too, which may be complex and difficult to meet. If you intend to occupy or currently occupy an abandoned building you may want to contact one of the lawyer referral services at the end of this section to consult with an attorney regarding the specific facts of your case.</p>

<p>Self-Defense</p>	<p>Can I be kicked out of the abandoned building where I have been staying?</p> <p>Yes. The police may also ask you to leave an abandoned building for health and safety reasons. Examples of health and safety reasons include: the building is a fire hazard, any urination or defecation takes place without working facilities, illegal activity occurs in the building, or loud noise causes disruption.</p> <p>If I am attacked at the place where I am trespassing or squatting, do I have to flee before I defend myself?</p> <p><i>Probably.</i></p> <p>In Washington, you may defend yourself if you encounter force in a place where you have a right to be. But, a self-defense claim will not apply if you initiate the attack, exceed the force the assailant used, or have no legal right to be in the place where you were attacked. For example, a trespasser does not have a right to be in the space in question; therefore, if you are trespassing you must flee before defending yourself, or potentially face criminal prosecution for such actions.</p>
	<p>COUCH-SURFING</p>
<p>Getting Kicked Out</p>	<p>I am staying at a friend's house for free and he is kicking me out. Can he do that?</p> <p>Yes. Your friend's past generosity does not mean he has to house you indefinitely. You have not made a contractual agreement with the property owner or tenant, so your right to live at the house is subject to your friend's whims. You must leave if he is kicking you out.</p> <p>Moreover, if your friend is renting, he has a separate agreement with the landlord. Your friend's landlord could have rules restricting guests' length of stay. Without signing the lease yourself, you may subject your friend to an additional fee, or worse, cause your friend to violate the terms of the lease. Or if your friend receives Section 8 or other housing assistance, they could lose their benefits if you stay more than a certain amount of time.</p>
<p>Using a Friend's Address</p>	<p>I am staying at a friend's house. Can I use this address for mail? School? Residency?</p> <p><i>Maybe.</i> The answer probably depends on other actions you take.</p> <p>If you have no other place to live (you have been kicked out, are on the run, or are otherwise homeless), you can use your friend's address for school even if you're not originally from Washington State. See Section IV (Education) for further information.</p> <p>This status does not help you establish a "domicile" in the state of Washington. The law does not specify a period of time you must remain in a home before it becomes your domicile.</p> <p>Establishing yourself as a Washington resident requires you to take further action than just staying at your friend's house. Your status is only sufficient for educational purposes – to be a full resident requires evidence of a domicile. Some actions that cause the Department of Revenue to presume you are a resident include: registering to vote in the state, receiving benefits under Washington's public assistance programs, or having a Washington State driver's license.</p>

	<p>There are no specific United States Postal Service requirements for the use of your friend's house as your mailing address. It is, however, recommended that you obtain your friend's consent to have mail delivered to such address.</p>
	<p>PUBLIC HOUSING</p>
<p>Public Housing?</p>	<p>What is public housing? Government-owned housing. The local housing authorities provide subsidized apartments owned by them to low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Households usually pay 30% of their monthly income.</p>
<p>Qualifying</p>	<p>How do I know if I am eligible for public housing? To be eligible for public housing you must meet their income limits, requirement for citizenship or immigration status, pass a criminal background check, meet their rental history requirements and meet any other policies and requirements established by the housing authority for which you are applying. If there are some qualifications you might not be able to meet due to a disability, like alcoholism or a mental health issue, then you may be able to ask the housing authority to make a change in its policy for you. You can find out more information about your rights by clicking here http://www.bazelon.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=bdk6FSfUBOQ%3d&tabid=104 To apply for public housing, contact your local housing authority by clicking here. The local housing authority representative will indicate what documentation you need to provide in order to verify the information on your application. If you are eligible, the Housing Authority will check your references to make sure you would be a good tenant.</p>
<p>Length Of Stay</p>	<p>How long can I stay? If you are accepted into a public housing program, the Housing Authority will require you to sign a lease. Unless otherwise specified, in general, a public housing lease automatically renews as long as you comply with the lease provisions and meet the income guidelines. This means you can stay indefinitely as long as you continue to be eligible for the program and comply with the rules.</p>
<p>Bad Conditions</p>	<p>What can I do if conditions in my unit are bad? Contact the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority is responsible for the condition and operation of its local public housing, and should be conducting periodic checks to ensure the building is in a decent, safe, and sanitary condition. You can also contact your local housing code enforcement agency to inspect your unit. Many counties in Washington provide this service for free.</p>
<p>Evictions</p>	<p>Can I be evicted? Yes, although as a public housing tenant you have greater protection against eviction than most other tenants do. For what reason could the Housing Authority evict me? The Housing Authority may only evict you for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious or repeated violations of material terms of the lease; • Criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any drug-related activity on or off the premises; or • Other good cause. <p>What if someone else in my household engages in criminal activity?</p> <p>Criminal activity refers to criminal activity committed by you or other occupants or tenants of your household. If you consent to, or know that other occupants or tenants are engaging in criminal activity in your household, you can be held responsible for their activities if you do not attempt to prevent it.</p> <p>Does the Housing Authority need to give me notice before evicting me?</p> <p>Yes, and the notice must be in writing and include the reasons the Housing Authority is relying upon to evict you. In most cases, the Housing Authority will give you an opportunity to correct your lease violations.</p> <p>Public housing tenants have the right to a hearing before being evicted. If you receive an eviction notice from the housing authority, review it carefully to find out how to request a hearing. Even if you lose the hearing, the housing authority still has to go to court to evict you.</p>
<p>Other options</p>	<p>What are other affordable housing options?</p> <p>Section 8 Vouchers – Also known as the Housing Choice Voucher is also administered by the Housing Authorities. The Section 8 program allows tenants to take their voucher to a private landlord to secure low-income housing on the private market. Voucher tenants usually pay 30% of their income towards rent, and the Housing Authority pays the difference. Landlords sign a contract with the Housing Authority and a lease with the tenants.</p> <p>To be eligible for public housing you must meet their income limits and requirements for citizenship or immigration status, pass a criminal background check, meet their rental history requirements and meet any other policies and requirements established by the housing authority for which you are applying.</p>
<p>Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers</p>	<p>You can get more information about the Section 8 Voucher Program online.</p> <p><i>Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers</i> - FUP is a program under which Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) are provided to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families for whom the lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The imminent placement of the family's child or children in out-of-home care. ○ The delay in the discharge of the child or children to the family from out-of home care. • Youths at least 18 years old and not more than 21 years old who left foster care at age 16 or older and who lack adequate housing. FUP vouchers used by youths are limited to 18 months of housing assistance. <p>Families and youths may use FUP vouchers to housing in the private housing market. You can get more information about the Family Unification Program online.</p>

<p>Transitional Housing</p>	<p>Temporary or transitional housing is provided for up to 24 months and sometimes longer, to assist a formerly homeless household in making the transition to permanent housing. Transitional housing includes case management and other services, depending on the needs of the population being served. Transitional housing programs serve a variety of homeless populations, including youth, individuals and families. You can get more information about transitional housing in the Seattle area online or by calling 1-800-621-4636.</p> <p>There is a useful website for conducting housing searches in King County that is free. http://www.housingsearchnw.org/. You can search by your specific needs and budgets. You can also dial 2-1-1 from any phone in King, Pierce, or Snohomish County to be connected to a comprehensive information and referral service for housing and other needs or visit their website.</p>
<p>Requirements</p> <p>Not enough beds</p> <p>How long can I stay?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SHELTERS</p> <p>How can I find a shelter?</p> <p>The Washington State Coalition for the Homeless has an extensive compilation of shelters, listed by area. For residency requirements by shelter, contact the Coalition at (206) 442-9455, or go to their website.</p> <p>What are the requirements to stay in a shelter?</p> <p>Each shelter has its own requirements.</p> <p>Many shelters require its residents to be "homeless." "Homeless" is defined as people who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, people who will lose their primary nighttime residence imminently, and individuals who are fleeing dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against that individual. If a shelter requires its residents to be homeless, there is a good chance this definition is the standard that the shelter uses.</p> <p>Some shelters also cater to specific groups, for example teens, families, or women suffering from domestic violence.</p> <p>What if there aren't enough beds to accommodate me?</p> <p>Many shelters do have long waiting lists. Some shelters provide referrals to other shelters. If a shelter does not provide such referrals contact the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless.</p> <p>How long can I stay at a shelter?</p> <p><i>It depends.</i> Each shelter has its own requirements. Some shelters operate during the day, but more commonly you will be expected to leave during the day and return for an evening meal and bed. Shelters often have a nighttime curfew. Failure to comply with the shelter's rules may limit your ability to stay at the shelter.</p>

Who knows I stayed in a shelter?	Will a potential landlord or employer know I have stayed in a shelter in the past? <i>Probably Not.</i> Homeless shelters often require identification, but use it only for internal monitoring purposes. The shelter typically would not release that information, except to police. While the shelter will probably not reveal your information to an employer or landlord, there is no law preventing an employer or landlord from directly asking you to list your prior residences. You should not lie. A gap in address may indicate a period of homelessness, but would probably not reveal that that you have stayed at a shelter.
	LEASES
	What is a rental agreement? A rental agreement is a written or oral agreement between you (the tenant) and a landlord that establishes or modifies the terms, conditions, rules, regulations, or other provisions concerning the use and occupancy of the property. Can I sign a contract? <i>Yes.</i> In general, you can sign a contract that will legally bind the other party, <i>even if you are a minor</i> , though people do not always realize that minors are able to do this. How old do I have to be to sign a contract? There is no age requirement to sign a contract, although a contract entered into by an emancipated minor is sometimes "voidable." In other words, the minor can choose to get out of the contract at any time before turning 18 years old or within a reasonable time after turning 18 years old. While this law may seem beneficial to minors, landlords often refuse to contract with minors because the minor can easily get out of his or her end of the bargain. In addition, a court could still order the minor to return all of the remaining money and property received in the contract. Do I need a lawyer? Should someone else look at the contract before I sign it? <i>No.</i> Having a lawyer or guardian look over your contract may be a good idea, but is not required. Do I need permission from my parents? <i>No.</i> However, if a parent or legal guardian signs a contract on a minor's behalf, the contract cannot be canceled.

What are some things I should look for or be on the lookout for in a lease contract?

While the lease will be specifically tailored to your rental agreement, there are certain components you should always look out for:

- *Rent.* You should review carefully the amount of rent and when the payments are due.
- *Hidden charges or penalties.* Make sure you know when and how much your landlord is allowed to charge you for certain violations or fees, such as paying rent late.
- *Security Deposits.* Check the lease to make sure you know the amount of your security deposit and reasons why your landlord can keep it.
- *Who pays utilities.* Leases vary in who pays for hot water, heat, electricity, parking, and trash disposal. You should know what you must pay for, and ask how much a tenant typically pays per month for each item. Also know if the contract assigns you any additional responsibilities, such as snow or leaf removal.
- *Length of agreement.* You should know the exact term of your lease before binding yourself to rental payments.

You can find more information about these issues at <http://www.tenantsunion.org/>

Can I get out of a contract I already signed? How?

Usually, if you signed a contract when you were a minor, you have up until a reasonable time after you turn 18 to cancel the contract. If the contract is cancelled, you must give return all the remaining money and property that you received in the contract. There is no penalty for cancelling the contract. However, you cannot cancel a contract that you signed when you were a minor if:

- It was a contract for necessities, such as food or shelter,
- You lied about being over 18,
- An innocent third party would be harmed by cancelling the contract,
- You were was emancipated at the time you signed the contract,
- A parent/legal guardian signed the contract on your behalf.

There is no set definition for "necessities," but food, medicine, clothing, and shelter are usually included. A contract for a shelter would be deemed a necessity; therefore, a minor may be able to sign a lease that is legally binding on both the landlord and tenant.

FINDING AN APARTMENT AND SIGNING A LEASE

How can I find an apartment?

If you are low-income, you may want to talk to your local housing authority for what options may be available to you. (See Public Housing section)

You can also visit www.housingsearchnw.org (King County) or <http://aptfinder.org/> to find affordable housing in Washington.

Where can I find more information on these topics?

You can go to <http://www.housingsearchnw.org/LegalServices.html> for information on leases, security deposits, and repairs. You can also go to www.washingtonlawhelp.org.

Can a landlord refuse to rent to me because I am currently homeless or because I am a minor?

Yes. The landlord has not violated the law as long as he or she does not use discriminatory methods to select tenants. Since being homeless might not fall into one of these categories, a landlord could refuse to rent to you for this reason. (For more information on what constitutes discriminatory landlord actions, see below.)

The ability for a minor to disaffirm a contract may convince a landlord not to rent to a minor (see Leases section). In order to give the landlord additional security, you may want to find a guardian or another adult willing to sign on your behalf, thereby removing your ability to disaffirm the contract.

Can a landlord refuse to rent to me because of other reasons, for example, because of my race, because I have kids, or because I am a survivor of domestic violence?

No. Under federal law, landlords cannot discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status (having children). Under Washington law, survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, unlawful harassment, or stalking have the right to be free from landlord discrimination when entering or renewing a lease. The State of Washington also protects against discrimination based on Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity, use of a service animal, and HIV/Hepatitis C.

If you think you have been the subject of landlord discrimination contact one of the following agencies that investigates and enforces fair housing complaints within their jurisdictions:

- Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 (United States) 1-800-877-0246
- Washington State Human Rights Commission
 (Washington)..... 1-800-605-7324
- King County Office of Civil Rights Enforcement
 (Unincorporated King Co.) (206) 296-7592
- Seattle Office for Civil Rights (Seattle)..... (206) 684-4503
- Tacoma Human Rights Department (Tacoma)..... (253) 591-5151
- Northwest Fair Housing Alliance (Spokane and
 Eastern Washington)..... 1-800-200-3247
- Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound
 (Pierce Co. and Puget Sound Region)..... 1-888-589-6955
- Fair Housing Council of Oregon (Clark County) 1-800-424-3247

<p>Background</p>	<p>Can a landlord refuse to rent to me because of my juvenile offender record?</p> <p>Yes. Under federal laws, having a criminal record is not a protected class under fair housing laws. Landlords can establish screening criteria that rejects applicants with criminal records. However, it is discriminatory to perform criminal background checks only on certain applicants, or to distinguish between applicants with criminal records based on otherwise protected classifications such as race, religion, color, etc.</p> <p>Can a landlord make me submit to a background check, credit check or other screening process?</p> <p>Yes. A landlord is allowed to check your past rental history, eviction history, credit history, and criminal background before renting to you. Often a landlord will charge a "screening fee," which covers the cost of conducting the check or hiring a company to do it.</p> <p>The landlord must tell you in writing that he or she is running a check on you. The landlord cannot charge you more for the screening than it actually costs him or her. If the landlord rejects you because of something he or she found out in your screening, the landlord is required to tell you in writing exactly why you were rejected. Prior to obtaining any information about a prospective tenant, the prospective landlord is required to notify the prospective tenant in writing, or by posting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the types of information that will be accessed to conduct the tenant screening, • the criteria that may result in a denial of the application; and • if a consumer report is used, the name and address of the consumer reporting agency and the prospective tenant's right to obtain a free copy of the consumer report in the event of a denial or other adverse action, and to dispute the accuracy of information appearing in the consumer report.
<p>Signing a lease</p>	<p>Should I sign a lease? Is a "month-to-month" agreement okay?</p> <p>There are two types of rental agreements between a landlord and tenant: month-to-month agreements and term leases. Deciding which option is better for you is a personal choice. However, the landlord can insist that you sign a lease in order to live in the property.</p> <p>What is a month-to-month agreement?</p> <p><i>Month-to-month</i> agreements do not have a fixed duration: either you or your landlord can get out of the agreement within the month simply by notifying the other person. On the other hand, the agreement could continue indefinitely if both of you are satisfied with the arrangement.</p> <p>A month-to-month agreement affords both you and your landlord less protection. The landlord can increase your rent or change the rules by providing you with 30 days' notice (except in Seattle, where the landlord must give you 60 days' notice to increase rent 10% or more in a 12-month period). Additionally, the landlord must only provide you with 20 days' notice if he or she does not want to renew the agreement. He or she does not have to give you a reason why. (Except in Seattle, where your landlord cannot terminate your tenancy without just cause).</p>

Security deposits

But, less tenant protection also means more flexibility. If you decide to move, you only have to provide your landlord with 20 days' notice.

Month-to-month agreements can be written or oral. If you pay any kind of deposit or non-refundable fee your landlord is required to give you a written agreement; otherwise, the agreement need not be written down. This type of agreement may be formed without signing any documents.

What is a term lease?

Term Leases require you to stay in your apartment/house for a minimum amount of time. There is no standard for lease terms, but 12 months is common. Term leases must be written and signed, which requires both you and your landlord to comply with the agreement for the entirety of its term.

Your landlord will not be allowed to raise the rent or change the rules of the lease during the term of the lease. Your landlord cannot terminate the lease unless you violate the lease.

Your landlord must provide you with a copy of your lease.

What is a security deposit? When can the landlord keep my security deposit?

A security deposit is money you give to your landlord at move-in to cover damages to the property when you move out. Your landlord cannot keep the security deposit for "normal wear and tear" to the property. The following list gives examples of what might be normal wear and tear and what might not be.

Normal Wear and Tear	Beyond Normal Wear and Tear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a worn carpet ▪ chipped paint; faded or dingy paint ▪ worn finish on wood floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ broken windows ▪ holes in the wall ▪ leaving trash or other items that have to be thrown away ▪ leaving your apartment so dirty that it is unhealthy or unsafe

When you give a security deposit: your landlord is required to provide you with:

- A receipt;
- A written rental agreement;
- A check-list or statement describing the condition of the unit; and
- A statement that tells you the name and address of the bank or escrow company where the deposit is being kept.

After you move out: your landlord has 14 days to either: (1) refund all of the deposit, or (2) send you a letter telling you why he or she is not giving some or all of it back. The landlord must send this letter to the most recent address he or she has for you.

<p>Landlord obligations</p>	<p>LIVING IN AN APARTMENT</p>
	<p>What does the landlord have to do?</p> <p>In general, your landlord is required to keep the apartment fit for human habitation. To be fit for human habitation, the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RLTA) requires maintenance relating to your basic health and safety.</p> <p>Your landlord must maintain all electrical, plumbing, heating, and other facilities and appliances. If you do not have hot water, for example, you can force your landlord to provide it.</p> <p>Your landlord must also maintain the premises to comply with applicable code, keep common areas reasonably clean, maintain structural components, provide adequate locks, and provide a reasonable program for the control of infestation by pests.</p> <p>You landlord has other obligations, too. If you think your premise is not fit for habitation, read the RLTA to find a complete list of your landlord's duties.</p> <p>Even if your landlord is deficient in making repairs, do not stop paying rent. The RLTA requires you to be current in rent in order to be eligible for the remedies under the law.</p> <p>What is the landlord not allowed to do? For example: can the landlord change the rent?</p> <p>Your landlord must <u>not</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter into a rental agreement for premises that have been condemned or declared unlawful to occupy; • Intentionally shut off your utility services (including water, heat, gas), except for necessary repairs; • Physically remove you from the premises without a court order; • Take your personal property; • Sell or dispose of your personal property without proper notice; or • Retaliate against you for good faith complaints or attempts to enforce your rights. <p>Your landlord has time limits for making repairs. A landlord has 24 hours to begin restoring heat, hot or cold water, or electricity. The landlord also has 24 hours to fix a very hazardous condition. To fix a refrigerator, oven, or major plumbing fixture, your landlord has 72 hours. In all other cases your landlord must begin making repairs within 10 days.</p> <p>Additionally, your landlord has restrictions on increasing your rent. If you signed a term lease, your landlord cannot change the rent during the term without your permission. To increase rent under a month-to-month tenancy your landlord must provide 30 days' written notice.</p>

Tenant obligations	<p>What do I have to do?</p> <p>As a tenant, you also have certain obligations to your landlord. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay rent by its due date;• Keep the premises clean and sanitary;• Maintain smoke detectors and replace batteries as needed;• Properly use all fixtures and appliances supplied by the landlord;• Leave the apartment in as good condition as the beginning of the tenancy, except for normal wear and tear. <p>Can I go to the police if my landlord is not following the rules of the lease?</p> <p><i>No.</i> You cannot go to the police to enforce the rules written into a lease. You must be familiar enough with Washington's laws to know what is required of a landlord, because it is unlikely someone will address problems with a landlord on your behalf. See the Lawyer Referral Services section for help to settle a dispute with your landlord. But, tenants who are being illegally removed from a property may call the police.</p> <p>You can read the entire RLTA online.</p> <p>I have a pet that hasn't caused any problems but my landlord says there are no pets allowed. Can I keep my pet in the apartment?</p> <p><i>No.</i> Your landlord's pet restriction is reasonable, so you must comply. While you may think your pet has not caused any problems, it could provoke other tenants' allergies. The pet could also cause problems in the future. Your landlord can have a no pets policy. If this provision is not in your lease, then your landlord cannot add it until the lease ends. If it is a month to month agreement, then your landlord must give you thirty days notice of the new rule. If the animal is a service or emotional support animal, then it is not considered a pet. You can contact your local fair housing office to find out more information.</p>
Roommates	<p>Can I let other people live in my apartment?</p> <p><i>Probably not.</i> You are required to comply with all reasonable obligations or restrictions your landlord imposes to maintain the premises. If you agreed with your landlord that other people would not live in your apartment (check your lease if you signed one), that restriction is probably reasonable. You could ask your landlord if you would like to have someone live with you. Your landlord might allow you to do so, but the new person would most likely have to go through a background check too.</p> <p>Can I be evicted if my roommate doesn't pay his or her share of rent?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i> Your landlord is not required to accept partial rent payments. If your roommate does not pay rent, and you do not cover his or her portion of the payment, your landlord can begin the eviction process. Additionally, your landlord has the choice to sue either you or your roommate for the missing rent.</p>

	<p>If your landlord successfully sues you for the rent, then you can bring a lawsuit against your roommate. Always keep records of your rental payments: you will only win a lawsuit against your roommate if you can prove the rent you covered was your roommate's portion and not your own.</p> <p>My roommates are doing drugs. Can I get in trouble even if I am not doing drugs?</p> <p>Yes. Your duties as a tenant require not only that you not use illegal drugs, but also that you do not allow anyone else to do so in your apartment.</p> <p>Can I make someone leave who is living in my apartment?</p> <p><i>It depends.</i> If that person also is part of a rental agreement with the landlord, the same eviction process applies for that person as it does for you. You cannot start an eviction on your landlord's behalf, and cannot physically remove the other tenant for any reason.</p> <p>However, if the person is not on the lease but is a guest of yours or your co-tenant, you can require him or her to leave.</p> <p>It is possible, however, to have the other tenant evicted. If that person is not paying rent, not following the rental agreement, or creating significant problems, then you should inform your landlord, who can then choose to initiate the eviction process. Your co-tenant's problems may reflect on you, so informing your landlord right away is important</p> <p>You may file for an anti-harassment order against the other tenant if the actions of the other tenant are of a willful and knowing nature and cause serious alarm, annoyance, harassment or are detrimental to you and do not serve any legitimate or lawful purpose. An anti-harassment order by the court may restrain the other person from making any attempts to contact you, or from making any attempts to keep you under surveillance. The court in its discretion may also require the other person to stay at a minimum stated distance from your house and workplace.</p>
<p>Noisy neighbors</p>	<p>There are noisy neighbors that keep waking me up. What are my rights?</p> <p>You have the right to prevent others from doing things that create a "public nuisance." Behavior that annoys, injures, or endangers safety, health, comfort, or sleep or offends the public decency may be a public nuisance.</p> <p>Someone being loud (noise pollution) would probably have to offend more people than just you in order to be a public nuisance. You have every right to address the issue with your neighbors, perhaps trying to find a compromise. If the noise is offensive enough and the neighbors refuse to stop, you can legally go to court to make them stop.</p>
<p>Leaving an apartment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LEASE TERMINATIONS AND EVICTIONS</p> <p>What should I do if I can no longer afford my apartment or I want to move? What happens if I just leave?</p> <p><i>If you have a month-to-month agreement:</i> you must notify your landlord <u>in writing</u> that you plan to move out. The letter must arrive to your landlord at least 20 days before the end of the rental period. The end of the rental period is the day before rent is due.</p>

	<p>Leaving without providing the required notice means that your landlord can legally demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent for the month after you move out; or • Rent for 30 days from the day the landlord finds out you moved. <p><i>If you have a term lease:</i> you are usually not required to notify your landlord if you are leaving at the end of a lease. If you leave before the end of your lease, and you do not otherwise reach an agreement with the landlord, you will likely have to pay the landlord the lesser of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rent for all the months left in the lease; • All the rent owed before the landlord was able to re-rent the unit. <p>Whether you have a term lease or a month-to-month agreement, your landlord must try to rent the premises as soon as he or she finds out that you left, and can only charge you for the time that the premises were vacant.</p>
<p>Lease is not renewed</p>	<p>What happens if my lease ends or the landlord refuses to renew my month-to-month agreement?</p> <p>Your lease will end on the final day of the term. Failure to move out after your lease expires is the only circumstance in which your landlord can start an eviction ("Unlawful Detainer Action") without advance notice. If your landlord chooses not to renew your month-to-month agreement he or she must only give you 20 days' notice before the end of the rental period. Your landlord does not need a reason to not renew the agreement.</p>
<p>Valid Reasons for Eviction</p>	<p>Can my landlord evict me for not paying rent for the past few months?</p> <p>Yes. Even if you are only one day behind in your rent, your landlord can initiate the eviction process. However, your landlord must give you 3 days' notice before evicting you – if you pay all the rent you owe within those 3 days, your landlord cannot evict you.</p> <p>Can my landlord evict me for not following the rental agreement?</p> <p>Yes. If you break one of the terms of the rental agreement, the landlord must give you a 10-day notice. If you fix the problem within the 10 days, your landlord must stop the eviction process.</p> <p>Can my landlord evict me for engaging in drug, gang, or other hazardous activity?</p> <p>Yes. The landlord does not have to provide you with any notice in this situation, and you have no option to stay and correct the problem.</p> <p>Can my landlord evict me for damaging the value of the property, interfering with other tenants' use of the property, or creating a permanent nuisance?</p> <p>Yes. The landlord must provide 3 days notice, after which you must move out.</p>

Can my landlord evict me for no reason at all?

Maybe. If you have a term lease, your landlord probably cannot evict you during the term of the lease without "just cause." You should check the specific terms of your lease to be sure.

If you have a month-to-month tenancy, the law depends on where you live. Outside Seattle, a landlord can evict month-to-month tenants for no reason. The only requirement a landlord has is that he or she must give you notice 20 days before the next rent is due.

In Seattle the laws are more tenant-friendly. A landlord must provide "just cause" for terminating your month-to-month tenancy. Even with just cause, the 20 days' notice requirement still applies.

Information regarding the tenant protections in Seattle ("Just Cause Ordinance") can be obtained by contacting the City of Seattle, Department of Construction and Land Use at (206) 684-7867 and [online](#).

My landlord put all my stuff out on the street and changed the locks. Can the landlord do that?

No. Your landlord cannot lock you out or take your personal property unless you abandon it. If so removed, you may recover possession of the property or terminate the rental agreement and, in either case, may recover the actual damages sustained. If you do abandon the property your landlord can immediately remove you from the premises. You have not abandoned a property, however, unless you fail to pay rent when due and indicate, by words or actions, an intention not to continue the tenancy. Without abandonment, your landlord also cannot physically remove you from the premises without a court order, which may only be enforced by a sheriff.

How does the eviction process work?

Eviction Notice – Your landlord will first notify you of a problem by delivering an Eviction Notice to you. Technically, the Eviction Notice is the step before the eviction process begins. The Eviction Notice simply informs you that there is an outstanding problem the landlord wants you to correct, and that the landlord will begin the eviction process if you fail to fix the problem.

The Eviction Notice's expiration date is usually between 3 and 10 days, but varies depending on the reason your landlord is attempting to evict you. For unpaid rent, the Eviction Notice expires in 3 days. If you fail to pay your debt in that time, your landlord can continue the eviction process. [A list of Eviction Notice expiration periods can be found online](#).

Your landlord must first attempt to deliver the Eviction Notice to you personally. If no one is home, the Eviction Notice may be posted in a conspicuous place on the property, but the landlord must also send you a copy by regular mail.

Unlawful Detainer Action – If the Eviction Notice expires and the problem has not been fixed and you are still on the premises, your landlord will initiate an Unlawful Detainer Action. To start an Unlawful Detainer Action your landlord will give you a Summons and a Complaint for Unlawful Detainer. The Summons lets you know that your landlord is suing you. The Complaint tells you the reasons your landlord thinks he or she can evict you. Your landlord will file both documents with the court.

<p>Lawyer Referral Services</p>	<p><i>Notice of Appearance and Answer</i> – After receiving a Summons and Complaint you must take action or you will lose by default. The Summons and Complaint will tell you the deadline for filing your responsive documents. Although you will have at least 7 days, the time period may be short so you should act immediately.</p> <p>An Answer allows you to explain your side of the story. In the Answer you can admit and deny specific allegations and submit a defense and any reasons why the landlord is wrong in trying to evict you. The Notice of Appearance simply lets the court know you want to be notified if anything else happens in your case.</p> <p>This handbook is merely a guide, and cannot practically provide a complete source of information for every situation. In order to ensure complete compliance with the law, you should contact an attorney as soon as you are served with a Summons and Complaint, especially since the deadlines are very strict.</p> <p>If you cannot find help, it is possible to go through the eviction process yourself. The relevant forms are available online or by calling CLEAR at (888) 201-1014.</p>
	<p>LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICES</p>
	<p>How can I find a lawyer?</p> <p>The following list is a public service sponsored by County Bar Associations. Clients may have a half-hour consultation with an attorney for a small fee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County.....(206) 623-2551 • Lewis County.....(360) 748-0430 • Pierce County.....(253) 383-3432 • Snohomish County.....(425) 339-0100 • Spokane County (also serves other Eastern Washington Counties).....(509) 456-3655 • Thurston County.....(360) 923-4844 <p>In King County, you can also call 211 or the Lawyer Referral Service of the King County Bar Association and ask them to refer you to an attorney. Information about their service and fees can be obtained by calling (206) 623-2551.</p> <p>There are several agencies which provide information and counseling for tenants in the Seattle-King County area, and you may want to contact one of these agencies. The agencies include Solid Ground (206) 694-6700; Seattle Tenants Union, (206) 723-0500 and 1 (800) 752-9993; and Legal Action Center, (206) 324-6890.</p> <p>Outside of King County, low-income people may contact the CLEAR intake line at: (888) 201-1014.</p>

VI. LGBTQ

LGBTQ	SAFETY AND VICTIMIZATION
<p>Temporary housing</p>	<p>If I've been kicked out of my house for being LGBTQ, where can I go for temporary housing?</p> <p>For general information about shelters, see <i>Chapter 7, section D</i>.</p> <p>Seattle-area resources include Lambert House (http://www.lamberthouse.org/), Isis House (http://www.youthcare.org/our-programs/shelter-and-housing/transitional-housing/isis-house), Queer Youth Space (http://queeryouthspace.org/), Safe Schools Coalition (http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/), and Youth Eastside Services' BGLAD (Bisexual-Gay-Lesbian Adolescent Drop-in) (http://www.youtheastideservices.org/services/index).</p> <p>Outspoken is a good resource for Spokane and Eastern Washington (http://www.outspokane.com/resources.html).</p>
<p>Shelter for transgender youth</p>	<p>What shelters are available for transgender youth?</p> <p>For general information about shelters, see <i>Chapter 7</i>.</p> <p>Many transgender youth are homeless or have lost the support of their families because of their gender identity. Transgendered youth issues are often distinct from gay/lesbian youth in many spheres. The ACLU can help (http://www.aclu-wa.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Transgender).</p>
<p>Addiction treatment</p>	<p>Where can homeless LGBTQ youth get treatment for drug and alcohol addictions?</p> <p>For general information about treatment options, see <i>Chapter 8</i>. Intervention America's website has links to many teen rehab centers, including in Washington (http://teenrehab.interventionamerica.org/).</p>
<p>Employment</p>	<p>Can an employer refuse to hire me because I am LGBTQ?</p> <p>No. It is illegal to discriminate in employment in Washington based on sexual orientation and gender expression/identity. If you think you've been discriminated against in getting or keeping a job, contact the WA Human Rights Commission: http://www.hum.wa.gov/.</p> <p>Can I serve in the military if I am LGBTQ?</p> <p>Yes. The U.S. military's "Don't Ask/Don't Tell" policy has been repealed, so lesbian women and gay men can serve openly in the military. It is not illegal to deny the ban on transgendered individuals as Gender Identity Disorder is still considered a disqualifying mental disorder.</p>

<p>Medical treatment for transgender youth</p>	<p>What medical treatment is available for transgender youth? Can I choose the gender of the doctors and nurses who examine me?</p> <p>For general information about health and medical treatment, see <i>Chapter 9</i>.</p> <p>Due to the nature of emergency situations, you may not always be able to choose the gender or other characteristics of your health provider. In non-emergency situations, you do have the right to choose the gender and other characteristics of your doctor.</p>
<p>Foster care</p>	<p>I've been beaten up in foster care for being LGBTQ. How can I report this? Where can I go?</p> <p>All crimes should be reported to the police. <i>Chapter 3</i> discusses the criminal legal process.</p> <p>For general information about safety and stability, see <i>Chapter 2</i>.</p> <p>For general information about foster care, see <i>Chapter 14</i>.</p> <p>The Trevor Project is a resource for crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBT youth (http://www.thetrevorproject.org/).</p> <p>What are my rights while in foster care? Will the foster parents that I'm placed with be trained on sexuality and gender issues?</p> <p>Youths have the right to a foster home that does not treat LGBTQ youth differently from any other youths. Your options, though not ideal, are to tell your case worker and request a change in placement, tell your attorney if you have one, or ask the court to appoint an attorney for you.</p>
<p>Sexual assault</p>	<p>Are there clinics available to LGBTQ youth who have been sexually assaulted?</p> <p>All crimes should be reported to the police. <i>Chapter 3</i> discusses the criminal legal process.</p> <p>The Gay City Health Project provides information on domestic and sexual violence (http://www.gaycity.org/domestic-and-sexual-violence/).</p>
<p>Physical assault / Hate crimes</p>	<p>Is it a hate crime to assault someone because they are LGBTQ?</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>I've been the victim of a hate crime. Can I get medical treatment without telling my parents? Who should I report it to?</p> <p>All crimes should be reported to the police. <i>Chapter 3</i> discusses the criminal legal process.</p> <p>For general information about health and medical treatment and getting treatment without parental consent, see <i>Chapter 9</i>.</p> <p>The Trevor Project is a resource for crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBT youth (http://www.thetrevorproject.org/).</p>

Rights in school / Bullying	What do I do if I am bullied in school because I'm LGBTQ? What services/resources can I access in school if I'm LGBTQ? <p>You have the right to an education and the right not to be harassed or bullied at school. For general information about school, see Chapter 4.</p> <p>Many LGBTQ youth run away from home because of their situation at school as well as at home. Washington has laws that specifically forbid discrimination and bullying in schools based on sexual orientation and gender identity. If you are bullied at school, the first step is to tell a teacher or principal or other adult at school. Your school should have a compliance officer to whom you should report incidents.</p> <p>You can read about the anti-bullying policy at http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/BullyingHarassment.</p>
Juvenile detention	What happens if I am in juvenile detention? Do I have any special protection because I'm LGBTQ? <p>A detention center is obligated to keep the youth in its care safe. This certainly includes transgender youth and any others who require protection. The ACLU can help explain policies that apply to LGBTQ youth in detention (http://www.aclu.org).</p>
Domestic abuse	What if my parent is physically or emotionally abusing me because I am LGBTQ? <p>If you have a safe place to stay away from home, you can file a Child in Need of Services petition (CHINS and/or a dependency petition) on your own behalf. See Chapter 1.</p>
Marriage	Can I marry my same sex partner? What if I am under 18? <p>You can get married at age 17 or older with your parents' permission, or at age 16 and 17 if you are emancipated.</p>

VII. EDUCATION

EDUCATION	RIGHTS OF HOMELESS YOUTH UNDER THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT
<p>Education Basics</p>	<p>What are my basic rights to education?</p> <p>Your rights to education are protected under both Washington state and federal law and by the Washington State Constitution. If you are under the age of 21, the state must provide you with free educational services at a regular or alternative high school, a General Education Development (“GED”) program, or a high school diploma program provided by a community college, social services agency, or online high school.</p> <p>What if I am experiencing homelessness or don’t have a regular place to sleep?</p> <p>You have the same rights to receive a free public education as any other student. Federal law, specifically the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“McKinney-Vento Act”), and Washington state law provide special protections for homeless students. For instance, under Washington state law, if you do not have a legal residence, a school district cannot require you to provide proof of residency or any other information regarding your address if you are eligible to receive their services because of your age. See RCW 28A.225.215.</p> <p>What is the McKinney-Vento Act?</p> <p>The McKinney-Vento Act protects the right of homeless youth to go to school.</p> <p>Am I “homeless”?</p> <p>You are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act if you lack “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with a friend, relative, or someone else because you lost your home or can’t afford a home; • Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground because you have nowhere else to go; • Living in a shelter, including emergency or transitional shelters, domestic violence shelters, and runaway and homeless youth shelters; • Living in substandard housing; • Living in places not ordinarily used for sleeping, such as cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, or bus or train stations; • Awaiting foster care placement; or • Abandoned in a hospital.

<p><i>For more information regarding your education in foster care, visit the Website of the Legal Center for Foster Care and Education or the OSPI Website on Homeless Education.</i></p>	<p>Does the McKinney-Vento Act put a time limit on how long I can be considered homeless?</p> <p>No. There is no specific time limit placed on how long a student can be considered homeless. You are eligible under McKinney-Vento as long as you lack “a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.” Additionally, if you are identified as homeless at any point during the school year, you are eligible for education benefits under the McKinney-Vento Act for the remainder of the school year even if you find permanent housing.</p> <p>I am not living with a parent or guardian; do I still qualify?</p> <p>Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act will protect you if you are homeless and not living with a parent or guardian. You are considered an unaccompanied youth. You will be considered an unaccompanied youth even if your family wants you to return home.</p> <p>How do I know if I am awaiting foster care placement?</p> <p>You are “awaiting foster care” during the period of time between your initial placement into state care and your 30-day shelter care hearing.</p> <p>Do I have the same rights if I’m awaiting foster care placement?</p> <p>Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act covers you if you are awaiting foster care placement. Additionally, the Fostering Connections Act of 2008 includes new educational requirements for child welfare agencies. Specifically, your case plan must include assurances that your placement in foster care takes into account the proximity to your school of origin. The case plan also must consider the appropriateness of your current education setting. In addition, the child welfare agency must coordinate with your school to ensure that you remain in the school of origin, if it is in your best interest. However, if you meet the definition of “awaiting foster care placement,” then the best interest determination will rest with the school district. If your school of origin is not in your best interest, the child welfare agencies must ensure your immediate enrollment in a new school and provide all of your education records to your new school.</p> <p>Does the school have to advise me of my rights under the McKinney-Vento Act?</p> <p>Yes. Schools must ensure that you and your family are aware of the McKinney-Vento Act, who it covers, and what it provides. School districts must distribute public notice of the education rights of youth in homeless situations in places where youth receive services, such as schools, family shelters or drop-in centers, and soup kitchens.</p> <p>Is there anyone at the school I can go to if I have questions about my rights?</p> <p>Every school district must designate a “homeless liaison”. The McKinney-Vento Act requires homeless liaisons to ensure that you are identified as homeless in order to offer appropriate services to you or your family. If you would like to meet with your district’s homeless liaison, any teacher or administrator can point you in the right direction.</p>
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<p><i>For more information on your rights and other frequently asked questions, see The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations, National Association for the Education of Homeless Youth (November 2009); Know Your Rights - A Guide for Public School Students in Washington, American Civil Liberties Union of Washington (June 2007).</i></p>	<h3>What can the homeless liaison do for me?</h3> <p>Liaisons can help you with, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolling in school immediately, even if you do not have the papers the school would normally need;• Getting immunizations, immunization records, or other medical records;• Providing transportation options to get you to/from school;• Providing information about available school programs and services;• Settling disagreements between you and the school;• Referring you to any needed medical, dental, or mental health services; and• Making sure you have the chance to do well in school. <h3>What if English is not my first language?</h3> <p>Schools must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide appropriate language instruction to you if English is not your primary language and your English language skills impair your learning ability;• Identify you shortly after enrollment and annually test your progress;• If your participation in a language remediation program puts you behind in other areas of the curriculum (history, math, social studies, etc.), schools must provide appropriate assistance in those areas to ensure your “equal participation” in the school’s regular program; and• Provide information to your parents in their primary language in certain circumstances. <h3>Do I have to go to school?</h3> <p>If you are between the ages of 8 and 18, you must go to public school unless you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend an approved private school;• Are home schooled;• Attend a certified education center devoted to teaching basic academic skills; or• Are excused by the school superintendent because you are physically or mentally unable to attend school. <p>If you are 16 or older, you may be excused from attending public school if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are regularly and lawfully employed and your parent agrees you should not be required to attend school or you are legally emancipated;• Have already met graduation requirements; or• Have received a “certificate of educational competence” by meeting certain requirements, including passing the GED. <p>You may miss school for a valid excuse, such as an illness. If there is no valid excuse, the school district can bring a truancy action against you and your parents. See “Truancies and School Attendance” section below.</p>
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<p>School Selection</p> <p><i>The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations, National Association for the Education of Homeless Youth (November 2009).</i></p>	<p>Can I stay in the school I was in before I became homeless?</p> <p>Yes. When choosing the school to attend when you are homeless, the choice must be made in your best interest. Generally, changing schools could significantly impede your academic and social progress. Therefore, in determining your best interest, the school district should keep you in your “school of origin”—the school you were attending when you became homeless—except if this is contrary to your wishes or your parent’s or guardian’s wishes.</p> <p>You have the right to remain in your school of origin for the duration of your homelessness, even if that homelessness extends over multiple school years or you move to temporary housing in another school district or even another state. Additionally, if you move into permanent housing in another school district during the school year, you can finish that academic year in your school of origin.</p> <p>Can I attend a different school after I become homeless?</p> <p>Yes. While the McKinney-Vento Act favors staying in your school of origin, school choice must be made based on your best interests. Under the Act, you are entitled to enroll in any public school that other students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.</p> <p>Can I attend a charter school?</p> <p>Yes, if you meet the school’s skills-related criteria. Charter schools must follow the McKinney-Vento Act. If you attempt to enroll in a charter school, the school must enroll you as long as other students living in the same area would be eligible to attend the school. If the charter school has particular, skills-related entrance requirements (e.g., a fine arts charter school with requirements related to artistic ability), you must meet those criteria. However, enrollment deadlines must be waived for you.</p> <p>Can I attend a private school?</p> <p>The McKinney-Vento Act does not apply to private schools. Therefore, private schools are not required to allow you to enroll or continue to attend if you become homeless.</p>
<p>Enrolling in School</p> <p><i>The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations, National Association for the Education of Homeless Youth (November 2009).</i></p>	<p>How do I enroll? How soon can I enroll?</p> <p>If you fit the definition of homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act, you simply need to go to the school and let them know you are homeless and wish to enroll. The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to enroll students experiencing homelessness immediately. The school’s homeless liaison can assist you with any paperwork or issues with enrolling.</p> <p>What information do I need to provide to the school? What if I don’t have the information requested?</p> <p>The school will request prior school records and immunization records. However, the school must still enroll you immediately even if you cannot provide the required documents at the time of enrollment. The school’s homeless liaison can assist you with gathering the required paperwork and documentation after you have enrolled. The school cannot require verification or proof of residency as a condition of enrollment.</p>

<p>Staying in School</p>	<p>What if I haven't attended school for an extended period of time? Can I still enroll?</p> <p>Yes. Having missed a period of schooling does not in itself make attending your school of origin unfeasible. For example, it may be better for you to return to a familiar school, teachers and peers, to make up for lost time, and to reintegrate smoothly into school.</p> <p>How long can I stay in school under the McKinney-Vento Act? If I'm over 18, am I still covered?</p> <p>Generally, you can stay in school under the McKinney-Vento Act until high school graduation or equivalent or until age 21. For special education students, federal law provides the right to access services until age 22.</p> <p>If I'm over 18, can I stay in high school until I graduate, or do I have to get a GED?</p> <p>You do not have to switch to a GED program after you turn 18. Schools should not push you into a GED program if you would rather graduate from high school.</p> <p>Are GED, Online Education, and Alternative Programs covered?</p> <p>Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act also guarantees access to GED, Online Education, and Alternative Programs until age 21. However, it is up to you whether to receive a high school degree or seek a GED instead.</p>
<p>Transportation to School</p>	<p>Does the school need to provide transportation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. Transportation must be provided to your school of origin upon request, regardless of whether the school district provides transportation for other students or in other circumstances. • For transportation to a school other than your school of origin, school districts must provide transportation comparable to that provided to students who are not homeless. • School districts must eliminate barriers to school enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness. If you are unable to attend school without transportation, the school district must eliminate lack of transportation as a barrier to you attending school. For example, if you live by an extremely busy intersection or in a very dangerous neighborhood, the district must provide you with transportation. <p>Does the school have to provide "door-to-door" transportation?</p> <p>Generally, no, unless that is the only appropriate arrangement for you. However, if for example, you live by a dangerous intersection, and crossing that intersection would put your safety at risk, door-to-door transportation may be appropriate.</p> <p>Does public transportation count?</p> <p>Yes, if public transportation is appropriate for the particular student. But, if using public transportation is dangerous (e.g., you are very young), or public transportation requires an unreasonable length of time, another more appropriate mode of transportation may be required.</p>

<p>Extra-Curricular Activities</p>	<p>How far can I live from my school and still be entitled to transportation?</p> <p>There are no specific limits; transportation services depend on individual determinations. The McKinney-Vento Act requires school districts to provide transportation to your school of origin. If the commute is lengthy, that can weigh against the school of origin being in your best interest. However, if you live in a rural community where lengthy commutes are normal, the need for transportation should be evaluated in that context.</p> <p>If I provide my own transportation, will the school reimburse me for transportation costs?</p> <p>Generally, yes. School districts may provide gas vouchers or mileage reimbursement if providing your own transportation is a cost-effective means of meeting the school district's transportation obligations.</p> <p>Can I participate in extra-curricular activities?</p> <p>Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act requires states and school districts to eliminate barriers to school enrollment and retention for you. Enrollment is defined as attending school and participating fully in school activities. Sports and other extra-curricular activities are school activities.</p> <p>I cannot afford to pay fees for extra-curricular activities. Can I still participate?</p> <p>Yes. If fees for extra-curricular activities are a barrier to your full participation, those fees should be waived or paid with donations or district funds. The district's homeless liaison should help you figure out how to get fees waived.</p> <p>Can I play sports even if I don't meet the residency requirements?</p> <p>Many courts have determined that school athletic associations are considered to be part of the state. Therefore, athletic associations must comply with the McKinney-Vento Act's requirements by exempting you from sports participation rules that you cannot meet due to your homelessness and mobility, such as attendance rules. Some athletic associations have changed their written policies to facilitate compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act.</p>
<p>Financial Support</p>	<p>Can I receive help with school and activity fees?</p> <p>Yes. If fees are a barrier to your full participation, those fees should be waived or paid with donations or district funds.</p> <p>Can I receive free meals?</p> <p>Yes. Under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, if you are identified as homeless by the district's homeless liaison, you are automatically eligible for free school meals.</p>
<p>Issues Facing Teen Parents</p>	<p>I'm a homeless teen parent. Can I still send my child to preschool?</p> <p>Yes. Equal access to all school services for children or youth experiencing homelessness specifically includes access to preschool education programs administered by the state.</p>

<p>Discipline And Disability-Related Behavioral Issues</p>	<p>time of the meeting, the location, the purpose of the meeting, and who will be attending. If you want to attend the meeting but are unavailable at that time, you should contact the school to schedule another time. You have the right to an interpreter at IEP meetings.</p> <p>What does an IEP include?</p> <p>The IEP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of your current performance;• Annual educational goals;• A statement of how your progress will be measured and when the school will report on your progress;• Descriptions of the services you will receive in the general education and special education classrooms, and of related services, such as therapy and transportation;• Descriptions of accommodations and devices you will receive, such as a computer or readings in large print;• Descriptions of any accommodations that you will have for taking tests or alternate assessments;• The location, frequency, and start and end date of services; and• If you are an older student, a description of transition services. <p>When is an IEP reviewed?</p> <p>The IEP will be reviewed at least once a year. It can be reviewed more frequently upon request of an IEP team member.</p> <p>Can I be disciplined for behavior related to my disabilities?</p> <p>Generally, no. As a part of your right to be free from disability discrimination, you have the right not to be disciplined for behavior related to your disabilities. However, some conditions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within 10 days of imposing or proposing exclusion for more than 10 school days, relevant members of the IEP team must meet and determine whether your misconduct was related to your disability. This determination is called a “manifestation determination.” The 10 school days may be the result of one disciplinary action or the result of several disciplinary actions if the total time out of school equals 10 days or more.• If the IEP team decides that your misconduct was related to your disability, then you may not be disciplined unless certain emergency circumstances exist and you are removed to an interim alternative educational setting for no more than 45 days.• If the misconduct was NOT a result of your disability, the school may discipline you in the same manner as it would a general education student so long as educational services are provided in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) such as tutoring at a public library or your home or classes at an alternative school during the period of exclusion.
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<p>Due Process Hearings</p>	<p>Can I be completely removed from school for misconduct either related or unrelated to my disabilities?</p> <p>Schools can discipline you for misconduct unrelated to your disability and, in some circumstances, even for conduct that may be related to your disability. However, there are major restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools may not completely deny you educational services for more than 10 school days in a school year.• You can be sent to an IAES only under certain circumstances:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Schools can require you to attend.○ You can also be removed to an IAES for up to 45 school days if a hearing officer determines that maintaining your current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to you or others.○ If your behavior is determined not to be a result of your disability, you can be disciplined in the same manner as general education students, but you must be provided with services in an IAES during the period of exclusion. <p>NOTE: The IAES must be determined by the IEP team and must allow you to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress towards meeting the IEP goals.</p> <p>What if the IEP team fails to develop or modify a behavior plan for me after my determination meeting?</p> <p>If the school doesn't develop or modify a behavior plan and later tries to suspend or expel you, you may have a defense to the suspension or expulsion.</p> <p>What if I disagree with the IEP team's determination regarding whether my behavior was a manifestation of my disability and/or placement in an IAES?</p> <p>If you disagree with the IEP team's determinations, you or your parent or guardian may request a due process hearing. In these situations, you or your parent may wish to consult with an attorney about the due process hearing procedures.</p> <p>What is a special education due process hearing?</p> <p>If you or your parents disagree with a special education decision made by the school, they can request a due process hearing. A due process hearing is an administrative proceeding similar to a trial, in which a hearing officer makes a decision in favor of your parent or the school district. Both the parents and the school district can give the hearing officer documents to review, present witnesses, and cross-examine the other side's witnesses. If you don't want to go through the due process procedures you can instead file a complaint with the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction ("OSPI"), the state agency that oversees public school education in Washington, regarding the special education decision you disagree with. Alternatively, if you think you have been discriminated against because of your disability, you can file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the US Department of Education in Seattle. There is also an ombudsman in the Washington Governor's Office who handles special education complaints. Information about these procedures can be found on-line.</p>
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<p>Special Considerations For Homeless Youth With Special Education Needs</p>	<p>For what reasons can I request a special education due process hearing?</p> <p>You and your parents have a right to request a due process hearing about whether you are eligible for special education, your evaluation, details of your IEP, the delivery of special education services to you, and your placement.</p> <p>How do I request a special education due process hearing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You or your parents can request a due process hearing by filling out a request form from your school district's office, and delivering the form to the OSPI and the school district.• You or your parents can also write a letter requesting a due process hearing. The letter should include the name of your school and school district, your address, a description of the problem, and a proposed solution to the problem if you know one. You should deliver the letter to the OSPI and the school district.• You or your parents should ask the school district if they have rules about requesting a due process hearing. <p>When will the hearing occur?</p> <p>The hearing officer must issue a decision within 45 days of receiving a request for a hearing. The hearing will occur at a time and place that are convenient for you and your parents.</p> <p>What services will I receive between the time I request a special education due process hearing and the time the hearing officer makes a decision?</p> <p>You will continue to receive the same services between the time you request a hearing and the time of a decision. Your parent and the school district can agree that you will receive different services during this time.</p> <p>Do special education laws apply to me if I am homeless?</p> <p>Yes. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") contains several provisions specific to children in homeless situations. IDEA defines homeless children to include any children or youth considered homeless under McKinney-Vento. It includes a specific requirement that states ensure that children with disabilities experiencing homelessness are identified, located and evaluated.</p> <p>If I am a homeless, special education student, do I have the right to remain in my school of origin?</p> <p>Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act applies to students receiving special education services the same way it applies to other students. In addition, any state receiving IDEA funds must ensure that the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act are met for all children with disabilities in homeless situations in the state. Therefore, you must remain in your school of origin, unless it is not feasible or against your parent's/guardian's wishes. Frequently, the school of origin is preferred because changing schools and educational programs can be particularly difficult for students with special needs. Of course, if the distance is</p>
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such that the commute would be more detrimental than changing schools would be, then you may have to change schools.

There are additional legal requirements under IDEA that might come into play. However, IDEA does not supersede McKinney-Vento; you retain all McKinney-Vento rights.

If I am a special education student and I become homeless and elect to remain in my school of origin, who pays for the transportation?

School districts must provide transportation to the school of origin upon request. This is true regardless of the services you receive, including special education and related services. Transportation can be included as a related service in your IEP, when appropriate. If transportation is listed as a related service in your IEP, your transportation should be funded from the special education budget. If transportation is not an appropriate related service, your transportation should be funded in the same manner as that of other students experiencing homelessness.

Must schools immediately enroll me if I am homeless and receiving special education services?

Yes. You must be enrolled immediately in school, including attending classes and participating fully in school activities. In addition, any state receiving funds under IDEA must ensure that the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act are met for all homeless children with disabilities in the state. There are other legal requirements that might come into play. However, IDEA does not supersede the McKinney-Vento Act; you retain all McKinney-Vento rights.

Must schools immediately provide special education services to me if I am homeless and have IEPs from another school district or state?

Yes. If you have a current IEP and change school districts during the school year, the new district must provide you with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) immediately, including services comparable to those described in your previous IEP, in consultation with your parents. While such services are being provided, the district can either adopt the existing IEP or implement a new IEP. If the new school district is in a different state, the district can choose to conduct a new evaluation and develop a new IEP, while services are being provided.

How can a school determine what services to provide me if there are no school records?

The enrolling school must contact the previous school for records. To facilitate FAPE if you change districts during the school year, IDEA specifically requires enrolling schools to promptly obtain your records from the previous school, and previous schools to promptly respond to such records requests. The district's homeless liaison should work with special education staff to ensure that your special needs can be identified and addressed quickly. The district should establish procedures for obtaining your school records promptly. If the records cannot be transmitted immediately, the enrolling school can speak with staff from the previous school to get basic information about you. Former teachers, counselors and administrators should be able to provide this information. Even if records are delayed, you must be enrolled in school and provided FAPE immediately.

If I change school districts while special education evaluations are underway, must the new school district continue the evaluation process?

Yes. Under IDEA, school districts must complete initial evaluations within 60 days of your parent’s request, or within time frames established by the state. These time limits apply to students who change school districts during the evaluation process, so the new school district cannot “restart the clock” when you enroll. The only procedure to extend the time frame is if the new district is making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of evaluations, and your parent and the school agree to a specific time when the evaluation will be completed. In addition, IDEA specifically requires schools to ensure that assessments of children who change districts during the school year are coordinated with prior schools as necessary and as quickly as possible, to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations. To expedite evaluations, the new school should immediately get all the evaluations and other paperwork completed on you from the old school and consult with the previous school psychologist, counselor and/or teachers about your needs.

If I am unaccompanied and under 18, who signs for special education services?

Under IDEA, the following people can sign for special education services for you:

- A parent or legal guardian;
- An adult acting in the place of a parent and with whom you are living; or
- If consistent with state law, a foster parent.

If the school district cannot identify or locate such an adult, the district must appoint a surrogate parent for you. If you are an unaccompanied youth or a ward of the state, IDEA requires the district to ensure that your rights are protected, including by assigning a surrogate parent. The surrogate parent must be trained in special education procedures and cannot be a DSHS social worker, a school district employee, or other person who might have a conflict of interest. If you have someone in your life who knows about your special education needs and is interested in helping you succeed in school, you may request that the person be appointed as your surrogate parent.

However, because the process of appointing a surrogate parent can take several weeks, school districts should appoint immediate, temporary surrogate parents for you. Temporary surrogate parents can consent for evaluations or sign IEPs so that assessments and services can begin immediately, while a regular surrogate is being appointed. Due to their more limited role, appropriate candidates for temporary surrogates include staff of emergency shelters, transitional shelters, independent living programs, and street outreach programs, as well as the district’s homeless liaisons or other school district staff.

If my poor academic performance may be attributable to my homelessness, should I still be evaluated for special education?

Yes. If you are experiencing homelessness, you may miss school, have poor physical health, and struggle with behavior issues related to the stress of losing your housing. The IDEA cautions that you should not be found eligible for special education if your difficulties are caused by lack of instruction or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. At the same time, IDEA places clear obligations on school districts to conduct special education evaluations upon your

	<p>parent’s request. Only through conducting evaluations and analyzing the results will a school district be able to determine if you have a disability requiring special education and related services or are merely reacting to the realities of homelessness. Therefore, IDEA requires schools to administer assessments and other evaluation measures. The law also requires schools to consider environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage as part of the evaluation. These considerations are part of the evaluation and eligibility determination process; they do not substitute for the process or eliminate a school district’s responsibilities to engage in the process.</p> <p>In many cases, it will be appropriate for the school to put interventions and services in place to support your achievement and avoid unnecessary special education services. However, the U.S. Department of Education has emphasized that such interventions can be provided while an evaluation is in progress, rather than delaying the evaluation process.</p>
EDUCATION	Truancies And School Attendance
<p>Attendance Requirements and Unexcused Absences</p>	<p>Can I be exempted from the mandatory attendance requirement?</p> <p>You may miss school for a valid excuse, such as an illness. However, if the absence is unexcused, the school district can bring a truancy action against you and your parents.</p> <p>Additionally, if you are 16 years old and older and meet certain requirements, you may receive an exemption from the mandatory attendance requirement, as addressed earlier.</p> <p>What is an “unexcused absence”?</p> <p>An “unexcused absence” means you have failed to attend the majority of hours or periods in an average school day or have failed to comply with a more restrictive school district policy; and you have failed to meet the school district’s policy for excused absences.</p> <p>What will the school do if I have unexcused absences?</p> <p>If you have as few as 5 unexcused absences in a month, the school district can bring a truancy action against you and your parents. However, before the school district can bring a truancy action, it first must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify your parents of your unexcused absences; • Schedule a conference with your parents after unexcused absences; and • Take steps necessary to eliminate or reduce your absences. <p>Can I be suspended or expelled for a certain number of unexcused absences?</p> <p>No. You may be disciplined, but you cannot be suspended or expelled for unexcused absences unless the school has taken several prior steps to address the absences. Schools must first impose other discipline, and must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given your parent notice in writing or by other necessary means of your absences in your primary language;

<p>Truancy Proceedings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled a conference with your parent, at a time and place reasonably convenient to your parents and school, to discuss the absences and determine whether you should be evaluated for special education or another special program; and • Taken appropriate steps to reduce or eliminate your absences. <p>If you learn that you have been threatened with a disciplinary exclusion for missing school, consider negotiating with the school district representative to avoid any sanction that will result in the loss of additional class-time. School district representatives may be open to alternatives, particularly if your attendance has improved or you are working on a plan to catch up in school.</p> <p>When can the school bring a truancy action against me?</p> <p>Schools are directed to file a <i>truancy petition</i> if you reach 7 unexcused absences in a month or 10 unexcused absences in a school year.</p> <p>Schools <i>may</i> file a truancy petition upon 5 unexcused absences in a month. After 5 unexcused absences in a month, the school must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter into an agreement with you and your parent establishing student attendance requirements; • Refer you to a community truancy board, if available; or • File a truancy petition. <p>Whether the school district has tried to address the reasons why you have missed school is an important issue that the school district must prove in a truancy proceeding. For example, if you have missed school because you are homeless, or because you have been bullied by other students or not provided with accommodations or special education services, you should point that out to the judge.</p> <p>What must a truancy petition contain?</p> <p>The petition must address three things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have unexcused absences during the school year; • Actions taken by the school district have not been successful in substantially reducing your absences from school; and • Court intervention and supervision are necessary to assist the school district or parent to reduce your absences from school. <p>The petition must also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facts supporting each of the three required items listed above; • A request for relief; • Your name, date of birth, school, address, gender, race and ethnicity; • The names and addresses of your parents; • Whether you and your parents are fluent in English; and • Whether there is an existing individualized education program.
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Are hearings on truancy petitions required?

A hearing on the petition should be scheduled by a court, unless:

- The court refers you to a community truancy board; or
- Other actions by the court would substantially reduce your unexcused absences.

There is no requirement regarding when the hearing must occur.

It is important to appear at all court hearings related to the truancy. At these hearings you will be allowed to tell your side of the story and to challenge the school district's allegations.

What must the school district prove at the initial truancy hearing?

The school district bears the burden of proof at the initial hearing. It must prove by a "preponderance of the evidence," that:

- You have unexcused absences during the school year;
- Actions taken by the school district have not been successful in substantially reducing your absences from school; and
- Court intervention and supervision are necessary to assist the school district or parent to reduce your absences from school.

What can the court do in a truancy action?

If the court finds that you haven't properly attended school, it may order you to attend school and will monitor your attendance. If you fail to follow the court's order, you may be found in contempt (found to have violated the order). In cases of contempt, the court could:

- Fine you \$25 per day;
- Order you to perform community service; or
- Sentence you to secure detention in the juvenile jail for up to 7 days at a time.

Do I have a right to an attorney?

At the factual hearing in a truancy case, neither you nor your parent has the right to an attorney, but you have a right to an attorney if you are charged with contempt. To contact a free attorney, call your local juvenile court.

What if I cannot communicate with the school in English?

Notices to your parents must be given in their language, if practical. Your parents may have a friend or family member call the school to request an oral translation. Your parents should also ask for an interpreter to accompany you to any meetings. You also have a right to an interpreter at any court hearings. It is not your responsibility to find or pay for the interpreter.

<p>Assistance with Truancy and Attendance Issues</p>	<p>What if I stopped attending school on account of intimidation, harassment, or discrimination?</p> <p>You may stop attending school because you feel intimidated, harassed or discriminated against. Schools are obligated to take reasonable steps to protect you from discrimination, harassment or bullying by other students or by school staff. State and federal laws prohibit schools from discriminating against students on the basis of national origin, race, religion, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration, or a physical, mental or sensory handicap.</p> <p>Consider asking for a continuance or dismissal of an initial petition or contempt motion to allow time for you to negotiate with the school to arrange for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An appropriate investigation and intervention with the student or staff person who is harassing you; or• The transfer of you or the harasser to another class. <p>If you have already complained to the school about harassment and the problem persists, consider referring the issue to an agency, organization or attorney that handles discrimination claims.</p> <p>What if I stopped attending school due to a language barrier?</p> <p>You may stop attending school if you have a difficult time learning and communicating because your native language is not English.</p> <p>Does my school have a responsibility to address my disability or special education needs before filing a truancy petition?</p> <p>If your absences are related to a mental, physical or emotional impairment that interferes with your ability to learn, your district has a responsibility to address your disability needs through accommodations and special education services. A faulty or poorly implemented plan could contribute to your missing school. Putting a good plan in place might eliminate the reasons for your non-attendance.</p> <p>Federal and state laws require school districts to provide appropriate special educational services to you. Two federal laws – the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (the “IDEA”), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (“Section 504”) – protect your rights and afford procedures for enforcing those rights. The IDEA requirements have been adopted in Washington through statute and regulations. You may receive accommodations under either Section 504 or the IDEA, or both.</p> <p>Is the school required to help me attend school?</p> <p>The law requires that before bringing a truancy action, the school must take the necessary steps to eliminate or reduce your absences. This means the school must find out why you aren't coming to school and must try to find a solution.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> If you need special education because of a disability, the school district must provide appropriate special education and other services such as counseling, therapy and medical services (for diagnosis or evaluation).</p> <p><u>Example:</u> If you are afraid to attend school because another child is threatening, harassing, or bullying you, the school district must take steps to stop the harassment, such as transferring you to another school.</p>
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Special Considerations for Homeless Youth and Children in Foster Care	<p>If you aren't going to school, it is important to contact the school principal or a teacher to request help with your attendance. If you do nothing, the school may file a truancy action in court. If your parents ask the school for help with attendance problems, but the school won't provide the help needed, your parents can file a truancy action.</p> <p>Who can I call to get help?</p> <p>If you have a truancy problem or if you have any questions, call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outside King County: CLEAR intake line: (888) 201-1014 (weekdays 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.).• In King County: Call 211 for information and for a referral to an appropriate legal services provider Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 6:00 pm. You may also call (206) 461-3200, or the toll-free number, which may be useful when calling from a pay phone, (877) 211-WASH (9274).• Anywhere: Call TeamChild: (206) 322-2444. <p>My school has a zero-tolerance rule for school absences. How do these rules apply to me if I am homeless?</p> <p>The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to identify and remove all barriers to enrollment and retention in school for you. Zero-tolerance rules for absenteeism can be such barriers, particularly when they result in your class failures, exclusion from school, or court involvement. Frequently, you may miss school due to your living situations. Absences caused by homelessness must not be counted against you, as this would create a barrier to your enrollment and retention in school.</p> <p>If I am homeless, does my school have a duty to assist me to access education before filing a truancy petition?</p> <p>Yes. The school district's homeless liaison, can help you access education, among other things.</p> <p>I am in foster care. Do child welfare agencies have responsibilities for my school enrollment, attendance, and stability?</p> <p>Yes. For more information on your rights as a foster child, see the section on Basic Rights, above.</p>
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Alternative Ways to Learn

What other alternatives for education are available?

- **General Education Development (GED) Test**

The GED is a set of tests designed to measure skills and knowledge normally gained in four years of high school. Completion of a GED after age 16 exempts you from the state's compulsory education laws. Passing the GED is not exactly the same as getting a high school diploma, and some employers, colleges, and universities will not admit applicants unless they have a high school diploma. Other colleges and employers treat a GED the same as a diploma.

If you are considering taking the GED, find out whether it will be accepted by the kind of employers or post-secondary schools in which you're interested. If you are under 21, you have the option of returning to school to seek a diploma after earning a GED.

RCW 28A.305.190; WAC 131-48-100

- **Alternative high school programs**

An alternative high school program may help accommodate your needs. Alternatives include evening classes, online high school, child care programs, or abbreviated credit requirements for graduation.

RCW 28A.225.020

- **Approved private schools**

An approved private school is a nonpublic school which has been approved by the state board of education and that conducts a program with kindergarten and at least grade one, or a program consisting of any or all of grades one through twelve.

RCW 28A.195.010; WAC 180-90-112

- **Home-based instruction/home**

Washington law gives your parent or guardian the option to teach you at home. The laws relating to home schooling are meant to be flexible, but there are some minimum requirements, including:

- home schooling must cover all the basic skills taught in public school;
- your parent or guardian must be supervised by a person with a teaching certificate, unless your parent or guardian has received some college education, has taken a course in how to conduct home schooling, or has been deemed qualified by the local school superintendent;
- you must either take a standardized achievement test or have a certified person provide a written assessment of your academic progress each year; and
- if you are not making reasonable progress, your parent or guardian must make a good faith effort to remedy any deficiency.

RCW 28A.225.010; RCW 28A.200.010

- **Education centers**

An education center is a private school designated to specifically serve public school drop-outs ages 12 to 20 which:

- is devoted to the teaching of basic academic skills, including specific attention to improvement of student motivation for achieving, and employment orientation;

<p>Information for Native Americans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ operates on a clinical, client-centered basis; and ○ conducts courses of instruction by professionally trained personnel certificated by the Washington professional educator standards board. <p><u>RCW 28A.205.010</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job Corps <p>Job Corps is a federal program that provides free vocational and educational services for students in a residential setting. If you are at least 16 years of age and qualify as low income, you may be eligible for Job Corps. Each Job Corps site offers different career opportunities, and provides instruction for students to work toward their high school diploma or GED.</p> <p>If I enroll in any of these alternatives, what happens to the truancy petition?</p> <p>If you are actively enrolled in an alternative program, you may be able to negotiate dismissal of the truancy petition or avoid a contempt sanction.</p> <p>I am Native American – are there any other things I should know?</p> <p>If you are Native American, you may be able to access resources through the school or the Tribe. You may also be subject to truancy proceedings in a Tribal Court as well. You may want to seek dismissal of a case if a truancy case is also pending in Tribal Court or have your case transferred to Tribal Court.</p> <p>School districts serving Native American students may maintain an Indian Education Department and employ either an Indian Education Director or an Indian Education Coordinator. These individuals may be able to connect you with resources available in the school or in the tribal community. Additionally, Tribal governments may operate Education Departments which may provide resources for students, including tutoring, credit retrieval and after-school programs.</p> <p>Applicable Sources/Legislation: <u>What every parent needs to know - Basic Education Rights and Opportunities in Public Schools, which is available at www.governor.wa.gov</u>.</p>
<p>EDUCATION</p>	<p>SCHOOL DISCIPLINE - SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION</p>
<p>Student's Rights and Responsibilities</p>	<p>What are my basic rights as a student?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You may not be denied equal educational opportunity or be discriminated against because of your national origin, race, religion, economic status, sex, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration, or a physical, mental or sensory handicap. ● You have the constitutional right to freedom of speech and press, to peaceably assemble, to petition the government and its representatives, to the free exercise of religion, and to have your school free from sectarian control or influence, with reasonable limitations on the time, place and manner of exercising these rights. ● You possess the constitutional right to be secure from unreasonable search and seizure of your person, papers and belongings. ● You have the right to be free from unlawful interference while attending school.

<p><i>For additional resources, see Parents' Guide to Public School Discipline in Washington: A Project of the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington Foundation (March 2007).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may not be deprived of the right to an equal educational opportunity without due process of law. <p>What are my responsibilities as a student?</p> <p>You have the responsibility to attend school, do your assignments, follow the written rules of the school, and submit to reasonable corrective actions imposed by teachers and school administrators.</p> <p>Can the school discipline me for my behavior?</p> <p>School districts can impose student discipline as authorized by state statutes and administrative rules. However, pursuant to <i>Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)</i>, the Supreme Court noted that <i>students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gate. Even though students are in school they still have constitutional rights such as to free speech and due process.</i></p> <p>What should I do if I get in trouble at school and face being suspended or expelled?</p> <p>First gather information about the incident and what happened. Write it down in your own words. What were you accused of doing? Who were you with? Keep copies of any letters, emails and forms you have been sent from the school as well as letters or correspondence (and emails) you send to the school. Remember: anything you say, put on-line or text can be used against you. If you think you may be accused of a crime, do not talk with anyone about the incident or conduct until you have spoken with an attorney.</p> <p>How can I know if I broke any rules at my school?</p> <p>Ask for a copy of the written rule(s) you have allegedly broken. You should only be punished if you have violated a school or district rule. Also, you should be given access to school rules and other information in a student handbook, which is given out at the beginning of each school year. In the event you did not get a handbook, ask for one. If there is a problem getting a copy of the school policies, contact your district office and let them know you are making a request under Washington's Public Records Act. A response is required within 5 days of your request. You should either receive the records/documents you have requested or an explanation as to why it is taking longer. If English is not your primary language, ask for a copy of the student handbook and policies written in your own language. You may also ask the principal or district office for a written or spoken translation, if needed.</p> <p>What if the school has a "zero-tolerance policy" related to my behavior?</p> <p>Some districts have "Zero-Tolerance Policies" for many offenses, including bringing firearms or drugs to school. These policies establish standard punishments regardless of individual circumstances.</p> <p>Under Washington state law, school officials must be able to consider each case and punishment may be reduced.</p>
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Disciplinary Actions and Due Process

Key terms relating to disciplinary actions

- **Discipline:** Corrective action or punishment other than suspension or expulsion. This could include removal from class, detention, loss of privileges, restriction from participating in non-educational activities, etc.
- **Detention:** This may include having the student remain after school, staying in for lunch or recess, or coming in on a Saturday.
- **Suspension:** The student is restricted from attending school for a prescribed amount of time. A “short-term suspension” is less than 10 consecutive school days. A “long-term suspension” is more than 10 consecutive school days.
- **Expulsion:** The student is restricted from attending school or participating in any portion of a school program (such as an activity or class), for an indefinite amount of time. This action is essentially permanent but it can be reversed or amended by a school official or the school board.
- **Emergency Expulsions and Emergency Removals:** Immediate removal will take place due to a threat or danger to others by the student or a significant disruption of the educational process.

For what reasons can I be suspended or expelled?

You should only be punished if you have violated the rules. Insist that you be provided, in writing, a clear statement about what rule(s) were violated and what type of punishment will be imposed.

Generally, you should not be suspended or expelled for a first-time offense, unless your actions are determined by the school district to be considered “exceptional misconduct.” This would be outlined in the school handbook or district policies as to what these offenses would be.

You cannot be suspended for unexcused absences unless several prescribed steps have been taken. Written notice must first be provided regarding your unexcused absences. A conference with the school must be scheduled to discuss the absences. If you do not have a parent to attend, try to have a guardian or adult attend with you and take appropriate steps to reduce or eliminate absences.

What can I do to keep up with school if I cannot attend?

If on a short-term suspension, it is best to ask for make-up assignments and tests. For long-term suspension or if you are expelled, look into alternative school programs. Another possibility is to work with the school to arrange continued learning either in a school or community-based program.

Will disciplinary actions hurt me in the long term?

That depends. Expulsion will have the most negative impact as you will miss a considerable amount of time from school. Regardless, no form of discipline should prevent you from completing a grade or subject. When you graduate from high school, the disciplinary records should be destroyed at that time and the records should not be a part of your transcript. Under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, colleges are not entitled to have access to your disciplinary history. These records cannot be released unless a parent or student (18 years old or legally emancipated) authorizes the release. Still, most colleges ask you for records if you were disciplined in high school. If you transfer to one high school to another, the disciplinary records may be sent as well and no

For additional resources, see [Suspension, Expulsion, and Due Process Rules](#), Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (July 2010).

Appeals/Hearings Processes and Requirements	<p>consent is needed. If you go to another district, you cannot be denied enrollment due to the disciplinary records, but your records may be considered if you <i>request</i> to be transferred to a school in the same or different district.</p> <p>What process is due for a short-term suspension?</p> <p>For short-term suspension, state law authorizes an informal due process. This means that you or your parent or guardian may contact the principal or assistant principal for a meeting. This meeting will allow you to understand the issues and alleged violations as well as the punishment and is your opportunity to present your side of the story.</p> <p>What process is due for a long-term suspension?</p> <p>State law requires that a written notice be provided or an opportunity for a hearing must occur before a long-term suspension can take place. A hearing must be requested by you or your parent or guardian within 3 business days from learning of the suspension or the right to a hearing will be waived. A hearing will be scheduled and you and/or your parent/guardian can present evidence at that time. An attorney may also be present at your expense. You have the right to question and cross-examine witnesses from the district. You should request that that school district have its witnesses present at the hearing so you can question them. Also you may present an explanation of the alleged misconduct by presenting your own witnesses, documents or other physical evidence.</p> <p>The person hearing the case cannot be called upon to be a witness. The outcome of the hearing will be determined by the evidence presented at the hearing. A written decision will be provided to you. The suspension may move forward or a lesser corrective action may be imposed</p> <p>What can I do if I don't agree with the punishment or want to appeal the process?</p> <p>There are different actions that can be taken if you do not agree with the punishment that is being imposed depending on the severity of the disciplinary action taken. The grievance and appeal process becomes more formal based on the level of discipline imposed.</p> <p>If there is a disagreement with the proposed action in a disciplinary action other than a suspension or expulsion, you have the right to have an informal conference with the school principal. At this point if the grievance goes unresolved, a written or oral appeal can be submitted to the school superintendent within 2 business days.</p> <p>How do I appeal a short-term suspension?</p> <p>If you do not agree with a decision made that imposes a short-term suspension, you have the right to an informal conference with the principal to resolve the grievance. At this time, the principal may question you, your parent or the employee who imposed the suspension. At this level if the issues are not resolved, a written or oral appeal may be made to the district superintendent within 2 business days. If the issue is still not resolved at this level, a written or oral appeal may be presented to the school board at the next regular scheduled meeting if notice is given within 2 business days. The suspension may still be imposed during the appeal process unless the principal delays the suspension during this time.</p>
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<p><i>For additional resources, see Suspension, Expulsion, and Due Process Rules, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (July 2010).</i></p>	<p>How do I appeal a long-term suspension or expulsion?</p> <p>The process for an appeal in a long-term suspension or expulsion decision is more formal. In the circumstance of a disagreement with the decision of a hearing officer, you or your parent or guardian has 3 business days to file a written request for appeal after receiving the decision. The appeal can be submitted to the school board or to a school district disciplinary appeals counsel (if one has been established).</p> <p>The school board or appeals counsel must then schedule a meeting within 10 business days. During this time, the suspension or expulsion may still continue forward while the appeal process proceeds. A board-level hearing decision may also be appealed to superior court if you (or your parent/guardian) do not agree with a decision at this level. An appeal must be made within 30 days to superior court.</p> <p>Is the due process for emergency expulsion and appeals different than for suspension?</p> <p>Yes. This process requires stricter timelines and notices must be delivered or mailed by certified mail within 24 hours of the expulsion. If an expulsion occurs, written notice must be given immediately and it will include information regarding the right to a hearing. In addition, reasonable attempts to contact you or your parent or guardian by phone must also be made if the notice is sent by mail. At this point, you or your parent/guardian has 10 business days to request a hearing or the hearing will be waived and the expulsion will be continued without a hearing. The emergency expulsion will continue through the hearing process, unlike a suspension. This may be rescinded or modified by the district superintendent. The decision to continue the expulsion or not must be made within 1 day of the hearing. Notice will be sent by certified mail to you or your parent/guardian or attorney.</p>
<p>EDUCATION</p>	<p>HIGHER EDUCATION</p>
<p>Attending College</p>	<p>If I am an unaccompanied homeless youth and receive no financial support from my parents, can I still go to college and receive financial aid?</p> <p>Yes. Upon establishing independent status, you can work with the admissions and financial aid offices at the college you choose to attend to determine what documentation you will need to obtain. You may need correspondence and letters from your current school district’s homeless liaison, counselors, social workers, or other service providers in your community to assist with this process. They can provide information about your academic status, your goals, and your personal situation to assist in getting admitted to college and receiving financial aid.</p> <p>If I am not in a stable home situation, what mailing address do I use for correspondence on college applications and aid information?</p> <p>Use an address that you can access and is reliable, such as your school, a family member, or an adult whom you trust.</p>

<p>Applying for Financial Aid</p> <p><i>For additional information on applying for financial aid and tips for completing FAFSA, please see:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>"FAFSA Tips for Unaccompanied Youth Without Stable Housing" and related publications</u>• <u>"Making Student Status Determinations for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Eligibility Tool for Financial Aid Administrators" and related publications</u>• <u>"The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid"</u>• <u>Federal Student Aid website</u>	<p>What do I need to file to receive financial aid to attend college?</p> <p>You will need to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is necessary to secure loans and financial aid for college. FAFSA generally requires information regarding your parents' or legal guardians' income to determine your need level.</p> <p>However, if you are an independent student, you may apply for federal aid using FAFSA without needing to include parent or legal guardian information. Your high school counselor and homeless liaison will be able to assist in making the independent student determination.</p> <p>What if I have been living in a shelter or transitional housing? Am I considered an independent student?</p> <p>If you do not have independent student status, contact your high school counselor or the homeless liaison or the National Center for Homeless Education at (800) 308-2145. You will need this determination to complete the FAFSA.</p> <p>What if I have been living with a family member or friend who is supporting me? How do I complete FAFSA questions about guardianship?</p> <p>Based on federal guidance, if you cannot obtain verification from your school as to your homeless status, you may contact a financial aid office to ask for an independent status determination. You may need to provide documentation, such as a letter from friends or family with whom you have been staying, an employer, counselor, church, etc. Otherwise, you will need to interview with a financial aid administrator to establish your status.</p>
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VIII. EMPLOYMENT LAW: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EMPLOYEE IN WASHINGTON STATE

<p>How do I get hired? What are my rights?</p>	<p>How old do I have to be? Generally, you must be at least 14 years old to work in non-agricultural or agricultural jobs. However, 12 and 13 year-old children may work during non-school months (June 1 - Labor Day) hand-harvesting berries, bulbs, cucumbers and spinach.</p> <p>What documentation do I need? You must present proof of age to get a job. A copy of one of the following documents is required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birth certificate• Driver's license• Baptismal record• Notarized statement from a parent or legal guardian (i.e., a document carrying authenticated signature(s) of the person(s) authorized or required to sign it, and the signature of a notary public witnessing the signature(s), accompanied by an impression of his or her official notary seal.) <p>You must also obtain a parent/school authorization form. The parent/school authorization form must be completed by the employer, signed by your parent or guardian and by a school representative if you will be working during the school year.</p> <p>What can I be asked in a job application or during an interview? An employer is not allowed to ask you questions that might show a bias or discriminate against you based on your age, race, national origin, sex, religion or disability. In some places in Washington, employers cannot legally ask you about your political affiliation or your sexual orientation.</p> <p>For example, an employer may ask you whether you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can meet the work schedule or if you have other commitments that might keep you from coming to work.• Can perform the functions of the job with or without accommodation.• Can speak a foreign language.

<p>What rights do I have after I am hired?</p>	<p>Can I be required to take a drug test?</p> <p>Yes. Employers have the right to drug test their employees. However, drug tests may not be used in a discriminatory way. For example, it would be against the law if only women or people with physical disabilities were given a drug test.</p> <p>Does the employer need a good reason to fire me?</p> <p>Unless your employment is based on some sort of agreement (e.g., a written contract between you and your employer or a union contract) for a fixed period of time, then your employment may be terminated at the will of your employer, at any time and for any reason that is not against the law. Likewise, you are free to quit at any time. This is called "at-will" employment; most people work in an at-will employment relationship.</p> <p>If you are fired from a job, you have the right to receive a statement from your employer listing the reasons why you were fired. Your employer must provide this statement to you within 10 working days of your request. Common reasons for firing include: tardiness, leaving work without notifying anyone, absences, lack of courtesy to fellow employees and the public, failure to follow health and safety rules, and inaccurate information on the employment application.</p> <p>What hours can I work?</p> <p>The hours you may work depends upon your age and whether you are working during school weeks or non-school weeks.</p> <p>Minors in Washington are permitted to work the following hours and schedules:</p> <p><u>During the School Year for 16 and 17 year-olds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum of 4 hours a day (Monday-Thursday)• Maximum of 8 hours a day (Friday-Sunday)• Maximum of 20 hours per week• Maximum of 6 days per week• The earliest you can start work is 7 a.m.• The latest you can end work on Sunday-Thursday is 10 p.m.• The latest you can end work on Friday and Saturday is Midnight. <p><u>During the Non-School Year for 16 and 17 year-olds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum of 8 hours a day• Maximum of 48 hours per week• Maximum of 6 days per week• The earliest you can start work is 5 a.m.• The latest you can end work is Midnight. <p><u>During the School Year for 14 and 15 year-olds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum of 3 hours per day (Monday-Thursday)• Maximum of 8 hours per day (Friday-Sunday)• Maximum of 16 hours per week• Maximum of 6 days per week
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- The earliest you can start work is 7 a.m.
- The latest you can end work on Sunday-Thursday is 7 p.m.
- The latest you can end work on Friday and Saturday is 9 p.m.

During Non-School Year for 14 and 15 year-olds:

- Maximum of 8 hours a day
- Maximum of 40 hours per week
- Maximum of 6 days per week
- The earliest you can start work is 7 a.m.
- The latest you can end work is 9 p.m.

Can I work longer hours or at different times?

Yes. Your employer may apply for a variance from the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries. Your employer will have to show that this variance will not be harmful to your health, safety and welfare.

Are there jobs I am not allowed to do?

Yes. Certain activities have been proven to be hazardous for young workers. Therefore, Washington provides that all minors under 18 years old are prohibited from doing the following work in any industry:

Prohibited Duties Common to Restaurants, Delis and Grocery Stores:

- Operating meat slicers or powered bakery equipment such as a Hobart mixer.
- Driving motor vehicles to make deliveries on a regular basis, such as pizza delivery. (No driving on public roads for workers age 16 or under.)
- Driving a forklift.
- Working at heights more than 10 feet off the ground or floor level.
- Loading, operating or unloading paper balers and compactors.
- Working in freezers, meat coolers and preparing meats for sale.
- Slaughtering, meat packing or food processing.
- Working alone past 8 p.m. without supervision by someone 18 years or older who is on the premises at all times.

Prohibited Duties Common to Construction-Related Activities:

- Roofing – all work on or around a roof.
- Working at heights more than 10 feet off the ground or floor level.
- Wrecking and demolition.
- Operating elevators, hoists and cranes.
- Flagging (e.g., directing traffic for a road-construction crew).
- Trenching or excavating.
- Working in or about boilers or in engine rooms.
- Operating power-driven woodworking machines.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working in or about plants or establishments manufacturing or storing explosives or articles containing explosive components.• Mining. <p><u>Other Prohibited Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17 year-olds may drive only under very limited circumstances.• Firefighting.• Logging and sawmill work.• Selling candy, flowers, or other items to motorists on a public roadway.• Manufacturing brick, tile and similar products.• Working in a job requiring the use of respiratory protection or hearing protection.• Working in saunas or massage parlors.• Working as a nurses' aid or assistant, unless the minor is in a state-certified training program.• Working in a job with possible exposure to bodily fluids, or radioactive or hazardous substances. <p><u>Additional Prohibited Duties for Minors Under Age 16:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• House-to-house sales.• Cooking and baking.• Operating or cleaning meat slicers.• Occupations involving operating, repairing, oiling, cleaning, adjusting, or setting up any power-driven machinery.• Construction.• Manufacturing.• Processing operations.• Public messenger.• Staffing at amusement parks.• Loading or unloading trucks.• Working in transportation, warehouse, storage and working around conveyors.• Mounting ladders and scaffolds, including window washing.• Maintenance and repair in gas stations. <p>The above only highlights certain prohibited activities. For further details, refer to Washington Administrative Code § 296-125-030.</p>
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What is the minimum wage?

In 2012, the minimum wage for 16 and 17 year-olds was the same as adults—\$9.04 per hour. For minors under 16, the current minimum wage is \$7.68 per hour (i.e., 85% of the state minimum wage).

Minimum wages apply to all workers even if you are paid for piece work (amount of windows washed, floors cleaned, etc.). Tips you may receive are not part of the minimum wage.

How often will I get paid?

You must be paid at least once a month. How often you will get paid depends on the business' regularly established payday. For example, many businesses have regularly established paydays that occur on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Can my employer require me to sign up for direct deposit of my pay?

Yes, as long as there is no cost to you.

Does my employer have to give me a raise from time to time?

No, unless you are paid minimum wage. By law, Washington's minimum wage must be adjusted for inflation each January 1.

What can my employer take out of my paycheck?

Allowed While Employed or From Final Paycheck:

The following deductions are allowed when you are still employed, on payday or when you have voluntarily quit or been discharged.

- Required state and federal taxes.
- Any deduction that is to your benefit and that you have agreed upon in advance.
- Specific medical care expenses the employer paid on your behalf. (This does not refer to or include deductions for health insurance coverage and similar coverage.)

Allowed from Final Paycheck Only When There is an Oral or Written Agreement Between Employee and Employer:

- Cash shortage in the till, only if employer has established policies regarding cash acceptance, and if the worker has counted money in the till before and after shift and has sole access to the till during his or her shift.
- Breakage, loss, or damage of equipment if the employer can show it was caused by the employee's dishonest or willful act.
- "Bad checks" (NSF) or credit card purchases accepted by the employee, if the employer has established check and credit card acceptance policies before the event.
- Worker theft, only if the employer filed a police report and is able to show that the employee's act was dishonest or willful.

- Other agreements made orally or in writing between the employee and employer at the time of termination, if agreements were made for employee's benefit.

For more information, you should refer to the [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries website](#).

Does my employer have to give me benefits such as vacation, paid holidays, and sick leave?

No. An employer is not required to give workers paid holiday, vacation, sick or bereavement leave.

Paid leave for holidays, vacation, sickness or bereavement following the death of a close family member are considered "benefits" that may be paid by the business under a policy, written agreement, personal contract, oral agreement, collective bargaining agreement or other form of agreement. There are no state laws requiring that such benefits be given.

If the business agrees to give these benefits and then does not do so, workers may sue the business in a private legal suit in small claims court or through a private attorney.

Does my employer have to provide me health insurance?

No. Health insurance is a voluntary benefit that a business may or may not provide.

Do I get any breaks during the workday?

Yes. You are entitled to an uninterrupted meal break of at least 30 minutes if you work more than 5 hours in a day. You also are entitled to at least a 10-minute paid rest break for each 4 hours worked. You must be allowed a rest period no later than the end of the third hour of the shift.

Fourteen and 15 year-old workers may not work more than 4 hours without a 30-minute uninterrupted meal period. This is separate from and in addition to rest breaks. They must also receive at least a 10-minute paid rest break for every 2 hours worked. They must have a rest period after 2 hours for every 4 hours of work.

Can my employer require me to wear a uniform?

Yes. If an employer requires employees to wear a uniform for work, the employer must pay for the full cost of the uniform. A "uniform" is defined as:

- Clothing clearly identifying the person as an employee of a specific employer.
- Apparel specially marked with the employer's logo.
- Unique apparel to identify historical or ethnic background.
- Formal attire.

If the required apparel fits into one of the above categories, regardless of color, it is a uniform, and the employer is required to furnish the apparel or compensate employees for the apparel.

If required clothing is of a common color and conforms to a general dress code or style, the employer is not responsible for the cost. Only the following are considered common colors:

- Tops: white, tan, and blue (including light and dark variations of those colors).
- Bottoms: tan, black, blue, and gray (including light and dark variations of those colors).

If the required clothing is any color other than those above, the employer must provide or compensate the employee for the apparel. Please see [Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) 49.12.450](#) for more information.

Can my employer require me to dress and groom in other ways?

Generally speaking, employers have a right to establish employee dress and grooming guidelines during work hours if they are reasonable and serve a legitimate business purpose. Such a purpose may include safety, such as requiring employees to wear closed toe shoes, goggles or gloves. Other employers implement dress codes to maintain a certain image with customers and competitors.

If you believe that your employer's dress and grooming guidelines discriminate against you in an unlawful manner, you can contact the [Washington State Human Rights Commission](#) at 800-233-3274 and file a Discrimination Complaint.

Alternatively, you can also contact the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) at 800-669-3362 and file a Charge of Discrimination.

Can I look at my personnel file?

Yes. Employees who work in non-agricultural jobs (e.g., restaurants, grocery stores, etc.) may request to inspect their personnel files at least once per year. Upon employee request, an employer must make the personnel file available within a reasonable period of time. Former employees also have the same rights to review their personnel files as current workers. In addition, the law is not clear as to whether the employer must provide copies of information in the personnel file to workers, or whether the employer may charge workers a reasonable fee to make copies of the file.

There is no law for access to personnel files for agricultural employees, but they do have the right to review their time and pay records.

What happens if I get hurt on the job?

You have rights if you are injured on the job. If you are injured on the job, you should see a doctor right away and have the doctor assist you in filing a workers' compensation claim. The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries pays medical bills for injured workers and often replaces lost wages when time off work is required for recovery. For the steps involved in filing a workers' compensation claim, visit the [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#) website.

<p>What rights do I have when I quit or am let go?</p>	<p>What do I do if I think something is unsafe at work?</p> <p>You are entitled to a safe and healthy workplace. If an unsafe working condition exists on the job, you should immediately notify your employer. If this does not help, you can report your safety concern to (and file a Safety Complaint with) the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries at 800-423-7233.</p> <p>What can I do if I feel that I have been treated unfairly?</p> <p>You have many options. First, you may want to notify your employer's human resources or ethics and compliance department about your concerns. If this option is not available to you or you think it would not be worth your time, you may want to file a workplace rights complaint with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries if your concerns involve denial of things like regular pay, overtime pay, rest and meal breaks; or not being allowed to use paid sick leave to care for a sick family member, or any other protected leave.</p> <p>If you feel that you have been unlawfully discriminated against or treated unfairly, you can contact the Washington State Human Rights Commission at 800-233-3274 and file a Discrimination Complaint. Alternatively, you can also contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at 800-669-3362 and file a Charge of Discrimination.</p> <p>Aside from the above, you may also want to consult with an attorney to explore your rights.</p> <p>When can I expect my final pay?</p> <p>Termination wages are due to you on the next regularly scheduled payday regardless of whether you quit or were fired. If the employer fails to pay you on the next scheduled payday, you should ask the employer why. If the employer does not cooperate, you have a few options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact an attorney.• File a claim in small claims court (for up to \$4,000).• File a wage claim with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (as referenced in Section B. 18) <p>Can I collect unemployment?</p> <p>Yes, so long as you are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Your eligibility depends on why you became unemployed. You are probably eligible if your employer laid you off for lack of work.</p> <p>If you voluntarily quit your job, were fired or suspended by your employer, or are on a leave of absence, then the Washington State Employment Security Department will have to decide whether you are eligible.</p> <p>To qualify for unemployment benefits (regardless of the circumstances of why you became unemployed) you must be physically able to work, available for work, and actively seeking suitable work.</p> <p>For more information about filing a claim for unemployment benefits, visit the Washington State Employment Security Department website.</p>
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Can I take my personnel file with me?

You can certainly ask for it or copies of it. However, the law is not clear as to whether the employer must provide you copies of information in your personnel file, or whether the employer may charge you a reasonable fee to make copies of the file.

Also, there is no law granting access to personnel files for agricultural employees, but they do have the right to review their time and pay records.

If I think my firing was unfair, what rights do I have?

You have many options. If you believe you were fired for filing a workplace rights complaint, a safety complaint or injured work claim, then you may want to file a workplace rights complaint with the [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#) to dispute your firing.

If you believe you were fired due to unlawful discrimination, you can contact the [Washington State Human Rights Commission](#) at 800-233-3274 and file a Discrimination Complaint. Alternatively, you can also contact the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) at 800-669-3362 and file a Charge of Discrimination.

Aside from the above, you may also want to consult with an attorney to explore your rights.

IX. GENERAL CRIMINAL LAW

GENERAL CRIMINAL LAW					
<p>Warrants – what are they and how do I quash them?</p>	<p>What is a warrant?</p> <p>A warrant allows the police to arrest you and will be issued by a judge if you do not show up to court. A judge can also issue a search warrant if there is enough evidence to think that there is evidence of a crime in your house, car, other personal belongings, etc.</p>				
	<p>How do I know if I have an outstanding warrant from the City of Seattle or another part of Washington State?</p> <p>For warrants issued by the Seattle Municipal Court for events that happened in Seattle, contact the Seattle Police Department Misdemeanor Warrant Unit at (206) 684-5690. Provide them with your full name and date of birth.</p> <p>For warrants issued out of any other county, contact both the Court at the number listed below and your attorney. If you do not know your attorney's name or number, you can contact the Office of Public Defense and they should be able to help you. You can also go into court and talk to someone at the front desk about setting up a warrant quash hearing.</p>				
	County	Juvenile Contact Phone Number	Juvenile Contact Address	Clerk's Office Phone Number	Clerk's Office Address
	Adams	509-488-5646	425 E Main St, Ste 100 Othello, WA 99344-1346	509-659-3257	210 W Broadway Ave Ritzville, WA 99169-1860
	Asotin	509-243-2024	135 2nd St Clarkston, WA 99402	509-243-2081	County Courthouse 135 2nd St Asotin, WA 99402
Benton	509-783-2151	5606 W Canal Pl, Ste 106 Kennewick, WA 99336-1300	509-735-8388	Benton County Justice Center 7122 W Okanogan Pl, Bldg A Kennewick, WA 99336-2359 or Prosser Courthouse 620 Market St Prosser, WA 99350	
Chelan	509-667-6350	316 Washington St, Ste 202 Wenatchee, WA 98801-2853	509-667-6380	350 Orondo Ave Wenatchee, WA 98801-2876	

	Clallam	360-417-2282	1912 W 18th St Port Angeles, WA 98363-5121	360-417-2231	223 E 4th St, Ste 9 Port Angeles, WA 98362-3015
	Clark	360-397-2201	500 W 11th St Vancouver, WA 98660-3052	360-397-2292	1200 Franklin St Vancouver, WA 98666-5000
	Columbia	509-524-2800	455 W Rose St Walla Walla, WA 99362-1792	509-382-4321	341 E Main St Ste 2 Dayton, WA 99328-1361
	Cowlitz	360-577-3100	1725 1st Ave Longview, WA 98632-3274	360-577-3016	312 SW 1st Ave, Rm 233 Kelso, WA 98626-1724
	Douglas	509-884-3545	110 2nd Street NE Ste 102 East Wenatchee, WA 98802-4846	509-745-8529	203 S Rainier Waterville, WA 98858-0516
	Ferry	509-775-5225 ext 1108	350 E Delaware Ave, Ste 10 Republic, WA 99166-9747	509-775-5225 ext 2505	350 E Delaware Ave, Ste 4 Republic, WA 99166-9747
	Franklin	509-783-2151	5606 W Canal Pl, Ste 106 Kennewick, WA 99336-1388	509-545-3525	1016 N 4th Ave, Ste 306 Pasco, WA 99301-3706
	Garfield	509-243-2024	135 2nd St Asotin, WA 99402	509-843-3731	789 Main St Pomeroy, WA 99347
	Grant	509-754-5690	303 Abel Rd Ephrata, WA 98823-0818	509-754-2011	35 C St NW Ephrata, WA 98823-1685
	Grays Harbor	360-533-3919	103 Hagara St Aberdeen, WA 98520-3198	360-249-3842	102 W Broadway Ave, Rm 203 Montesano, WA 98563-3621
	Island	360-679-7325	501 N Main St Coupeville, WA 98239	360-679-7359 Ext. 6	101 NE 6th, Fl 1 Coupeville, WA 98239
	Jefferson	360-385-9190	1820 Jefferson St Port Townsend, WA 98368-6951	360-385-9125	1820 Jefferson St Port Townsend, WA 98368-6951
	King	206-205-9422	1211 E Alder St Seattle, WA 98122-5553	206-296-9300	516 3rd Ave, Rm E609

					Seattle, WA 98104-2363
Kitsap	360-337-5401	1338 SW Old Clifton Rd Port Orchard, WA 98366-9113	360-337-7164	614 Division St, MS 34 Port Orchard, WA 98366-4692	
Kittitas	509-962-7516	205 W 5th Ave, Ste 211 Ellensburg, WA 98926-2887	509-962-7531	205 W 5th Ave, Ste 210 Ellensburg, WA 98926-2887	
Klickitat	509-773-3355	131 W Court St, MS CH-16 Goldendale, WA 98620-8932	509-773-5744	205 S Columbus Ave, Rm 204, MS CH-3 Goldendale, WA 98620-9279	
Lewis	360-740-1178	1255 SW Pacific Ave Chehalis, WA 98532	360-740-2704	345 W Main St Chehalis, WA 98532	
Lincoln	509-725-7475	450 Logan St Davenport, WA 99122	509-725-1401	450 Logan St Davenport, WA 99122	
Mason	360-427-9670	615 W Alder St Shelton, WA 98584-0368	360-427-9670 ext 346	419 N 4th St, Fl 2 Shelton, WA 98584-3419	
Okanogan	509-422-7250	237 N 4th Ave Okanogan, WA 98840	509-422-7275	149 3rd Ave N Okanogan, WA 98840	
Pacific	360-875-9350	300 Memorial Dr South Bend, WA 98586	360-875-9320	300 Memorial Dr South Bend, WA 98586	
Pend Oreille	509-447-4021	229 S Garden Ave Newport, WA 99156	509-447-2435	229 S Garden Ave Newport, WA 99156	
Pierce	253-798-7900	5501 6th Ave Tacoma, WA 98406-2603	253-798-7455	930 Tacoma Ave S, Rm 239 Tacoma, WA 98402-2177	
San Juan	360-378-4620	350 Court St, #4 Friday Harbor, WA 98250-7901	360-378-2163	350 Court St, #7 Friday Harbor, WA 98250-7901	
Skagit	360-336-9360	Skagit County Office of Juvenile Court 611 S 2nd St Mount Vernon, WA	360-336-9440	205 W Kincaid St, Rm 103 Mount Vernon, WA 98273-4225	

			98273-3820		
Skamania	509-427-3715	240 Vancouver Ave Stevenson, WA 98648-6447	509-427-3770	240 Vancouver Ave Stevenson, WA 98648-6447	
Snohomish	425-388-7800	Denney Juvenile Justice Center 2801 10th St Everett, WA 98201-1414	425-388-3466	3000 Rockefeller Ave, Fl 2, MS 605 Everett, WA 98201-4046	
Spokane	509-477-4742	1208 W Mallon Ave Spokane, WA 99201-2091	509-477-2211	1116 W Broadway Ave, Rm 300 Spokane, WA 99260-0350	
Stevens	509-684-2549	215 S Oak St, Rm 202 Colville, WA 99114-2862	509-684-7575	215 S Oak St, Rm 206 Colville, WA 99114-2862	
Thurston	360-709-3131	2801 32nd Ave SW Tumwater, WA 98512-6178	360-786-5430	2000 Lakeridge Drive SW, Bldg 2 Olympia, WA 98502-6001	
Wahkiakum	360-875-9350	300 Memorial Ave, Fl 2 South Bend, WA 98586	360-795-3558	64 Main St Cathlamet, WA 98612	
Walla Walla	509-524-2800	455 W Rose St Walla Walla, WA 99362-1792	509-524-2780	315 W Main St Walla Walla, WA 99362-2864	
Whatcom	360-676-6780	311 Grand Ave, Ste 501 Bellingham, WA 98225-4048	360-676-6777	311 Grand Ave, Ste 301 Bellingham, WA 98225-4048	
Whitman	509-397-6246	400 N Main St Colfax, WA 99111-2031	509-397-6240	400 N Main St Colfax, WA 99111-2031	
Yakima	509-574-2050	1728 Jerome Ave Yakima, WA 98902-1820	509-574-1430	128 N 2nd St, Rm 323 Yakima, WA 98901-2639	

	<p>What if a police officer tells me he or she has a warrant to search me or arrest me?</p> <p>You have the right to see the warrant and confirm that it is for you and allows the police to search or arrest you.</p> <hr/> <p>Can I be searched or arrested without a warrant?</p> <p>Yes. You can be arrested if a police officer has a reasonable belief, called probable cause, that you have committed or are about to commit a crime. You can be searched without a warrant under the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <i>Search incident to a lawful arrest</i> permits police to search an arrested person and the area within the person's immediate control.2) <i>Stop and Frisk</i> allows an officer to stop a person who is behaving suspiciously and investigate. The officer can pat down that person if the officer fears for his/her safety.3) <i>Consent</i> searches require that permission to search be voluntarily given by a person with authority to consent after the person is advised of their right to refuse the search. If refused, police still have the opportunity to obtain a warrant to search and seize evidence.4) <i>Plain view</i> includes three types of searches:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) when an officer sees an illegal item sitting out in the open in a public place;b) when an officer lawfully enters into a constitutionally protected area (like a home) and sees an illegal item sitting out in the open; andc) when an officer, standing in a place s/he has a right to be, sees an object that is inside a constitutionally protected area (like sitting on the seat of a car or looking into a lighted living room from the sidewalk).5) <i>Hot pursuit</i> allows an officer to follow a fleeing suspect into a building or a home.6) <i>Emergency situations</i> include the right to search a building without stopping to get a warrant first when there is a potentially dangerous situation, for example, screams are heard or there is a bomb threat. These are only examples, however, and there are many different events that could be viewed as an emergency.7) In Washington, in most instances where a vehicle occupant is arrested, handcuffed and detained in a patrol car (or a significant distance from the vehicle), there will not be a basis to search the passenger compartment unless an actual exigency relating to officer safety or destruction of evidence is present, or some other exception to the warrant requirement applies, such as reasonable belief that evidence related to the arrest is located in the vehicle.8) <i>Borders, airplanes and schools</i> are also subject to special rules. Customs agents, airport security, and school officials are authorized to search without probable cause.
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What do I have to do if there is an outstanding warrant for my arrest in Seattle?

There are four ways to clear a misdemeanor warrant in Seattle:

- 1) Pay the bail amount by either a) mailing it to the Municipal Court Revenue Office, Public Safety Building, 610 Third Avenue, Seattle WA 98104 or b) come to the SPD Misdemeanor Warrant Unit at 701 3rd Avenue in Seattle.
- 2) Post bond, an amount set by the court to clear a warrant and allow release if held, through a bail bond agency and receive a court date from Seattle Municipal Court. Please note that no bond will be accepted by Seattle Municipal Court on "Cash Only Warrants".
- 3) Appear in person at the SPD Misdemeanor Warrant Unit at 701 3rd Avenue, Seattle, for possible release on your own or to a supervising adult and schedule a new court date. Please note if the misdemeanor warrant is to "Hold and Book," then you will be required to go to jail.
- 4) Surrender yourself at the SPD Misdemeanor Warrant Unit at 701 3rd Avenue, Seattle, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., for a court hearing the next day.

To clear felony warrants in the Seattle area, there are three options:

1. Obtain an Attorney. If you don't have a private attorney, or you can't afford one, you may request one from the Public Defense Program in each Washington County typically has a similar Office of Public Defense.
2. Pay bail money or go to jail. Your attorney can also schedule a bail hearing, so you may be released on bail or bond, but you will still be required to go to court.
3. Have your attorney set a court date.

To clear a juvenile court warrant:

1. Contact the Court or go in person and ask to set a warrant quash hearing.
2. You can also contact your attorney and ask that person to set a warrant quash hearing.
3. Finally, you can contact your probation department and they can help you set a warrant quash hearing.

Do I need a lawyer?

If there is a warrant out for your arrest, you should contact or obtain an attorney.

Will I go to jail?

It depends on the type of warrant. For misdemeanor warrants, you can call the local Misdemeanor Warrant Unit and they will explain your options to you. For felony warrants, if you are unable to pay the bail or bond amount and your warrant does not allow release on "Personal Recognizance," which is your promise to the judge to return to court on the scheduled date, you will be required to go to jail. Your warrant may also be eligible for the Bench Warrant Add-On Calendar (BWADD). In this case, your warrant will remain outstanding, leaving you open to arrest until you appear in court. Contact the local Misdemeanor Warrant Unit for more information.

	<p>Will I have to pay something? What if I don't have money?</p> <p>If you are unable to pay the bail or bond amount and your warrant is not for release on "Personal Recognizance" you will be required to go to jail. Your warrant may be eligible for referral to the BWADD. In this case, your warrant will remain outstanding, leaving you open to arrest until you appear in court. Contact the SPD Misdemeanor Warrant Unit at (206) 684-5690 for more information.</p>
<p>Common charges for juveniles</p>	<p>What is the difference between a felony and a misdemeanor? Can I go to jail?</p> <p>For adults, felonies can be punishable with prison time and misdemeanors are punishable by less than one year in jail. For juveniles, however, the difference is not as clear. Juvenile felonies (Class A, B, or C offenses), especially when serious, can result in a youth going to juvenile prison at a Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) facility for a period of several months to several years. Juvenile misdemeanors (Class D or E offenses) typically result in less serious consequences such as probation, community service hours, fines or fees, classes and detention of up to 30 days in a county juvenile detention center.</p> <p>What kind of felonies and misdemeanors are common among youth?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Third degree theft:</i> Shoplifting or stealing property or services valued under \$750. A person who is with another person who shoplifts may also be charged with shoplifting, especially if they acted as a "look-out" for the shoplifter, or helped the person shoplift in some other way. 2. <i>Taking a motor vehicle without permission:</i> Using a motor vehicle without the consent of the owner, or for purposes the owner did not agree to. A person who rides in or drives a vehicle that they know or should know has been stolen (i.e., damage to the ignition, shaved key used to start the car, etc.) is guilty of this felony offense. 3. <i>Assault in the fourth degree (sometimes known as simple assault):</i> Intentionally causing another person to be in fear of harm or touching another person without his/her permission in a way the person considers offensive (includes pushing/shoving, slapping, hitting, fights and sexually motivated contact --groping/fondling). 4. <i>Burglary:</i> Entering the home or a business of another person, without the owner's permission, with the intent to commit a crime against a person or property inside. Entering itself is a crime even if you do not take anything from the property. 5. <i>Minor in possession or consumption of alcohol (MIP/C):</i> A person under the age of 21 who has consumed alcohol or who has alcohol in their possession may be cited or arrested. 6. <i>Malicious mischief:</i> Damaging someone else's property (Vandalism, graffiti, etc.). If the value of the property is over \$750, then it is a felony. 7. <i>Criminal trespass:</i> Knowingly entering or remaining on or inside someone else's property, or in an area not open to the public without permission of the property owner. 8. <i>Second degree theft and attempted theft:</i> Shoplifting or trying to steal something valued between \$750 and \$5000.

	<p>9. <i>Other types of Theft</i>: If you steal a motor vehicle, you can be charged with a serious felony even if the value is less than \$750. If you steal a bank card or someone's identification you can be charged with the felony of Identity Theft. If you steal a firearm you will be charged with a serious felony regardless of the firearm's value. In addition, if you sell property that you know to be stolen or that you should have known was stolen, then you will be charged with a felony regardless of the property's value. If you possess property that you knew or should have known was stolen, you will be charged with a misdemeanor if the value of the property is under \$750 and a felony if it is over that amount.</p> <p>10. <i>Second degree assault</i>: Intentionally injuring or trying to hurt someone by using weapons that result in substantial bodily injury (like a broken bone or serious bruising).</p> <p>11. <i>Robbery and attempted robbery</i>: Taking or trying to take property from another person against their will, by the use or threatened use of force, including a weapon</p>
	<p>What are my rights if I get arrested?</p> <p>Youth have the same rights as adults when they are arrested, including the right to remain silent and the right to an attorney. Because you have the right to remain silent, you do not have to say anything to a police officer and you have the right to have an attorney present prior to and during any questioning. That being said, it is usually wise to provide the officer your name, age, and address. But, since you do not have to provide any other information or say anything that would make it sound like you did something wrong, you should absolutely refuse to answer additional questions unless you have an attorney present. Politely telling a police officer you do not want to talk is the best approach. Remember that what you say can be used against you, and can give police an excuse to arrest you. So, be respectful and polite but do not answer any questions except those related to your name, age and address.</p> <p>Asserting your rights.</p> <p>The police do not have to inform you of your rights unless you are under arrest and being questioned, so it is best to know your rights, and remember that you can assert them. The police can approach any person in a public place and ask questions without suspicion of illegal activity as long as the person is free to leave. If the police have reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, they can detain a person and require identification and ask questions. If you are unsure, ask the police if you are under arrest or if you are free to leave. If the officer says that you are free to leave, then you should walk away. You should never run from a police officer under any circumstances since it will make you look guilty of a crime, even if you are not. Again, if you are not allowed to leave, then you should remain.</p> <p>Cooperation.</p> <p>Unfortunately, police officers are often suspicious of youth who are out alone at night. So, it is important to be respectful to officers while still maintaining your rights (such as your right to remain silent, right to an attorney, and right against being searched). Remember: while you should assert your rights, you should not resist if the police officer is trying to arrest you because you could be charged with an additional crime.</p>

	<p>Searches.</p> <p>You do not have to agree to any search. If an officer decides to search you or your property even though you have said that you do not consent to the search, you should make it clear that you do not agree to the search and then challenge the search in Court with your attorney. Remember: If you do not follow an officer's orders, you can be arrested for some other charge, like resisting arrest or obstruction. If the police officer says that he or she has a warrant to search you, ask to see it.</p> <p>Pat down.</p> <p>If the police have a reasonable suspicion that you have been involved in a crime and that you may be dangerous, they can pat down the outside of your clothing to check for weapons. The pat down is just to look for weapons for the officer's own safety, and the weapon has to be where you could grab it and use it against the officer. If you think a pat down or search is illegal, you should make it clear to the officer that you do not consent and then contest the pat down/search later in court.</p> <p>Police Custody.</p> <p>If you are in custody you must be read your "Miranda Rights" before the officer can ask you questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have the right to remain silent.• Anything you say can and will be used against you in court.• You have the right to an attorney, including having one during questioning.• If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you without cost.• As a juvenile, you also should be advised that your case may also be heard in adult court.
	<p>Do I have to answer questions from a police officer?</p> <p>You do not have to answer questions without consulting with an attorney and you should not answer any questions except those related to your name, age and date of birth. It is really important to remember that police can say many things, even lie, to get information. Therefore, remember that you do not have to say anything that could make you look bad and that you should not say anything. You are entitled to have an attorney even if you cannot afford one. You can ask for an attorney when you are arrested and do not have to say anything else without talking to the attorney. In most cases where you are charged with a youth offense in juvenile court, the judge must provide you a lawyer at no cost to you. Wash. RULE JuCR 9.2.</p>
	<p>Do I have to let a police officer search my car?</p> <p>If you are stopped in your car, you have to give your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance. Under limited circumstances, your car can be searched without a warrant if the police have probable cause that they will find evidence of a crime. They can also seize anything that is in plain view at the time of the search. To protect yourself, make it clear that you do not consent to a search. If you consent, the police officer has the ability to search your car even without a warrant. You cannot be arrested for minor traffic offenses, but police can require the driver to get out of the car if circumstances suggest that officer safety is an issue. In Washington, locked containers in the car and trunk may not be searched without a warrant.</p>

If I am under 18, is it a crime for me to have sexual contact with someone else who is under 18?

In Washington, "statutory rape" is called "Rape of a Child." There are common *misconceptions* about this law: that people over 18 cannot have sex with someone under 18, or that you must, in all cases, be 5 years older than your partner. The law is not that clear.

<i>Crime</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
<i>Rape of a child in the first degree</i>	Under 12 years old	24 months older than the victim	Class A felony
<i>Rape of a child in the second degree</i>	12 or 13 years old	36 months older than the victim	Class A felony
<i>Rape of a child in the third degree</i>	14 or 15 years old	48 months older than the victim	Class C felony

The laws regarding Child Molestation are also very important. Those laws prohibit someone from having, or causing someone under the age of eighteen to have sexual contact with another person in the situations below:

<i>Crime</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
<i>Child molestation in the first degree</i>	Under 12 years old	36 months older than the victim	Class A felony
<i>Child molestation in the second degree</i>	12 or 13 years old	36 months older than the victim	Class B felony
<i>Child molestation in the third degree</i>	14 or 15 years old	48 months older than the victim	Class C felony

The sexual misconduct laws are also important to know. Those laws prohibit *someone in a significant relationship with the victim* from having, or causing another person under the age of eighteen to have sexual contact with the victim and that person abuses a supervisory position within that relationship in order to engage or cause another person under the age of 18 to engage in sexual contact with the victim:

<i>Crime</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
<i>Sexual misconduct with a minor in the first degree</i>	16 or 17 years old	60 months older	Class C felony
<i>Sexual misconduct with a minor in the second degree</i>	16 or 17 years old	60 months older than the victim	Gross misdemeanor

	<p>Communication with a Minor for Immoral Purposes involves communicating with someone under the age of 18 in regard to a sexual situation and is a gross misdemeanor (unless that person has a prior felony sexual offense, in which case it is a Class C felony) and, like other sex offenses, requires registration as a sex offender for a lengthy period of time.</p> <p>Keep in mind that for all of these crimes, it is not a defense that you thought the child was older or that the child lied to you about their age. It is their actual age that matters.</p>
	<p>Can I go to jail for having marijuana on me? How much do I have to have for me to be in serious trouble? What about other drugs? Does it matter if I have a record?</p> <p>Yes - drugs can get you in trouble in lots of ways. In addition to the physical effects of drugs, there are less well-known criminal results of drug-related behavior. While criminal drug possession laws have recently been loosened in this state, it remains a crime for <u>juveniles</u> under 18 years of age to use or possess drugs of any kind unless prescribed by a doctor.</p> <p>If you plead guilty or are found guilty of a crime, your sentence will be determined by two things: the seriousness of the crime and your past criminal record. In general, the more offenses you have on your record and received consequences for, the more serious a sentence you will receive. In juvenile court, a crime is called an offense, a sentence is called a disposition, and a conviction is called an adjudication.</p> <p>In juvenile court, the law ranks different crimes by assigning them letters that tell you how serious they are.</p> <p>Crimes are ranked from A to E. A, B, and C offenses are considered felonies, punishable by incarceration in juvenile detention or a Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) facility. D and E offenses are misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors, and are punishable by a variety of sanctions including juvenile detention.</p> <p>An example of a class E offense is a misdemeanor drug offense. Possession of less than 40 grams of marijuana, being under the influence of alcohol, possession of drug paraphernalia, unlawful inhalation, and unlawful possession of a prescription drug are all class E offenses. Class E offenses, regardless of criminal history, subject a youth to local sanctions. That means up to 30 days in detention, up to 12 months of community supervision or probation, up to 150 hours of community service, and up to a \$500 fine plus court fees and restitution. There is also a mandatory Victim Penalty Assessment of \$75.</p> <p>A first time offender generally will not get more than local sanctions for anything less than a B+ offense.</p> <p>For example, a drug offense charged as a "Violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act" involving sale of or possession with intent to deliver drugs such as cocaine, LSD, methamphetamines, amphetamines, psychedelic mushrooms, etc. could lead to a harsher consequences such as JRA time despite not having a criminal record.</p> <p>The drug laws are very comprehensive. For example, dealing fake drugs intended to fool someone into thinking they are drugs is a serious crime.</p>

	<p>Can I get in trouble for having a pipe or a bong? What if I do not sell drugs, do I still get in trouble?</p> <p>It is illegal for people to use drug paraphernalia in almost any way that has anything to do with drugs. Therefore, unless you are using drug paraphernalia as decoration, you may be breaking the law. Even a decorative bong that has been used by you or another person at any time in the past will get you in trouble. In addition, you cannot deliver or attempt to deliver paraphernalia when you reasonably should know versus actually know that it is going to be used for drug-related activity. There are very harsh penalties for adults selling drug paraphernalia to minors. A person also cannot advertise when the purpose of the ad, even in part, is to promote the sale of paraphernalia. Again, the law only requires that it be shown that it was reasonable to think that the purpose of the ad was to promote the sale of paraphernalia, not that the ad actually did promote such.</p> <p>Is it a crime for me to drink and drive? Is the law stricter because I am a minor?</p> <p>It is a crime. A person is guilty of minor driving under the influence (DUI) or being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle after consuming alcohol if the person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Operates or is in actual physical control of a motor vehicle on a public roadway; b. Is under the age of twenty-one (21); and c. Has, within two (2) hours after operating or being in actual physical control of the motor vehicle, an alcohol concentration of at least 0.02 but less than 0.08, as shown by an analysis of the person's breath or blood made under the provisions of this section.
<p>Juvenile Court – dealing with hearings and public defenders</p>	<p>Is a Juvenile Adjudication a "Conviction"?</p> <p>For the most part under Washington law the answer is "no."</p> <p>In 2010, the law was changed to state that an adjudication has the same meaning as "conviction" only for the purposes of sentencing under the adult sentencing laws. Similarly, the laws were changed to define "criminal history" as including both convictions and juvenile adjudications. That means that your juvenile adjudications can be used against you in the future to increase your sentence.</p>
	<p>What is diversion?</p> <p>Diversion is a way of dealing with youth who are involved in an offense that does not require going to court or having a trial. Instead of having the case heard in a formal courtroom setting before a judge, the youth and his or her family meet with a Diversion Counselor or Community Accountability Board (CAB) comprised of volunteers from the community. No findings of innocence or guilt are made. By appearing at the diversion meeting, the youth is able to take responsibility for his or her actions without creating a criminal record. After participating in diversion, a youth may truthfully say that s/he has not been convicted of a crime.</p> <p>The diversion process differs for drug and alcohol offenses.</p>

What are the differences between diversion and court?	
Diversion	Juvenile Court:
<p>Proceedings are confidential and private</p> <p>No lawyer is appointed, but is available for consultation</p> <p>Meet with a Diversion Counselor or appear before a volunteer CAB</p> <p>Meetings are held in your community, usually in the evening</p> <p>Youth will have no conviction or criminal record</p> <p>Minimal Diversion fee is charged (currently \$263 although waivers can be obtained)</p>	<p>Court hearings/records are open to the public</p> <p>Lawyer is appointed</p> <p>Appear before a judge</p> <p>Hearings are typically held during the day</p> <p>The court process may take several weeks or months</p> <p>Court process is much more formal and respondents have the right to a trial</p> <p>If convicted, youth can be put on probation, put in detention, ordered to do community service hours, etc.</p> <p>Any charge or adjudication is public record.</p> <p>Post-adjudication consequences include detention, fines and fees (currently \$580 although waivers can be obtained)</p>
What if I do not want to go through diversion?	
<p>If you choose not to participate in diversion or if you fail to respond to your diversion letter by the response date, your case will be returned to the prosecutor for filing of charges in Juvenile Court.</p>	
How many times can I go through diversion?	
<p>You may be allowed to participate in diversion for a maximum of two minor, typically misdemeanor offenses. First-time misdemeanor offenses are automatically referred to Diversion. When a youth commits a second offense, the law leaves it to the discretion of the Prosecuting Attorney whether the referral will be diverted or charged in Juvenile Court.</p>	
Can I get a copy of my arrest report?	
<p>The diversion office is not authorized to release police reports for cases. This is due in part to the fact that there are often names of other juveniles, witnesses, and victims in police reports which must remain confidential.</p> <p>Police reports are typically only provided to attorneys to aid them in working with their clients. Attorneys are bound by court rules about what juvenile, witness, and victim information in the police report they may share with their clients.</p> <p>If you want to see a copy of your police report, you must contact the arresting police agency, make a public records request, or retain an attorney.</p>	

	<p>Do I need a lawyer to go through diversion?</p> <p>No. You do not need to hire an attorney to participate in diversion. The process generally involves the family and the youth only. You do have the right to have an attorney present at your diversion meeting to advise you. However, your attorney will not be permitted to participate in the meeting or negotiate the terms of your Diversion Agreement. If you choose to have a lawyer present at your diversion meeting, you must pay for this service. If you wish to have an attorney argue your case and contest the allegations, you must go to trial.</p>
	<p>Can I speak with a lawyer about my decision to go through diversion?</p> <p>You can talk to a lawyer about whether you should participate in diversion or go to court and you will not have to pay for this service. If you do not believe you committed the offense you are being accused of, you should talk to a lawyer. In Seattle, a Public Defender is available for a phone consultation free of charge Monday through Friday at (206) 205-5998. If you leave a message on this line, you should receive a call back within five (5) days. In other areas, you can ask the Diversion Unit or Office of Public Defense to put you in touch with a juvenile public defender.</p>
	<p>What if I am almost 18?</p> <p>If you are going to turn 18 within the next 2 – 3 months, you must call the diversion office immediately if you wish to participate in diversion. If you do not, you may lose the opportunity to participate in diversion and your case may be referred to adult court where you will be charged as an adult.</p>
	<p>Who will be at my Diversion meeting?</p> <p>You, your parent(s) or guardian(s), a Diversion Counselor, 2 –3 CAB members, and a court advisor will be present at the diversion meeting. The CAB members are volunteers from your community who have been screened and trained by the court to hear diversion cases. The court advisor is there to make sure everything is done properly and legally. Everyone present will have signed an agreement to keep all matters discussed in the meeting confidential.</p> <p>If you were arrested for a drug or alcohol offense, you will, in most cases, be required to meet with a drug and alcohol counselor.</p>
	<p>Do my parents have to come with me to my diversion meeting?</p> <p>Yes. Your parent or guardian must accompany you to your diversion meeting, but it is ultimately your decision to accept or reject Diversion.</p>
	<p>What will happen at my diversion meeting?</p> <p>The Diversion Counselor or CAB will first speak with you and your parent(s) or guardian(s) together. They may speak with you and your parents/guardians separately. Next, they will confer among themselves. Finally, they will bring you and your parent(s) or guardian(s) back into the room where they will most likely ask you to sign a Diversion Agreement. The Diversion Agreement is a legal contract between you and the Diversion Counselor or CAB. This contract may require you to complete one or more of the following sanctions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Perform community service hours2. Pay restitution to the victim of your crime

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Pay a fine in addition to the Diversion fee 4. Attend counseling or mediation 5. Attend an educational or informational session (class) 6. Get a drug and alcohol assessment 7. Obey a curfew 8. Obey a no contact order <p>In some cases, you may simply be counseled and released. This means that you will not be required to do any of the above and your case will be closed after you meet and discuss what happened and could have been done differently at your diversion meeting.</p> <p>If you were arrested for a drug or alcohol offense, your diversion meeting will be handled differently.</p>								
	<p>How long will the diversion meeting take?</p> <p>Diversion meetings usually take between 45 minutes and an hour.</p>								
	<p>What is the difference in the diversion process for drug or alcohol offenses?</p> <p>If you were arrested for a drug or alcohol offense, your diversion meeting will be handled differently. You will most likely be required to meet with a drug and alcohol counselor for a drug and alcohol assessment. You will be asked questions about your drug and alcohol use. Your counselor may speak with your parent(s) or guardian(s). Your counselor may make recommendations about the need for drug or alcohol treatment.</p> <p>If this is your second drug or alcohol offense, the Diversion Agreement may require you to attend classes and/or counseling sessions or participate in treatment.</p> <p>When you sign a Diversion Agreement for a drug or alcohol offense, notice will be sent to the Department of Licensing in Olympia. This will result in a driver's license revocation or could prevent you from obtaining a learner's permit.</p> <p>a. How long will my license be revoked?</p> <p>Starting 45 days after the notice of revocation is mailed to you, your license will be revoked as follows:</p>								
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="438 1470 730 1522">Type of offense</th> <th data-bbox="730 1470 1421 1522">Length of revocation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1522 730 1564">First offense</td> <td data-bbox="730 1522 1421 1564">1 year or until your 17th birthday, whichever is longer</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1564 730 1606">Second offense</td> <td data-bbox="730 1564 1421 1606">2 years or until your 18th birthday, whichever is longer</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="438 1606 1421 1648"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Early license reinstatement </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Depending on the type of offense, you may be able to reinstate your driver license before the full term of the revocation is completed:</p>	Type of offense	Length of revocation	First offense	1 year or until your 17th birthday, whichever is longer	Second offense	2 years or until your 18th birthday, whichever is longer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Early license reinstatement 	
Type of offense	Length of revocation								
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	Type of offense	Date when you're eligible for early license reinstatement
	<p>Possession of firearms</p> <p>First offense, possession of alcohol or drugs</p> <p>Second offense, possession of alcohol or drugs</p>	<p>No early reinstatement available.</p> <p><i>90 days after whichever comes last:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your 16th birthday. • The date of conviction or the date the diversion agreement was signed. • The date your license was revoked. <p><i>Whichever comes last:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your 17th birthday. • One year after the date of conviction or the date the diversion agreement was signed. • The date your license was revoked.
<p>b. How can I get my license back?</p> <p>Once you're eligible to apply for a new license or instruction permit, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully complete all applicable tests. • Pay licensing fees. • Pay a \$75 reissue fee. <p>Note: Remember to keep your address current with us so we can notify you of any changes to your driving status. You should report any change of address within 10 days of moving, using the Driver License Change of Address form.</p> <p>i. To get your license back early</p> <p>Contact the diversion counselor or court where you were convicted to discuss the possibility of getting your license reinstated early. If they decide to grant your request, they'll complete a Request for Early Reinstatement form and send it to you. They will notify you in writing when you're eligible to apply for a new license or instruction permit.</p>		
<p>What happens after my diversion meeting?</p> <p>If you signed a Diversion Agreement, your progress in completing the Diversion Agreement will be monitored. It will be your responsibility to report your progress to your counselor or monitor. Once you have completed the conditions of the agreement, they will inform the court and your case will be closed. If you do not complete the conditions of your agreement in the time allotted or if you do not provide proof of completion by the completion date, the case will be returned to the Prosecuting Attorney to file charges in Juvenile Court. If you are counseled and released, your case will be closed after your diversion meeting.</p> <p>Where will my diversion meeting be?</p> <p>Your diversion meeting will be held in the community where you live. There are 23 CAB and five youth service bureaus throughout King County. Your case will be assigned to the location closest to your home.</p>		

	<p>When will my diversion meeting be?</p> <p>Once you contact the diversion office, they will assign your case to a Diversion Counselor or the CAB or youth service bureau within two working days. A Diversion Counselor may call you or you will be notified by mail of your CAB appointment date and location, usually within two weeks to a month. Diversion meetings for drug and alcohol offenses are usually held during the day. Diversion meetings for all other offenses are usually scheduled in the evening.</p>
	<p>What if my parents have already punished me?</p> <p>Parental discipline at home does not excuse you from your responsibility to be accountable for your actions in court or at your diversion meeting. However, you will have the opportunity to share whatever consequences your parents may have imposed with the Diversion Counselor or CAB. They may take this into consideration when deciding what to include in your Diversion Agreement.</p>
	<p>Will I have to go to Juvenile Detention?</p> <p>No. The CAB does not have the authority to order you detained or imprisoned. No one is ever required to spend time in Juvenile Detention for a diverted offense unless they fail to comply with their Diversion Agreement and their case is filed in court where a judge deems detention appropriate.</p>
	<p>Who will know about my diversion?</p> <p>The diversion process is confidential. Employers and potential employers do not have access to diversion records. Your participation in diversion is not public record; however, the military and government agencies typically have access to your full record including diversion and infractions.</p> <p>If you sign a Diversion Agreement for one of the following offenses: inhaling toxic fumes, a controlled substance violation, liquor violation, assault, harassment, reckless burning, malicious mischief, reckless endangerment, and/or a weapons offense, chapter 13.04 of the Revised Code of Washington requires that notice be sent to your school principal. This notice will only include your name and the offense that you committed. It will not include the details of the offense. The majority of drug and alcohol cases are counseled and released and school notification is thus not required by law.</p> <p>After participating in diversion you will NOT have a criminal record. Rather, you will have a confidential criminal history. The main difference between a criminal record and a criminal history is that a criminal record is available to the public while a criminal history is not. Your criminal history is the state's way of internally keeping track of your participation in diversion. Your criminal history will include the offense and whether you signed a Diversion Agreement or were counseled and released. Your criminal history is not public record; it is not available to the public and is only available to the police, the prosecutor, the court, the diversion unit, and the military and other government agencies under limited circumstances.</p> <p>If you sign a Diversion Agreement for a drug or alcohol offense, notice will be sent to the Department of Licensing (DOL) in Olympia. Please note that for the vast majority of first time drug and alcohol offenses, youth are counseled and released and the DOL is not notified. Please see: What is the difference in the diversion process for drug or alcohol offenses?</p>

	<p>Will I have a criminal record?</p> <p>After participating in diversion you will NOT have a criminal record.</p>
	<p>Can I have my diversion records destroyed?</p> <p>The Court will automatically destroy all of your records related to your offense if your criminal history contains only one diversion, you are at least 18 years old, and two years have passed since you completed diversion.</p> <p>You may also ask the court to destroy all your records related to your diverted offenses if your criminal history consists of only referrals to diversion, you are at least 23 years old, all of your diversion agreements have been completed, and you have no pending criminal cases.</p>
	<p>What is a diversion fee?</p> <p>The diversion fee is a fee that must be paid to participate in diversion. To the extent that they are financially able, parents and guardians are responsible for the costs of the diversion services for their children in Washington State. This fee may be reduced or waived based on the parents' or guardians' ability to pay or a youth can pay his or her own fee.</p>
	<p>Why is there a diversion fee?</p> <p>Under local and state laws the court is required to recover the costs of diversion.</p>
	<p>Who must pay the diversion fee?</p> <p>The parent(s) or guardian(s) of youth who participate in the Diversion Program are legally responsible for paying the diversion fee. The youth themselves are not charged the fee because it is unlawful to bill anyone under the age of 18 and state law requires that parents pay this fee, but this does not prevent a youth from paying the fee or reimbursing their parents if they choose to do so.</p>
	<p>What if I cannot afford to pay the diversion fee?</p> <p>No child may be denied diversion based on his or her parents' or guardians' inability to pay. Your diversion fee may be reduced or waived based on your income. If you believe you may qualify for a reduced fee, talk to the Diversion Unit about a reduction, waiver, or conversion of the fee to community service hours or other sanction. To be considered for a reduction in King County, you must fill out the fee form and financial statement included in your diversion letter and return them along with both parents' or guardians' two most recent pay stubs or previous year's W-2 tax return. If you receive medical coupons, include copies of medical coupons for all covered family members. You must mail all of this paperwork to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Financial Screener King County Superior Court Juvenile Diversion Services 1401 East Jefferson, Ste. 506 Seattle, WA 98122.</p> <p>A financial screener will review these documents and determine your ability to pay based on the federal poverty guidelines. The financial screener will assess a fee and bill you. You can pay the fee in up to four monthly payments. If your fee is waived, you will not receive a bill.</p>

	<p>What is the diversion fee used for?</p> <p>The diversion fee is used to pay for diversion staff, to schedule diversion meetings, monitor diversion agreements, and advise the volunteers at the CAB meetings. The Diversion Program also works with outside agencies who perform drug and alcohol assessments for youth, and Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys must screen and process diversion cases. In King County, on average, it costs \$263 per diversion case from the time the prosecutor receives it to the time that the case is closed, hence the fee. Other counties may assess higher or lower fees. The diversion program does not generate a profit.</p>
	<p>Who can I ask questions about my diversion fee?</p> <p>In Seattle, if you have questions about your diversion fee, you may contact our Financial Screener at: (206) 296-1130, 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. In other counties in Washington, you can contact the local diversion unit.</p>
	<p>Will I be held?</p> <p>It depends on the offense. There are also different rules in different counties. In general, youth may be required to see a judge on any charge when detained in juvenile detention.</p>
	<p>Do I have to attend school while under judicial detention?</p> <p>During the week, detained youth attend school. Typically, the local school district provides regular and special education.</p>
	<p>Am I eligible for the King County Juvenile Drug Court program?</p> <p>Your eligibility will depend on your prior history, the nature of the current charge and whether there is restitution (money owed to the alleged victim).</p>
	<p>How do I get into the program?</p> <p>Your attorney or probation officer can recommend you for the program but the decision is that of the prosecutor, who can accept or deny any recommendation based on whether or not you are eligible. Once you are screened and accepted by the prosecutor, the drug court team makes a decision to deny or accept you based on your treatment needs.</p> <p>The prosecutor may recommend acceptance or rejection of respondents; however, the team votes and the judge has the final say regarding your participation as long as you are eligible.</p>
	<p>What happens when I enter the program?</p> <p>Each juvenile is required to participate in a 9- to 24-month program that includes early, continuous and intensive court-monitored treatment. This approach motivates participants to finish their mandatory treatment, maintain school or employment and complete community service and other court-ordered conditions.</p> <p>A juvenile who enters the Drug Court program waives the right to a trial. If the juvenile successfully completes the program, charges will be dismissed. If the juvenile does not complete the program or is terminated for non-compliance, the judge will review the police reports associated with the case and decide guilt or innocence in what is called a Stipulated Facts Trial.</p>

	<p>This process is combined with frequent status hearings (sometimes weekly) with the Drug Court Judge to monitor the juvenile's progress. Closely-monitored treatment services can include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Substance abuse treatment, including detoxification and in-patient treatment; 2. Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), a family-oriented treatment program aimed at reducing high-risk acting-out behaviors in youth (King County only); 3. Functional Family Therapy, a treatment program that teaches communication and problem-solving skills; 4. Aggression Replacement Training, which teaches a range of positive reactions to stressful situations; 5. Meeting with a mentor trained to work with juvenile offenders; mentors come from a state program with a track record of success; 6. Advocacy Team Coordination, which considers the family as a whole and utilizes a team approach to develop strategies that build upon the strengths of the youth, the family and the community. <p>What if I drop out of the program before I've finished?</p> <p>If you do not complete the program, the judge will review the police reports to determine your guilt or innocence and, if found guilty, sentenced you.</p> <p>What are the advantages of going into Drug Court?</p> <p>If you are charged with an alcohol or drug possession and you enter into drug court you will not lose your driver's license while you are a drug court participant.</p> <p>If you graduate from the program your criminal charges will be dismissed.</p> <p>Please contact your local Juvenile Court about the availability and requirements of a drug court program.</p>
<p>Criminal Records – Sealing</p>	<p>When I turn 18, will my criminal history disappear?</p> <p>No. Your criminal history will not automatically disappear when you turn 18.</p>
	<p>What exactly is on my criminal record?</p> <p>A lot of things. "Criminal record" is a blanket term for more than one thing. Most important is your court record. The clerks of different courts maintain court records. They consist of the documents filed by the prosecuting attorney, you or your attorney, court orders and some probation reports. If you were convicted of a crime, the court record will contain a disposition order or judgment and sentence that will specify what crimes you were found to have committed and what punishment was imposed. If you were found not guilty of charges, the court record will indicate that the case was dismissed.</p> <p>Can anyone look at my records?</p> <p>If your records are not sealed, the official juvenile court file is open to the public to view both at the courthouse and on the internet. Your juvenile court file contains all of the charges, court orders, and court findings.</p>

	<p>All other records, including social services and agency files, reports or information from counselors are confidential and will only be released if someone gets a court order from a judge. Information and records produced by the juvenile justice system can be released to other juvenile justice courts or agencies working with youth only if the person requesting the records is performing an investigation of you.</p> <p>How do I seal my juvenile court record?</p> <p>There are many different options when dealing with your juvenile court record:</p> <p>If you are 18 years old and your criminal history consists of only one referral for diversion you may petition the court to <u>destroy</u> your juvenile records. The court will destroy your records if two years have passed since you completed the diversion agreement.</p> <p>If you are 18 years old and you were adjudicated of a Class D or Class E offense, you may petition the court to <u>seal</u> your records.</p> <p>If you have been convicted of a Class A felony or a sex offense, the adjudication may be sealed in limited circumstances after a minimum of five years in the community with no new offenses. You should talk to your local juvenile court about the process for requesting a hearing or having one of these offenses sealed.</p> <p>If you have been convicted of a non-sexual Class B or Class C felony, misdemeanor, or gross misdemeanor and you meet certain requirements, you may petition the court to have your juvenile record <u>sealed</u>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-sexual Class A offenses may only be sealed on your criminal record if you have spent five consecutive years in the community without being convicted of another offense, you have paid all the restitution and you have no charges pending. 2. Non-sexual Class B offenses, non-sexual Class C offenses and non-sexual misdemeanors may only be sealed on your criminal record if you have spent two consecutive years in the community without being convicted of another offense, you have paid all the restitution and you have no charges pending. 3. After five years of crime free behavior and completion of restitution payment with no new charges, many sex offenses can be sealed but only if there was no requirement to register as a sex offender at the time of the original sentencing. It can be very difficult to have the duty to register relieved. You need a lawyer to explain these different concepts on a case-by-case basis.
	<p>How do I petition the court to seal my records?</p> <p>If you were found guilty of an offense in juvenile court, then to seal the records of conviction you must file a motion (i.e., a request) with the court. You must provide a copy of the motion to seal the records to the prosecuting attorney. Notice to the Washington State Patrol and arresting law enforcement agency is also advisable. You may also be required to notify the victim.</p> <p>If you satisfy the applicable requirements, then the Court must seal your record. After a record has been sealed you have the right to act as if you were never convicted of an offense. This means if an employer (or landlord or school) asks you if you have ever been adjudicated of a criminal offense, you can tell them that you have not. If an employer contacts a juvenile agency regarding your criminal background and your records were sealed, the agency must reply that no</p>

	<p>information is available. However, because Washington State sells juvenile records to private companies, there are times when the private company will report that a respondent has a juvenile history even if the record has been sealed.</p> <p>Remember: Sealed records are protected from public examination, <i>but they do not cease to exist</i>. Records may be re-opened for public examination if the juvenile offender is convicted of another juvenile offense or an adult crime, or if the offender is charged with a felony.</p> <p>Are sealed records permanently destroyed?</p> <p>No. If you commit another criminal offense your records will automatically be unsealed and you must admit to your past crimes once again. Even if you commit the next offense as an adult and many years have gone by, your records will be unsealed and can increase your sentencing range in adult court.</p> <p>Even if your records are sealed, your records are not destroyed. You can obtain a court order from a judge to view the records yourself. Also, if you are under care or treatment of certain clinics, hospitals or agencies, the court may grant access to your sealed records. Government agencies including the state patrol or military may still know about offenses that are sealed.</p> <p>Will my juvenile offenses count against the "three strikes" law?</p> <p>If you are adjudicated of a juvenile offense and are treated as a juvenile, this will not count towards the three strikes law.</p>
	<p>If I am arrested can the police tell my school?</p> <p>Yes. Upon arrest or upon the decision to arrest, the police and prosecuting attorney may release information and incident reports to your school about the investigation, diversion, and/or charges.</p> <p>How do I post bail?</p> <p>Bail does not get you out of jail permanently but it does allow you to stay out of jail while your case is being heard. There are different rules in each county so you should contact the clerk of the local juvenile court for details.</p>
<p>Police Inventory – Recovering Belongings</p>	<p>Generally, a request for the return of belongings seized in a criminal case can be made of the arresting law enforcement agency. Typically, they will consult with the Prosecuting Attorney about whether an item may be needed at trial and can be released. Oftentimes, this means property will not be released until a case is closed. If released, you will need to sign a form indicating your property was returned to you. Illegal items including weapons, drugs, or money gained illegally will not be returned.</p>
<p>How to report a crime</p>	<p>What do I do if I think I have just witnessed a crime? Do I have to call 911?</p> <p>If you have just seen or experienced a crime, or one is in progress, call 9-1-1 immediately.</p>

	<p>What if I know someone committed a crime before and it is no longer an emergency?</p> <p>If the crime happened a while ago or there is no direct danger to you or another person, please call the police non-emergency line at: 311. Each law enforcement agency typically has a non-emergency number you can call in these circumstances.</p>
	<p>Do I have to give my name or can I report the crime anonymously?</p> <p>If you have information about a serious crime that you want to report anonymously, you can make tips to Crime Stoppers by using the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hotline: (800) 222-TIPS 2. Online Web Form 3. Texting to 274637 (Crimes) <p>Is there a reward if I report a crime that leads to an arrest or a charge?</p> <p>If your tip leads to an arrest or a charge, you may earn up to \$1,000.</p>
<p>Sex trafficking/prostitution</p>	<p>What is the legal definition of prostitution?</p> <p>Prostitution laws make it a crime in most states to offer, agree to, or engage in a sexual act for compensation at any age. Depending upon the applicable state law, the stages of a typical prostitution "transaction" can involve charges against the provider of services for "prostitution", the customer paying for the services for "solicitation of prostitution", and any middleman for "pandering" or "pimping".</p> <p>Is it a crime in the State of Washington?</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>Is prostitution legal if I am over 18 years old?</p> <p>No. Prostitution laws make it a crime in most states to offer, agree to, or engage in a sexual act for compensation 'at any age.'</p> <p>What is sex-trafficking?</p> <p>Sex trafficking is forced sexual exploitation, including prostitution, stripping, exotic dancing, and pornography.</p> <p>Someone I know is in the sex trafficking business. What happens to me if I report them?</p> <p>Sex trafficking is illegal and dangerous. There is help for victims by contacting The Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force at (888) 428-7581, or Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline at (888) 373-7888. You will not get in trouble for doing the right thing, and you could be saving a life!</p> <p>Who do I call if I have questions about prostitution/sex-trafficking or crimes in general?</p> <p>See below toll-free contact numbers (http://www.ovc.gov/help/tollfree.html):</p>

Battered Women's Justice Project	800-903-0111 x 1
Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian Country Child Abuse Hotline	800-633-5155
Child Welfare Information Gateway	800-394-3366
Childhelp USA National Hotline	800-4-A-CHILD
Federal Trade Commission Identity Theft Hotline	877-ID-THEFT
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	800-GET-MADD
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children TDD Hotline	800-843-5678 800-826-7653
National Crime Prevention Council	800-NCPC-911
National Crime Victim Law Institute Referral Line	888-768-6556
National Domestic Violence Hotline TTY Hotline	800-799-7233 800-787-3224
National Human Trafficking Hotline	888-3737-888
National Organization for Victim Assistance	800-TRY-NOVA
National Organization of Parents of Murdered Children	888-818-POMC
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence TTY Hotline	800-537-2238 x 5 800-553-2508
National Sexual Violence Resource Center TTY Hotline	877-739-3895 717-909-0715
Parents for Megan's Law Helpline	888-ASK-PFML (888-275-7365)
Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)	800-656-HOPE
Resource Center on Domestic Violence, Child Protection and Custody	800-527-3223
Safe Helpline (sexual assault support for the DoD community)	877-995-5247
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration TDD Hotline Español	877-SAMHSA-7 (877- 726-4727) 800-487-4889 800-662-HELP (800- 662-4357)
Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force	888-428-7581
United States Postal Inspection Service	877-876-2455

Sleeping or staying in public spaces in Seattle	What is the Nuisance Ordinance? Nuisance ordinances cover many categories, including but not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Public intoxication or illegal consumption of alcohol;2. Public urination or defecation;3. Intentionally causing or trying to cause another person reasonable fear of imminent bodily injury or the commission of a crime against the person or property in their immediate possession;4. Engaging in acts of violence including fighting;5. Discharging a firearm or explosive;6. Creating unreasonable noise which disturbs others;7. Intentionally obstructing pedestrian or vehicular traffic; and8. Soliciting acts of prostitution.
	What is the Drug Loitering Ordinance? A Seattle law makes it illegal for any person to loiter in or near any public or private place for the purpose of engaging in drug-related activity. Among the factors that may be considered in determining whether the person's manner or circumstance show an intent to engage in illegal drug-related activities include: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>The Place</i>. The area where the person is loitering is an area of high drug activity; or the premises involved have been reported to law enforcement officers to be a place suspected of illegal drug-related activity; and2. <i>The Vehicle Involved</i>. Any motor vehicle involved is registered to a known unlawful drug user, possessor, or seller, or a person with an outstanding warrant for arrest for a crime involving unlawful drug-related activity; and3. <i>The Person</i>. The person loitering is:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A known unlawful drug user; or• The person is acting as a "lookout" by repeatedly leading, directing or responding to others for no obvious lawful purpose; or• The person repeatedly transfers objects or packages for currency in a furtive fashion other than in a retail transaction licensed under the business and occupation and sales tax ordinances of the city; or• The person obviously tries to conceal himself, herself or some object that reasonably could be involved in unlawful drug-related activity; or• The person is known by law enforcement officers to be a member of a "gang" or association that is known by law enforcement officers to be engaged in illegal drug activity; or• The person takes flight upon the appearance of a police officer; or• The person is currently subject to an order prohibiting his/her presence in a high drug activity geographic area; or• The person displays physical characteristics of drug intoxication or usage, such as "needle tracks"; or• The person possesses drug paraphernalia.

	<p>What is the Prostitution Loitering Ordinance?</p> <p>A person is guilty of prostitution loitering if he or she remains in a public place and intentionally solicits, induces, entices, or procures another to commit prostitution. For example, if someone repeatedly beckons to, stops, or attempts to stop passersby, or engages passersby in conversation; repeatedly stops or attempts to stop motor vehicle operators by hailing, waving of arms, or any other bodily gesture; or circles an area in a motor vehicle and repeatedly beckons to, contacts, or attempts to stop pedestrians.</p> <p>A “public place” is an area generally visible to public view and includes streets, sidewalks, bridges, alleys, plazas, parks, driveways, parking lots, automobiles (moving or not), and buildings open to the general public including those which serve food or drink, or provide entertainment, and the doorways and entrances to buildings or dwellings and the grounds enclosing them.</p> <hr/> <p>What is the Seattle Parks Exclusion Ordinance?</p> <p>Seattle Parks and Recreation instigated a new Code of Conduct on April 1, 2010. Violation of these rules can result in exclusion from a park or a group of parks. New prohibited behaviors include: Possession of glass containers at athletic fields, beaches, or children's playgrounds; smoking, chewing, or other tobacco use within 25 feet of other park patrons and or at play areas, beaches, playgrounds, and picnic areas; conduct that poses a risk of harm to any person or property; and possession of explosives [model rockets], acid, or any other article or material capable of causing serious harm to others.</p> <hr/> <p>What is trespassing?</p> <p>Trespassing is entering illegally or remaining unlawfully in or upon the premises of another. According to trespassing laws, remaining in a public building after hours is a form of trespassing. That means that it would be illegal to sleep in City Hall or the public library or another public building after operating hours. Another way the law can prohibit sleeping in public places is with a curfew law declaring that certain outdoor spaces are off-limits at particular times. Curfews might apply only to juveniles or else to geographic locations such as entire parks or sections of them, neighborhoods, or whole cities.</p> <hr/> <p>Curfew Ordinance</p> <p>Beginning January 1, 1995 the Tacoma City Council enacted a juvenile curfew law that prohibits youth under the age of 18 years from being out in public between the hours of midnight to 6:00 a.m. It is wise to check if your city or county has a curfew law.</p>
<p>Pedestrian interference/Sit down</p>	<p>Where and when can I sit on the streets?</p> <p>It is not illegal to sit on public benches or bus stops 'unless you are a nuisance', which is defined as:</p> <p>Unlawfully engaging in an act, or omitting to perform a duty, which act or omission either annoys, injures or endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of others, offends decency, or unlawfully interferes with, obstructs or tends to obstruct, or render dangerous for passage, any lake or navigable river, bay, stream, canal or basin, or any public park, square, street or highway; or in any way renders other persons insecure in life, or in the use of property.</p>

	<p>What is the Pedestrian Interference Ordinance?</p> <p>A person is guilty of pedestrian interference if, in a public place, he or she intentionally:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Obstructs pedestrian or vehicular traffic; or2. Aggressively or coercively begs. <p>Pedestrian interference is a misdemeanor, punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine or by imprisonment and jail for not more than 90 days, or both.</p> <hr/> <p>Can panhandling/spanging be considered Pedestrian Interference?</p> <p>"Spanging" is begging for spare change at freeway on/off ramps and in front of stores with or without a sign.</p> <p>"Panhandling" is to approach and beg from a stranger.</p> <p>"Aggressive panhandling" generally involves the solicitation of donations in an intimidating or intrusive manner. Examples may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Soliciting near ATM banking machines.2. Soliciting from customers inside a store or restaurant.3. Soliciting after dark.4. Approaching individuals from behind, as they are exiting their vehicles, to solicit.5. Soliciting in a loud voice, often accompanied with wild gesticulations.6. The use of insults, profanity, or veiled threats.7. Refusing to take no for an answer or following an individual.8. Demanding more money after a donation has been given.9. Invasion of personal space, cornering, blocking or inappropriate touching.10. A "team" of several beggars approaching an individual at once, often surrounding the person.11. "Camping out" in a spot where begging negatively influences some other business (such as in front of a store or restaurant) in the hope that the business owner will give money to make the beggar go away.
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X. HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL RIGHTS

HEALTHCARE	ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE
<p>Access to Health Care</p> <p><i>Apple Health for Kids</i></p>	<p>I need medical treatment. My parents won't help me. What can I do?</p> <p>As a youth, you may apply for health care coverage from the government. There are a number of government entities that can provide e you with basic health services. Medical programs in Washington provide full medical and dental coverage for children whose families have incomes up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Under these programs, known as "Apple Health for Kids," coverage is complete and includes preventive care and check-ups.</p> <p>When you apply for health care coverage, you may be asked questions about your income. If you are not living with your parents, their income will not be counted, except any amount they contribute to you. If this is your situation, you should be clear on your application that you are not living with your parents. It would be helpful to include a written and signed statement explaining your situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage for those under age 19 includes comprehensive health, dental and vision care free of cost if your income is below 200% of the federal poverty level. To find out if you are eligible, complete the survey available at the website of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. • Apple Health for Kids is called Basic Health Plus when your parents are on Basic Health, a subsidized insurance program. To be eligible, you must be under age 19 and a U.S. citizen or legal resident. For more information on this program, visit washingtonconnection.org. • For more information about Healthy Options (which is part of Apple Health for Kids), visit the Basic Health page at the website of the Washington State Health Care Authority. • If you were in foster care when you turned 18, you qualify to continue your health care coverage until age 21. There is no need to reapply. • The cost of Apple Health for Kids depends on your income level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FREE (no premiums, no deductibles, and no co-payments) for children in families below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (currently \$36,620 for a family of three); ○ \$20 a month per child for families below 250 percent of poverty; ○ \$30 a month per child for families below 300 percent of poverty. ○ The premiums max out at two payments per family, so no family (no matter how many children there are more than two) would pay more than \$40 or \$60 a month in premiums, depending on income level. ○ Families with income above 200 of poverty pay \$98 per month for a child who does not have documented legal status in the U.S., but no more than \$196 per month.

<p><i>Pregnant Women and Girls</i></p>	<p><u><i>Pregnant Women and Girls</i></u></p> <p>If you are pregnant, you can qualify for medical coverage at any stage of pregnancy. You can find income limits at the website of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, or if you are under age 19, Apple Health for Kids is available at higher income limits (see above). The unborn child is counted in your household size.</p> <p>There is no resource limit or immigration status requirement for pregnant women. You and your baby may continue to qualify for Medicaid as a family. In any case, women are eligible for a 2-month postpartum extension of medical benefits, and family planning coverage beyond the birth.</p> <p>If you are pregnant and you receive Medicaid, you are usually required to be in managed care (Healthy Options). For more information, go to the Family Medical website.</p>
<p><i>Hospital Charity Care</i></p>	<p><u><i>Hospital Charity Care</i></u></p> <p>If you need medical attention at a hospital and do not qualify for Apple Health for Kids or Medicaid, you may be eligible for Charity Care (some hospitals call this "financial assistance"). Charity Care is a program that helps people who cannot afford hospital services. If you qualify for Charity Care, hospitals must give you immediate necessary medical services for free or at a reduced cost. Each hospital in Washington has a charity care policy which is available at the Washington State Department of Health website. The following is a list of things you should know about Charity Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The hospital must give you information about Charity Care when they ask you whether you have insurance or health coverage. Be sure to ask for an application. If you have trouble reading or understanding English, the hospital has to give you a written translation of the application and explanation of their Charity Care policies, and/or an interpreter to read the information for you and help you understand this information free of charge.• The hospital may require you to apply for benefits through Medicaid or DSHS to cover part of the cost of care. Be sure to follow up with the hospital to let them know if you were accepted or turned down by these programs. The hospital must forgive or reduce any remaining fees if you cannot afford the cost.• You can apply for Charity Care any time, but be sure to fill out an application for Charity Care so that the hospital can determine whether you are eligible.• If the hospital approves your application for Charity Care after you already paid part of or all of your hospital bill, the hospital must refund the part of your payment that is covered by Charity Care.• If the hospital denies your Charity Care application, you have a right to appeal that decision. The hospital must tell you how to appeal the decision, and they must give you at least 30 days to make your appeal. If you appeal at least 14 days after the hospital denies your Charity Care application, the hospital cannot send your bill to a collection agency until after it decides whether to grant your appeal. If you appeal within 30 days of when the hospital denies your request for Charity Care, the hospital has to stop trying to collect on your account, at least until it makes a decision on your appeal.

<p>Prescription Medication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some services you receive in the hospital from health care providers such as ambulance or x-ray specialists (who may not be considered hospital employees) are not eligible for Charity Care. You must be informed by the hospital about the services you receive that are not covered by Charity Care. You will be responsible for paying for those services. Some of these services may have their own separate financial assistance applications, so be sure to ask. If you have any questions about why you were billed for particular services or how your hospital bill was calculated, ask the hospital to explain it to you. <p>For more information about Charity Care visit the Health section at WashingtonLawHelp.org.</p> <p>I saw a doctor and was given a prescription for medicine. Can I fill the prescription for free?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are on Medicaid or have been in foster care, you may have a ProviderOne card or account. If you do, you may be able to receive some or all of your medicines for free. Be sure to check with your social worker or the Foster Care Medical Team at 1-800-562-3022 ext. 15480.• Some clinics may have samples of the medicine that they can give you, at least to get you started. Be sure to ask your doctor or nurse before you leave the clinic. They may also be able to help you figure out what other free or low cost ways you can get the medicine you need.• You can also enroll in the Washington Prescription Drug Program, which is free to join and open to anybody who lives in Washington, regardless of age or income. You get up to 60% discount on generic drugs, and up to 20% discount on brand name drugs. Call 1-800-913-4146 to join, or enroll at www.rx.wa.gov.
<p>Your Parents' Insurance can cover you until you are 26 years old</p>	<p>I am under 26 years old and living on my own. Can my parents' insurance still cover me?</p> <p>Yes, you can stay on your parent's health plan up to the age of 26, regardless of whether you live with your parent, your parent financially supports you, or you are a student, employed or married. Until 2014, employer plans that were created before March 23, 2010 may only extend coverage to age 26 if the young adult is not eligible for an employer-based health care plan.</p> <p>It is important to note that this law does not require that a plan or issuer offer coverage for a child (dependent coverage). However, if coverage is offered it must be extended to young adults up to age 26, as described above.</p>
<p>Informed Consent for your Medical Care</p>	<p>What does my doctor have to tell me about a proposed medical treatment? What if I did not consent to a medical treatment that I received?</p> <p>Health care workers are legally required to get "informed consent" from you (or the person authorized to consent on your behalf) about any treatment or procedure that is performed on you. Before a procedure is performed, your medical provider should discuss the risks and benefits of the proposed procedure as well as any reasonable alternatives, answer any questions you have, and provide any other information reasonably necessary for you (or your parent/guardian) to make a reasoned decision about the proposed treatment.</p>

<p><i>If I am a minor, do my parents have to consent on my behalf?</i></p>	<p>Generally, for more significant treatments (for example, a non-emergency surgery that you choose to have), "express" consent is required. Express consent is typically written and signed, but can sometimes be given verbally. Other times, consent is understood to be given (or "implied") by the circumstances, for example, when you present yourself for a relatively simple, non-invasive procedure, such as receiving an immunization (consent is implied because you showed up to receive the service), or for certain procedures associated with a surgery to which you had already consented generally.</p> <p>There are some exceptions to the requirement that a doctor obtain your informed consent. For example, in emergency situations, there is not always time to obtain consent, or you may be unconscious and unable to communicate. In these circumstances, consent may be implied under the rationale that a reasonable person would have consented to emergency treatment when faced with a life-threatening event. Other exceptional circumstances where consent may not be required include where the doctor determines that you might suffer significant emotional or physical harm if you are given troubling information, or where you need to submit to a test or treatment (for example, in situations of mental health problems or communicable disease).</p> <p>In most situations for minors, consent must be given by a parent or guardian. However, as discussed below, in certain circumstances, minors are able to play a more active role in their medical care and treatment. Not every teenager is capable, however, of making informed consent decisions under these laws. In some situations, your medical provider will consider your maturity level and decision making ability in determining whether you could be considered a "mature minor" capable of understanding the nature and consequences of treatment. In such circumstances, you may be able to provide "informed consent" without consulting with your parents. Your medical provider will ask you questions to determine whether you are capable of providing consent on your own. Factors that your doctor will consider include your age, intelligence, maturity, training, experience, economic independence, and freedom from parental control. [See Smith v. Seibly, 70 Wn.2d 16, 431 P.2d 719 (1967)].</p>
<p>When YOU Can Consent to your own Medical Care</p>	<p>What health care services may I receive without the consent of my parent or guardian? Can I see a doctor, therapist, psychologist without my parents or legal guardians knowing about it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Emergency Medical Services</u>, at any age. If your parent or guardian is not available to consent, the doctor or hospital can provide medical services that are reasonably necessary under the circumstances. [RCW 7.70.050(4)] • <u>Outpatient Mental Health Counseling</u>, if you are thirteen years old or older. Your parents or guardian will not be notified without your consent. [RCW 71.34.530] • <u>Inpatient (in the hospital) Mental Health Treatment</u>, if you are thirteen years old or older. However, your parents/guardian will be notified that you have been voluntarily admitted. [RCW 71.34.500] • <u>Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment</u>, if you're thirteen years old or older. Your parents/guardian will be notified if you consent or if the clinic believes you are not able to make a rational choice for yourself. [RCW 70.96A.095, 230]

- Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment (staying in a hospital or clinic), if you're **thirteen years old or older**, or if DSHS believes you are a "[Child in Need of Services](#)". [[RCW 70.96A.235](#)] If someone from your school refers you for inpatient substance abuse treatment, they have to notify your parents/guardian within 48 hours. [[RCW 70.96A.096](#)]
- Tests and/or or treatment for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), if you're **fourteen years old or older**. Some public health agencies (for example, in [Seattle & King County](#)) will test individuals at any age. [[RCW 70.24.110](#)]
- Birth Control Services, at **any age**. You can also refuse birth control services at any age. [[RCW 9.02.100\(2\)](#)]
- Prenatal (pregnancy) Care Services, at **any age**.
- An Abortion and Abortion-related Services, at **any age**, without the consent of your parents, guardian, or the man who got you pregnant. [[RCW 9.02.100\(1\)](#)] and [State v. Koome, 84 Wash.2d 901, 530 P.2d 260 \(1975\)](#)]
- Immunizations or other non-Emergency Medical Services, at **any age**, if your doctor believes you are a "Mature Minor", capable of understanding the consequences of your healthcare decision. In making this determination, your doctor will consider your age, intelligence, maturity, economic independence (or lack thereof), general conduct as an adult and your independence from your parents/guardian. [[See Smith v. Seibly, 70 Wn.2d 16, 431 P.2d 719 \(1967\)](#)].

Good to Know:

- If you think you need a medical treatment, but your parent/guardian does not consent, talk to your doctor. Tell the doctor why it is important that you get the medical treatment without your parents'/guardian's consent. If you and the doctor agree that the treatment is in your best interest, the doctor can help to explain to your parents/guardian why the treatment is a good idea. Your doctor can be your advocate.
- When you are talking to your doctor or nurse, be sure to ask whether the conversation is "privileged." This means that what you say will not be revealed to anyone else without your consent, unless the doctor/nurse believes that you are in danger, or that you are a danger to someone else.
- If you are over 18 or legally "[emancipated](#)", you may receive (or refuse) ANY type of treatment you want without anyone else's consent. If you are under 18, under certain circumstances, you can become legally [emancipated](#), in which case, you will have all the rights of an adult. Also, if you are under 18 but married to an adult (or to an [emancipated](#) minor), you are treated as an adult for these purposes.

If you find out that you are expecting a baby, learn about all the options available to you. You can talk to your doctor, a social worker, or a trusted adult. You should be free to make the best, most informed decision for your life without excessive pressure from anyone else.

<p>When a Relative Can Give Consent for your Health Care</p>	<p>I am not living with my parents but am living with a relative. Can my relative consent to health care on my behalf instead of my parents?</p> <p>In most situations, yes. The following people may consent to health care for you even if they do not have a court order and if your parents are not available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an individual who has a signed authorization of your parent to make health care decisions for you;• an adult representing himself or herself to be a relative responsible for your health care; or• a relative caregiver who has signed and dated a declaration that says the caregiver is an adult relative responsible for your health care. RCW 7.70.065. <p><i>Who is considered a "relative"?</i> "Relative" is not currently defined under the health care consent law. If you are not related to the person you are living with, the law still allows that person to consent to health care for you if your parents have given that person written authorization to make health care decisions for you.</p> <p>The family member you are staying with can consent to any care, service or procedure provided by a health care provider: (a) to diagnose, treat, or maintain a patient's physical or mental condition; or (b) that affects the structure or any function of the human body. This specifically includes mental health care. Dental care is also covered. They cannot, however force you to receive care for which you are old enough to consent (see above).</p> <p>For more information about kinship caregivers, see "A Kinship Caregiver's Guide to Consenting to Health Care" available at WashingtonLawHelp.org.</p>
<p>Your Rights to Your Health Care Records</p>	<p>Can I review and get copies of my medical records kept by my doctor's office? What do I need to do? Do I have to pay to get copies of my medical records?</p> <p>Yes, you are entitled to review and to have copies made of your medical records. You will likely be required to fill out and sign a form to request the records you want.</p> <p>Washington State law permits health care providers to charge a "reasonable fee" (RCW 70.02.010(15)) for copying your medical records for you. This fee covers any charges for duplicating or searching the record, and may not exceed 65 cents per page for the first 30 pages and 50 cents per page for all other pages. In addition, a clerical fee for searching and handling may be charged, not to exceed \$15. [Note: these amounts are adjusted every few years, as determined by the Washington State Secretary of Health.] However, where editing of records by a health care provider is required by statute and is done by the provider personally, the fee may be the usual and customary charge for a basic office visit. They can also charge you for postage, if you ask that the copies to be mailed to you.</p> <p>There are some very limited circumstances in which your health care provider may refuse to provide your records to you. These include, for example, where the information contained in the records could be harmful to you or another person, or where the information could lead you to identify a person who provided information in confidence, in a circumstance where confidentiality was appropriate. If you are faced with these unusual circumstances, you should ask whether it is possible to remove, hide or separate the information that cannot be disclosed to you from the rest of your healthcare information, and give you partial copies. In any case, your doctor is required to provide complete copies to another health care provider that you nominate, provided that the other doctor is also licensed to treat you for the same condition. [RCW 70.02.090]</p>

<p>Privacy and Disclosure of Your Health Care Records</p>	<p>When can my doctor show my medical records to others? What do I need to do to allow my doctor to tell someone else about my health care? When can my doctor disclose my health care information without my permission?</p> <p>A good general rule of thumb is that if you were, as a minor, authorized to consent to a health care procedure without parental consent under Federal and State law, only YOU may control your health care information relating to that procedure. [RCW 70.02.130] Of course, if you are an emancipated minor or if you are married, you have all the rights of an adult, although hospitals and clinics in Washington will generally require documentation of your emancipated status.</p> <p>On the other hand, if your parent or guardian was required to consent to (or be notified of) a treatment, they will likely be able to access the medical records with respect to that treatment. There are a few exceptions, including where a court has authorized someone else to make health care decisions for you instead of your parent, or where your parent has previously agreed to a confidential relationship between you and your doctor.</p> <p>Importantly, you should know that health care workers are "mandated reporters" (like law enforcement and school personnel), which means that they are required by law to report within 48 hours to Child Protective Services when they have reasonable cause to believe that you have suffered abuse or neglect. [See RCW 74.34.020(11) for a complete list of mandated reporters.] For this purpose, "abuse or neglect" means "<i>injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare and safety is harmed.</i>" [RCW 26.44.020]. In this circumstance, your doctor can refuse to provide information to your parent or guardian where your doctor believes that doing so would endanger you or would not be in your best interest. However, CPS and law enforcement will be provided access to all relevant records in the pursuit of their investigation.</p>
<p>Free Meals</p> <p><i>At School</i></p> <p><i>In the Summertime</i></p>	<p>I am living on my own. Where can I get free meals?</p> <p><i>At School</i></p> <p>If you are homeless and your school provides free or low cost meals (breakfast and/or lunch), you are eligible to receive those meals, including any afterschool snacks. Talk to your school counselor or the school district's homeless liaison for help in figuring out whether you are eligible.</p> <p><i>In the Summertime:</i></p> <p>The Washington State Summer Meal Program provides free meals and snacks to children and teens during the summer months. Summer meal sites are located in schools, recreation centers, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and camps. The program begins at the end of the school year, and ends in the fall when school begins. All children and teens (18 years old and younger) are eligible for the program. No proof of income, address or citizenship is ever required.</p> <p>For questions about summer meals, call the Family Food Hotline 1-888-4-FOOD-WA (1-888-436-6392), 8am–5:30pm, Monday through Friday, or resources.parenthelp123.org.</p>

<p><i>Food Banks</i></p>	<p>Enter your location (mailing address, zip code, or city and state) in the Search box to find the closest summer meal site. Then, click on the meal site to see a map and directions. <u>Please call meal sites to confirm times and location before you go.</u></p> <p>An overview of the State of Washington's summer food programs can be found at the website of the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.</p> <p><i>From Food Banks:</i></p> <p>Food banks are local organizations that distribute free food to those in need. Some food banks serve specific areas. To find food banks near you, visit resources.parenthelp123.org.</p>
<p>Other Resources for Food and Healthcare if you are Pregnant or Nursing a Baby</p>	<p>I am pregnant/nursing/have a young baby. What free food and other nutrition support am I eligible for?</p> <p>The Women, Infants and Children ("WIC") program provides health screenings, free nutrient-rich foods, breastfeeding support, nutrition education and referrals to other health and social services for pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children under five.</p>
<p><i>Eligibility for WIC Support</i></p>	<p><i>You may be eligible for WIC food and other services if you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in Washington State • Are pregnant, a new mother, or have a child under five years of age • Meet the income guidelines • Are at nutritional risk (being pregnant or a nursing teen usually qualifies)
<p><i>What Does WIC Provide?</i></p>	<p><i>What Does WIC Provide?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks or Vouchers for Nutritious Foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women and children receive checks or vouchers to buy milk, cheese, fresh fruits and vegetables, cereal, juice, whole grains, eggs, and peanut butter or beans. WIC does not provide all of the food that you need in a month, but can help you find other sources as well. ○ All babies receive checks for baby food (fruits and vegetables) and baby cereal. Fully breastfeeding babies receive checks for additional baby food (fruits and vegetables), baby cereal, and baby food meats. For babies who are not breastfed, WIC provides checks for iron fortified formula. ○ During summer months at participating WIC clinics, you may be able to receive checks for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These checks allow you to purchase up to \$20 per person of Washington grown fresh fruits and vegetables at authorized Farmers Markets. To read more about the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, visit extension.wsu.edu/farmersmarket .

<p><i>Breastfeeding Nutrition Support</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breastfeeding Support, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information about the special benefits of breastfeeding ○ Information to help you decide if breastfeeding is right for you and your baby ○ How to continue breastfeeding when returning to work or school ○ Encouragement and help to continue breastfeeding ○ Connecting with other breastfeeding moms
<p><i>Health Screenings</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Screening, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weighing and measuring to monitor growth ○ Identifying health risks ○ Checking blood iron levels ○ Immunizations ○ Nutrition and Health Education ○ How to use foods to improve your child's health and your own health ○ Parenting, especially about feeding your children ○ Healthy lifestyle choices—being active, avoiding tobacco, alcohol and other drugs
<p><i>Help with Access to other Support Programs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help getting other services for which you may be eligible, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medical and dental care ○ Basic Food Program ○ Access to food via food banks, community meals, etc. ○ Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
<p><i>How do I get WIC?</i></p>	<p><i>How do I get WIC?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Make an appointment at a WIC clinic.</u> A list of clinics (including addresses, telephone numbers, website links, hours and services provided) can be found at resources.parenthelp123.org. 2. <u>Talk with a WIC health professional at your appointment.</u> 3. <u>You will be given coupons for nutritious foods if you are eligible.</u> Special formulas or nutritional supplements are also available to women and children participants with certain medical conditions. Ask your doctor to complete the appropriate form for you. 4. <u>You can use your coupons at an authorized grocery store or farmer's market that you select.</u> <p><i>Important things to know:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>If you are homeless, a permanent address is NOT required for WIC eligibility.</u> You may be able to use the address of a shelter, a relative or friend, or even the local WIC office itself if you do not have a permanent address. [See Washington State WIC Policy and Procedure Manual, Vol. 1, Chapter 19: Special Clients] • <u>Pregnant/nursing/parenting teens who are in the foster care system are automatically "income eligible".</u> If you are not in foster care, you may be asked to provide information about how much money you make, if any.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Only you (or your baby) should eat the foods given to you by WIC.</u> These foods should not be given to others (including other people living in a shelter), and should not be used in group meals. You may be asked to provide information about where you live to verify that these conditions can be met.• <u>You will not be eligible to receive WIC checks while you are living in an institution if the institution provides all of your meals</u> (for example, jails, mental institutions, long term care facilities, drug and alcohol treatment centers, etc.). However, you may still be able to receive other program benefits, such as nutrition education, health assessments and referrals. You can start receiving WIC checks again when you are released from the institution if you are still within a current eligibility period.• <u>If you move, you can transfer your WIC to another clinic.</u> Ask for a transfer card.
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Community Clinics: Provide general medical care for families; accept Medicaid and Apple Health for Kids; and offer a sliding fee scale for the uninsured.

Immunization Clinics: Provides children's immunizations, accepts Medicaid and Apple Health for Kids and offers a sliding fee for the uninsured.

Children's Dental Clinics: Dental clinics that provide services for children, accept DSHS insurance and may offer sliding fee for the uninsured.

Family Planning Clinics: Clinics that accept Medicaid and Apple Health for Kids and offer sliding fee for the uninsured. Planning when you will have a baby helps you take control over your life and health care. Timing and spacing pregnancies is better for your body.

More information on the foregoing is available at resources.parenthelp123.org

Within Reach: Founded in 1988 as Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, Within Reach is a non-profit organization that is widely recognized for its innovative and cost-effective approaches that connect families and individuals to health and food resources. Within Reach forms and supports valuable partnerships with other organizations to improve health for diverse communities throughout Washington state. Visit withinreachwa.org.

Northwest Justice Project
(888) 201-1014 (CLEAR hotline)
www.washingtonlawhelp.org

Disability Rights Washington
(800) 562-2702, TTY (800) 905-0209
www.disabilityrightswa.org

How do I challenge a denial of mental health services?

You have the [right to appeal](#) a decision to change, reduce, deny, or stop your public mental healthcare services. To appeal means to challenge or formally disagree with a decision and ask for a different result. You have this right if you have medical assistance like Medicaid or Apple Health for Kids.

You have the right to get a second opinion. If you think you need mental health treatment but your doctor or counselor says you do not, you have the right to get a second opinion without paying for it.

If you are under 21 and have Medicaid or Apple Health for Kids you have the right to get all mental healthcare services that are medically necessary. This generally means that the services are recommended by a doctor, a therapist, or a healthcare screener and that the services will help you feel better or prevent you from getting or feeling worse.

If you receive written notice about a change to your mental health services, the letter should include information about how to appeal. You can follow those instructions to appeal. There should be an option to make a complaint or a grievance to your local Regional Support Network. There are deadlines for responding.

You have the right to request a fair hearing (sometimes called an administrative hearing) from the Office of Administrative Hearings. A fair hearing is where you get to explain why you disagree with the decision to change or deny your services. An independent judge hears both sides and makes a decision. [You have right to a fair hearing](#) when:

- your mental healthcare services are changed, reduced, denied, or ended;
- you believe there has been a violation of a rule or law; or
- you did not get a written response within 30 days of making a written request for services.

There are deadlines for requesting a fair hearing.

- You have 20 days from the date of the notice to request a fair hearing before you might lose your right to a hearing. In some cases, you have up to 90 days to request a hearing.
- If you want to get mental healthcare treatment while your appeal is considered, you must request a fair hearing within 10 days of the notice. You may have to pay for the services if you lose your appeal.

For more information you can contact legal aid. You can also refer to a document called "Representing Yourself at a Fair Hearing" online at www.washingtonlawhelp.org. This document is about how to request a fair hearing and how to prepare for a fair hearing.

Commitment Generally	<p>The information in this section can be found at http://www.teamchild.org/index.php/resources/136/.</p> <p>Who can help get me out if I'm committed?</p> <p>You can only be committed for mental health or substance abuse treatment if it is a medical necessity. If you believe you have been committed without a medically necessary reason, you can challenge the commitment. You have the right to speak to a lawyer at any time if you are being committed for mental health or substance abuse treatment against your will.</p> <p>A lawyer will be able to contest your commitment in front of a judge.</p> <p>In Washington, it's technically legal for a parent to have a youth committed without the youth's consent but they would require the support of the Department and many treatment centers do not admit youth in this situation.</p> <p>Who can see my treatment records? Can I keep people from seeing my treatment records?</p> <p>Your written consent is required before your treatment records can be shared with anyone, except for other care providers that are working with you, family members (if you are under 13) or if a judge orders it. If you are over age 13, you have a right to keep your treatment records from being shared with your family--if you want to keep family members from seeing your treatment records you should let your treatment provider know in writing.</p> <p>There are some exceptions to confidentiality and records sharing between agencies, in particular as it relates to record sharing for youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system (Delinquency, Dependency and Status Offenders). Because legal requirements do not always match practical realities, then deadlines may not be as rigorously kept as the law might suggest.</p>	
	MENTAL HEALTH	SUBSTANCE ABUSE/CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
	What is commitment?	
	<p>Commitment means you are being admitted to a psychiatric hospital or other mental health facility, or to a substance abuse/chemical dependency treatment facility. Commitment can be either voluntary or involuntary.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)

	<p>What is the difference between voluntary and involuntary (or civil) commitment?</p>	
	<p>Voluntary commitment means you have chosen to be admitted to treatment. Involuntary commitment or civil commitment is a legal process through which you are ordered by the court into treatment. In either case, treatment can be on an outpatient basis or through an inpatient facility.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>
	<p>What happens if I am involuntarily committed?</p>	
	<p>You will be put in a 72-hour commitment, regardless of whether it crosses weekends or holidays. During that time, your parent may petition the court to commit you. Also, a qualified mental health professional or certified alcohol and drug counselor may petition the court to commit without permission from your parent. If it is determined that you need more time than a 72-hour hold, a qualified mental health professional or certified alcohol and drug counselor may petition for a longer stay – typically 14 days.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>
<p>Legal Definitions</p>	<p>How does the law define mental disorder, chemical dependency, and drug addiction?</p>	
	<p>Mental disorder: "Any organic, mental, or emotional impairment which has substantial adverse effects on an individual's cognitive (thought) or volitional (action) functions." Chemical dependency: "(a) Alcoholism; (b) drug addiction; or (c) dependence on alcohol and one or more other psychoactive chemicals, as the context requires". Drug addiction: "A disease characterized by a dependency on psychoactive chemicals, loss of control over the amount and circumstances of use, symptoms of tolerance, physiological or psychological withdrawal, or both, if use is reduced or discontinued, and impairment of health or disruption of social or economic functioning."</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>

Involuntary Commitment Criteria	Under what circumstances might I be considered for involuntary commitment?	
	<p>You can be considered for involuntary commitment for mental health issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is a substantial risk, based on written or verbal threats or actual physical actions, that you will cause serious harm to yourself, or if you have attempted suicide or inflicted physical harm on yourself; • If you have behaved in a way that causes harm to others or places others in reasonable fear of being harmed by you; this determination may be based on written, verbal, or actual assaultive acts; • If you have caused substantial loss or damage to the property of others; <p>If you are gravely disabled.</p>	<p>You can be considered for involuntary commitment for substance abuse or chemical dependency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you present a likelihood of serious harm; • If you are gravely disabled.
	What does gravely disabled mean?	
	<p>It means you are in danger of serious physical harm resulting from the failure to provide for your basic needs of health and safety or you have shown a deterioration in routine functioning which is evidenced by a repeated and escalating loss over your actions and you are not receiving necessary care for health and safety needs.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	What is an inpatient facility?	
	<p>An evaluation and treatment facility, certified by DSHS, that provides 24-hour-per-day care within a hospital or residential treatment facility.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	Can my school refer me for commitment?	
	<p>Yes, your school can refer you for commitment. If they do, they must notify your parent of their referral within 48 hours.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)

Do I have the right to an attorney?	
<p>Yes. You have a right to an attorney and can be assigned a public defender. You can also contact legal aid.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>
What are my rights if I'm committed?	
<p>Unless you are a risk to yourself or others, you have the following rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To wear your own clothes and keep and use your personal possessions; • To keep and be allowed to spend a reasonable sum of your own money for canteen expenses (in other words, money to purchase items from the canteen (or cafeteria) or vending machines) and small purchases; • To have individual storage space for private use; • To have visitors at reasonable times; • To have reasonable access to a telephone, both to make and receive confidential calls; • To have ready access to letter-writing materials, including stamps, and to send and receive uncensored correspondence through the mail; • To discuss treatment plans and decisions with mental health professionals; • To have the right to adequate care and individualized treatment; • Not to consent to the performance of electro-convulsive treatment, which is a treatment in which seizures are electrically induced (formerly known as electroshock treatment), or surgery, except emergency life-saving surgery; • Not to have electro-convulsive treatment (see above) or nonemergency surgery unless ordered by a court under certain conditions; and 	<p>You have the following rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue contact with family and friends, subject to reasonable rules regarding hours of visitation and consistent with an effective treatment program; • To not have your mail or other communication to or from intercepted, read, or censored; and • To use the telephone if allowed. <p>You also have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be admitted to treatment without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability; • Be reasonably accommodated in case of sensory or physical disability, limited ability to communicate, limited English proficiency, and cultural differences; • Be treated in a manner sensitive to your needs and which promotes dignity and self-respect; • Be protected from invasion of privacy except that staff may conduct reasonable searches to detect and prevent possession or • use of contraband on the premises; • Have all clinical and personal information treated in accord with state and federal confidentiality regulations; • Have the opportunity to review your own treatment records in the presence of the administrator; • Have the opportunity to have clinical contact with a same gender counselor, if requested and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to have psychosurgery, which is an operation where a small piece of the brain is destroyed or removed, performed on you under any circumstances. <p>The treatment facility must post these rights in a prominent place.</p>	<p>determined appropriate by the supervisor, either at the agency or by referral;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fully informed regarding fees charged, including fees for copying records to verify treatment and methods of payment available; • Be provided reasonable opportunity to practice the religion of your choice as long as the practice does not infringe on the rights and treatment of others or the treatment service; you also have the right to refuse participation in any religious practice; • Be allowed necessary communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With your custodial parent or legal guardian; ○ With an attorney (see information on legal aid); or ○ In an emergency situation; • Be protected from abuse by staff at all times, or from other patients who are on agency premises, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sexual abuse or harassment; ○ Sexual or financial exploitation; ○ Racism or racial harassment; or ○ Physical abuse or punishment; • Be fully informed and receive a copy of counselor disclosure requirements; • Receive a copy of patient grievance procedures upon request; and • In the event of an agency closure or treatment service cancellation, you must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given thirty days' notice; ○ Assisted with relocation; ○ Given any refunds to which you are entitled; and ○ Advised how to access any records to which you are entitled.
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<p>Admission, Evaluation and Inpatient Treatment</p>	<p>Involuntary Commitment</p>	
	<p>Can my parent have me committed without my consent and without court intervention?</p>	
	<p>Yes. If you are under 18 years old and your parent brings you to a treatment facility, your consent is not required for admission, evaluation, and treatment. In addition, no court order or court intervention is required for a parent to bring you to a treatment facility to have you admitted, evaluated, and treated. However, you will have to be examined by a professional to determine whether you are in need of inpatient treatment.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>
<p>The Commitment Hearing</p>	<p>How long can I be kept in the inpatient facility?</p>	
	<p>The initial evaluation must be completed within 24 hours, unless the professional doing the evaluation determines that your condition requires more time for evaluation. However, you cannot be held longer than 72 hours for evaluation.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>
	<p>What about after the evaluation is done?</p>	
	<p>If the facility staff decides that further inpatient care is necessary, they must petition the court and a commitment hearing will take place. Note that you have a right to an attorney and can be assigned a public defender. You and your attorney can attend the hearing. A Superior Court commissioner or judge hears the evidence presented by witnesses, and makes the decision. The commissioner/judge may:</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order you to remain for up to 14 additional days of involuntary treatment in a facility; the facility may release you whenever they think treatment is complete; or • Order you to 180 days of "less restrictive treatment;" this means you have to enter outpatient treatment as the court order dictates (most often the court order will specify you have to participate in treatment at a mental health center and must take such medication as is recommended by the mental health center); or • The commissioner/judge may accept your agreement to enter treatment voluntarily; or • The commissioner/judge may dismiss the case and let you go free. 	
<p>Medical Necessity</p>	<p>What is a “medical necessity”?</p>	
	<p>"Medical necessity" for inpatient care means you need a service that is expected to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnose, correct, cure, or alleviate a mental disorder or chemical dependency; or • Prevent the worsening of a mental or chemical dependency condition that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. endangers life or causes suffering and pain, or b. results in illness or infirmity, or c. threatens to cause or aggravate a handicap, or d. causes physical deformity or malfunction, and <p>there is no adequate less restrictive alternative available.</p>	<p>(See Mental Health column.)</p>

	<p>What if DSHS decides that placing me in inpatient treatment is a medical necessity?</p>	
	<p>You will be admitted to a facility for treatment. DSHS will make sure that an independent professional periodically reviews your situation to determine whether it is a medical necessity to continue your treatment on an inpatient basis. In making a determination whether to release you, the department will consider the opinion of the treatment provider, your safety, and the likelihood your mental health will deteriorate if released from inpatient treatment. The department will consult with your parent in advance of making its determination.</p>	<p>If the professional in charge and your parent believe that it is a medical necessity for you to remain in inpatient treatment, you will be released to your parent on the second judicial day following DSHS's determination in order to allow your parent time to file an at-risk youth (ARY) petition.</p>
	<p>What if DSHS decides it is no longer a medical necessity for me to get inpatient treatment?</p>	
	<p>If DSHS determines it is no longer a medical necessity for you to receive inpatient treatment, DSHS will immediately notify your parent and the facility. The facility will release you to your parent within 24 hours of receiving notice.</p> <p>If the professional person in charge and your parent believe that it is still a medical necessity for you to remain in inpatient treatment, you will be released to your parent on the second judicial day (a judicial day means a day that the court is in regular session) following DSHS's determination in order to give your parent time to file an at-risk youth (ARY) petition.</p> <p>If DSHS determines it is a medical necessity for you to receive outpatient treatment and you decline to obtain such treatment, your parent can file an ARY petition.</p>	<p>(See discussion under Mental Health column.)</p>

	Can I be forced to take medication if I don't want to?	
	<p>It is possible for the treatment facility to medicate you against your will for up to 30 days as long as there is a second, concurring medical opinion approving medication. Beyond 30 days, a special court hearing is required to determine if there is legal justification for compelling the continued administration of medications.</p> <p>This applies to individuals who are found to be gravely disabled or present a likelihood of serious harm as a result of a mental disorder.</p>	
Leaving the Treatment Facility	Can I leave the inpatient facility at any time?	
	<p>No. You can't leave the facility just because you want to. You can petition the superior court for your release from the facility. The court will decide if it is medically necessary for you to stay at the facility.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	What if my parent requests that I be released?	
	<p>If your parent requests in writing that you be released, then the facility must let you leave immediately.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	Who has access to any information, records or files related to my commitment?	
	<p>The registration, records and files of treatment programs are confidential and available only to you, your parent, and your attorney.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	Who has to pay for my treatment?	
<p>You and others who are responsible for you (such as a parent) must pay for the costs of treatment, care, and transportation to the extent of available resources and ability to pay, as determined by DSHS. However, you may be eligible for full or partial funding assistance or other arrangements if your family is considered poor or low income. Generally, for purposes of eligibility for medical assistance, you</p>	<p>Your parent will not be required to pay for inpatient or outpatient chemical dependency treatment unless your parent joined in the consent to the treatment. However, you may be eligible for full or partial funding assistance or other arrangements if your family is considered poor or low income.</p>	

	<p>are considered part of your parent's or legal guardian's household, except under certain circumstances.</p>	<p>In addition, the state may provide services for indigent minors to the extent that such funds are available.</p>
	<p>Can I be detained in an inpatient facility once I turn 18?</p>	
	<p>No. Once you have turned 18 years old, you cannot be detained unless you have applied for admission to an appropriate evaluation and treatment facility or unless involuntary commitment proceedings have been initiated under Chapter 71.05 RCW. However, you may be detained after your 18th birthday for purposes of completing the 14-day diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment.</p>	<p>Yes. However you may be discharged at any time before the end of the period for which you have been committed (typically 60 days) and you will be discharged by order of the court if either of the following conditions are met:</p> <p>(a) In case where you are committed on the grounds of likelihood of infliction of physical harm upon yourself or another, and the likelihood no longer exists; or further treatment will not be likely to bring about significant improvement in your condition, or the treatment is no longer adequate or appropriate.</p> <p>(b) In case where you are committed on the grounds of the need of treatment and incapacity, and the incapacity no longer exists.</p>
	<p>What happens when I'm released by the facility?</p>	
<p>You will be released into the custody of your parent or other responsible person. If necessary, the facility will provide transportation for you to your residence or other appropriate place.</p> <p>If you are released to someone other than your parent, the facility has to attempt to notify your parent of your release as soon as possible.</p> <p>You can't be released to a less restrictive alternative treatment or setting or discharged from inpatient treatment without suitable clothing, and DSHS has to provide this clothing if your family can't afford to.</p>		

	What can I do if I think my rights have been violated?	
	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File a grievance with the provider • File a grievance with the Mental Health Ombudsman for your home region • Apply for a fair hearing • Seek the assistance of your attorney 	(See Mental Health column.)
Voluntary Commitment Generally	VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT - INPATIENT TREATMENT	
	Can I voluntarily commit myself?	
	<p>If you are age 13 or older: You may admit yourself for inpatient treatment.</p> <p>If you are under age 13: Parental authorization, or authorization from a person who may consent on your behalf, is required for inpatient treatment.</p>	(See Mental Health column.)
	Does anyone need to agree to my commitment?	
Notifying Parents	Does the treatment facility need to notify my parent if I commit myself voluntarily?	
	<p>Yes. The facility must let your parent know within 24 hours of your voluntary admission. The notice has to let your parent know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you have been admitted to inpatient treatment; • the name, location and telephone number of the facility providing treatment; • the name of a staff member who is designated to discuss your need for inpatient treatment with your parent; and 	<p>No. If you are 13 years or older, you can refuse to have your parent notified of your admission. However, if you sign a written consent authorizing the notification, or if the director of the facility determines that you lack the capacity to make a rational choice regarding consenting to disclosure, the facility must let your parent know within 7 business days of your request for voluntary admission. The notice has to let your parent know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you have been admitted to inpatient treatment;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the medical necessity for admission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the name, location and telephone number of the facility providing treatment; and the name of a staff member who is designated to discuss your need for inpatient treatment with your parent. 	
<p>How often do I need to renew my consent to treatment?</p>			
<p>At least once every 12 months. You must renew in writing.</p>	<p>There is no requirement that renew your consent to treatment within a specified time-frame.</p>		
<p>Once I have been admitted, can I leave the facility at any time?</p>			
<p>If you are 13 or older and were voluntarily admitted to a facility, you can give notice of your intent to leave at any time. You must provide this notice in writing. The professional in charge must let you leave immediately after receiving your written notice.</p>	<p>If you are 13 or younger or an incompetent person, the request for discharge must be made by your parent, legal guardian, or other legal representative.</p>		
<p>Outpatient Treatment</p>	<p>OUTPATIENT TREATMENT</p>		
	<p>Can I request outpatient treatment without the consent of my parent?</p>		
	<p>If you are age 13 or older: You can request and may receive outpatient treatment without the consent of your parent.</p> <p>If you are under age 13: You need parental authorization for outpatient treatment.</p>	<p>(See discussion under Mental Health column.)</p>	
	<p>Does my parent have to be notified if I request outpatient treatment?</p>		
	<p>If you are 13 or older and initiated outpatient treatment without the consent of your parent, there is no legal requirement that your parent be notified.</p>	<p>The agency has to notify your parent within 7 business days of your request for outpatient treatment if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have signed a release allowing notification of your parent; or The agency determines you are unable to sign a consent form. 	

	<p>Can my parent bring me to an outpatient treatment without my consent?</p>
	<p>Yes. Your parent can bring you to an outpatient mental health or chemical dependency treatment center and request that a professional examine you to determine if you have a mental disorder or chemical dependency and are in need of outpatient treatment. Your consent is not required.</p> <p><i>RCW 70.96A.25; RCW 71.34.650</i></p>
	<p>How can I share my treatment records with others (like new doctors)?</p> <p>You have a right to examine or make copies of your treatment records in almost every situation. The treatment provider is required to respond within 15 days. However, the treatment provider may charge a reasonable fee for providing the information and is not required to permit examination or copying until the fee is paid. In any case, if the treatment provider does not respond within 15 days, contact a lawyer.</p> <p>Once you get your treatment records you generally have a right to share them, but your treatment provider can refuse to let you have them or share them if they think the information would be harmful to you, would reveal confidential information about you or someone else, would put someone else’s health or safety in danger or if the records were only made for legal proceedings.</p> <p>How can I pay for treatment? Are there any programs out there that can help with the bills?</p> <p>You can get free public mental healthcare if you have Medicaid or other state medical assistance like Apple Health for Kids. If you have a “medical coupon” or a ProviderOne card, you should be able to get all the free mental health treatment that you need.</p> <p>If you do not have Medicaid or Apple Health for Kids, you can apply. You can apply at a local community service office of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). You can find your local community service office online at http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/findservice.shtml.</p> <p>If it’s an emergency, a card isn’t necessary because everyone in Washington is eligible for crisis services at places like hospitals.</p> <p>A parent or legal guardian can help you apply for other types of aid programs.</p> <p>Chapter Nine provides more information about Health Care and your Medical Rights.</p>

XII. PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

<p>Parental Rights and Custody</p>	<p>What Are My Rights and Responsibilities as a Parent?</p> <p>You have the right and responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be with and care for your child; • make decisions about your child's life, such as education, health care, religion, and where they live; and • support your child financially. <p>These rights and responsibilities continue until your child is 18 years old, married, or legally emancipated. If you and your baby's other parent are not married at the time of your baby's birth, then the father will not have any legal rights or responsibilities until his paternity is legally established.</p> <p>What if My Baby Lives With Only One Parent?</p> <p>If you are not married, the father does not have any legal right to see your baby until paternity has been legally recognized. Once it is, though, it is usually a good idea to get an order from the court called a Parenting Plan. A parenting plan establishes who your child will live with most of the time, and how much time the other parent will be able to see the child. It makes things clear for both the parents and the child. A parenting plan can prevent conflicts now and in the future—for example, if the baby's other parent suddenly wants to have a bigger role in the child's life.</p> <p>If I am a Parent Under 18 do I Still Have to Follow My Parents' Rules?</p> <p>Yes. Just as you are responsible for your child, if you are younger than 18, not married, and not legally emancipated, your parents or your guardian are still legally responsible for you and have to make sure that your basic needs are taken care of. This also means that you have to follow your parents' reasonable rules.</p> <p>What Kind of Care Do My Parents or Guardians Have to Give Me?</p> <p>Your parents' (or guardians') responsibilities towards you do not change if you have a baby, as long as you are under 18, unmarried, and not legally emancipated. Your parents or guardian still must give you food, clothing, a safe place to live, and health care, and they must supervise you. However, your parents or guardian do not have to help you with your baby. They don't even have to let the baby live in their home.</p>

Can My Parents Make Me Leave Home Because I'm Pregnant or Have a Child?

Even if you are pregnant or have a baby, your parents' or guardians' responsibilities to and for you do not end. If your parents decide that you cannot live with them, they must find a safe place for you to live—but they don't have any legal responsibility to find your child a safe place to live. That is your responsibility. If you are still living with your parents, it's important to talk to them about how you plan to care for your child.

Can My Parents Tell Me What to Do About My Pregnancy?

No, only you have the right to decide what to do about your pregnancy. You can choose whether you want to raise the baby, have an abortion, or place the baby with another adult family member or an adoptive family.

What if My Baby Lives with a Relative?

If your baby is living with a relative, that relative is called a *kinship caregiver*. Kinship caregivers can be grandparents, aunts, uncles, or adult brothers or sisters. There are lots of financial, legal, and emotional issues for kinship caregivers to learn about. Start with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services ([DSHS](#)) website that covers legal, health, support, and financial information and then visit [WashingtonLawHelp.org](#) for additional information.

Can My Parents or the State Take Away My Child?

You have the right to be with your baby, unless you give up that right or the State finds that it is not in the best interest of the baby. The grounds for taking away your child include, among other things:

- if you abandon or demonstrate "extreme parental disinterest" in your child;
- if you abuse or neglect your child;
- if your mental illness or deficiency makes you unable to care for your child;
- if your abuse of drugs or alcohol makes you incapable of taking care of your child;
- if you are convicted of a felony or put in jail;
- if you abuse or neglect another of your children, or if you lose your rights to have custody of another of your children;
- if you or your child are judged "in need of services" by the Department of Child and Family Services;
- other aggravated circumstances (for example you being convicted of a violent crime); or
- a court decides it is otherwise in the best interest of your child.

[RCW 13.34.180; 13.34.190; 13.34.132]

<p>Abortion</p>	<p>What If I Don't Want to Continue My Pregnancy? Can I Get an Abortion? Do I need my parents' permission if I am a minor?</p> <p>Yes, you can get an abortion without your parents'/guardians' consent. Every woman's situation is different, and only you can decide what is best for you. If you're trying to decide if abortion is the right option for you, you may find it helpful to list the pros and cons of having an abortion. Think about which ones are most important to you. You may wish to ask a trusted adult to discuss the issues with you.</p> <p>If you decide to end your pregnancy, your health care provider may talk with you about different abortion methods. You may be offered the option to have an in-clinic abortion, or you may be offered the abortion pill. The abortion procedure is generally safe, and serious complications are rare—</p>
<p>Other Options:</p> <p><i>Kinship Care</i></p>	<p>If I Have to Give Up My Child, What Are My Options?</p> <p><i>Kinship Care</i></p> <p>The connection to family, relatives, and community is important to every growing child. If you are not in a position to care for your child, but your parents or another relative would be willing to do so, you can arrange for "kinship care" through your local office of DSHS, which can be found at the DSHS website.</p> <p>Kinship caregivers can be grandparents, aunts, uncles, or adult brothers or sisters. Relatives who are not closely related to your child may need to be licensed. There are lots of financial, legal, and emotional issues that kinship caregivers should consider. The DSHS website covers some of the legal, health, support, and financial information. WashingtonLawHelp.org also has some useful information.</p>
<p><i>Temporary Foster Care</i></p>	<p><i>Temporary Foster Care</i></p> <p>In some cases, temporary foster care may be available if you need more time to decide between adoption and parenting. Temporary foster care may be available through the DSHS. Typically, you will sign a voluntary agreement to hand over custody of your child for a limited time only. When the separation is over and you are ready to resume responsibility, your child would be returned to you in accordance with the terms of the temporary foster care contract you signed. You should ask your DSHS case worker to assist and advise you as to the temporary foster care alternative, and you should also seek legal advice before you sign any such agreement.</p>
<p><i>Adoption</i></p>	<p><i>Adoption:</i></p> <p>If you are pregnant, and you do not want to have an abortion or be a parent, you can give birth and let someone else raise your child. This is adoption. It is a permanent, legal agreement in which you agree to place your child in the care of another person or family.</p> <p>No adoption is final until after the baby is born and you have signed the papers agreeing to the adoption. After signing these papers, you may be given a limited period of time during which you may change your mind. After that, few adoptions are reversed by the courts.</p>

Some things to ask yourself if you are thinking about adoption:

- Am I ready to be a parent?
- Can I afford to be a parent now?
- What would it mean for my future if I had a child now?
- Can I accept not being my child's primary parent?
- Does adoption feel like what I should do, not what I want to do?
- Would I consider abortion?
- Is someone pressuring me to choose adoption?
- Am I prepared to go through pregnancy and childbirth?
- Will I be able to cope with the feeling of loss that I may have?
- Do I have people in my life who will help me through the pregnancy and adoption process?
- How do I feel about other women who choose to place their children for adoption?
- How important is it to me what other people will think about my decision?

You may want to discuss your answers with your partner, someone in your family, a friend, a trusted religious adviser, or a counselor. An adoption agency can help you answer some of the questions you might have. When you look for an adoption agency, ask questions to make sure they are a good fit for you.

You might want to ask questions like the following:

- Will using your services cost me anything?
- Do you offer counseling or support groups for birth parents?
- How do you screen the adoptive families you work with? If so, how?
- Will I be able to meet with adoptive families?
- If I choose an open adoption, will you help me stay in touch with the adoptive family?
- Can your agency help with prenatal care or delivery costs?
- Do you work with families looking for babies of different races and ethnicities? Are there families interested in adopting babies with special medical needs? Do you work with gay individuals or couples looking to adopt?
- What are the birth father's rights in my state?
- If I choose adoption, when is my decision final?

Whether you decide to become a parent or place the baby for adoption, it's very important to get prenatal care early in the pregnancy to make sure you have a healthy pregnancy.

<p>Safe Havens</p>	<p>What are Safe Havens? How do they work?</p> <p>The Safe Havens law saves babies from unsafe abandonment. It says that parents who do not harm their baby will not be prosecuted for abandonment if they hand their newborn to a responsible adult at a Safe Haven location. <i>Under Washington law, you can leave your baby, up to 3 day(s) old, with an employee on duty at any Hospital, Emergency Room or Fire Station in Washington.</i></p> <p>If you are not in Washington, you can find a local Safe Haven at: http://safehavenalliance.org/find-a-safe-haven/</p> <p>or by calling the Toll Free Crisis HOTLINE: (888) 510-BABY</p> <p>You might be asked to provide some medical information and other important facts about your newborn, yourself, and the father. This information might be needed to pass along to the adoptive parents for the infant. The person to whom you are relinquishing your baby will make sure that the baby is unharmed in any way, and if that is the case, then you will be free to go with no questions asked.</p>
<p>Medical Questions:</p> <p><i>Pregnancy Tests</i></p>	<p>If I Think I Am Pregnant, Where Can I Get a Pregnancy Test?</p> <p>If you have had sex and have missed a period, it is a good idea to take a pregnancy test. You can buy a home pregnancy test at a grocery or drug store without parent permission. You can also get a pregnancy test at your doctor's office or a local clinic. Many family planning clinics offer free or reduced cost pregnancy tests. The average cost of a pregnancy test at a clinic is \$10-\$15. To find an agency or clinic that offers free pregnancy tests call the Family Health Hotline at (800) 322-2588.</p>
<p><i>Parental Consent</i></p>	<p>Do I need my parents' consent for my treatment?</p> <p>In Washington State, you do not need your parent's/legal guardian's permission to be tested for pregnancy or to receive prenatal care. Under Washington law, a minor may receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth Control Services, at any age. You can also refuse birth control services at any age. [RCW 9.02.100(2)] • Prenatal (pregnancy) Care Services, at any age. • An abortion and abortion-related services, at any age, without the consent of your parents, guardian, or the man who got you pregnant. [RCW 9.02.100(1)]
<p><i>Confidentiality</i></p>	<p>If I see a doctor while I am pregnant, will he/she report me to my parents or law enforcement?</p> <p>Generally, no. Since you can legally consent to healthcare procedures related to pregnancy or prenatal care without parental consent, in most cases, <u>your health care provider will not disclose any confidential health care related information to your parents or law enforcement without your consent.</u></p> <p>However, there is an important exception. Health care workers are required by law to report when they have reasonable cause to believe that you may have suffered "abuse or neglect". [See RCW 74.34.020(10) for a complete list of mandated reporters.]</p>

<p><i>Insurance</i></p>	<p>For this purpose, "abuse or neglect" means "injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare and safety is harmed." [RCW 26.44.020]. In this circumstance, your doctor may need to provide information to your parent or guardian, DSHS or the police if your doctor believes that you might have been harmed or might be in danger. DSHS and law enforcement will be provided access to all relevant records in the pursuit of their investigation.</p> <p>Who will pay for the doctor visits/treatments? What happens if I have to stay in the hospital? Who pays for the delivery?</p> <p>Pregnant women and girls at any point in their pregnancy can qualify for medical coverage. In Washington, a program called First Steps covers a variety of services for low income pregnant women and their infants. First Steps is available as soon as you know that you are pregnant. First Steps services include:</p> <p><i>Medical Services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prenatal care• Delivery• Post pregnancy follow-up• Dental care• One year of family planning services post delivery• Newborns receive one year of full medical coverage <p><i>Enhanced Services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maternity Support Services• Infant Case Management• Childbirth Education and• Expedited (quicker access to) alcohol and drug assessment and treatment services <p><i>Other Services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expedited eligibility determination• Outreach• Transportation• Interpreter services <p>How do I qualify for First Steps?</p> <p>All pregnant women on Medicaid qualify for First Steps. If you have no medical coverage, you may apply for First Steps Pregnancy Medical Benefits to see if you are eligible. Call (877) 501-2233 to find out where you can apply, or apply online at https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/</p> <p>You can also call Within Reach Family Health Hotline at (800)322-2588 for help.</p>
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Good to Know:

- If you are a teenager living with your family, you may apply for coverage. Your eligibility will be determined by your personal income.
- If you are not a documented U.S. resident, you may also receive First Steps coverage.
- When you apply in person at your local Community Services Office for First Steps, a social worker will talk with you and determine your basic needs. You will be referred to a local agency to receive Maternity Support Services and/or Infant Case Management services.
- Most women will receive their medical prenatal care through Healthy Options. After you are found eligible, you will be contacted by Healthy Options to discuss the plans in your area and will be able to enroll in the plan of your choice to receive your prenatal care from the provider of your choice.
- You should receive a Services Card within 20 calendar days after your application is received. Most applications are processed within a few days.

Coverage for women begins within the month of application if you are eligible for First Steps. If you need help with medical bills you received before then, let your caseworker know. There may be a medical assistance program to help with these bills.

What do I do if I don't qualify for First Steps?

If you are currently on your parent's or legal guardian's insurance, The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires plans and issuers that offer coverage to children on their parents' plan to make the coverage available until the adult child reaches the age of 26. The issued regulations state that young adults are eligible for this coverage regardless of any, or a combination of any, of the following factors: financial dependency, residency with parent, student status, employment and marital status. This applies to all plans in the individual market and to employer plans created after the date of enactment (March 23, 2010). For employer plans that were in existence prior to the date of enactment, young adults can qualify for dependent coverage only if they are not eligible for an employment-based health insurance plan until 2014. Beginning in 2014, young adults can choose to stay on their parent's health plan until age 26, even if they are eligible for their own employer-sponsored insurance plan. This law does not require that a plan or issuer offer dependent coverage but that if coverage is offered it must be extended to young adults up to age 26.

If you do not qualify because you have too much income, there are other resources to help you. Please contact the **Within Reach Family Health Hotline at (800)322-2588**. They are able to link you to resources in your county.

<p>Parenting Classes /Resources</p>	<p>Are there any classes I can take while I am pregnant that teach me about pregnancy and how to take care of my child once it's born?</p> <p><u>GRADS:</u></p> <p>If you are still in High School, one program to consider is called the GRADS (Graduation, Reality, And Dual-Role Skills) Program. This is a program for pregnant or parenting teens that offers classes about positive self-esteem, pregnancy, parenting, academic achievement, economic independence, and preparation for graduation. The GRADS program provides on-site or nearby childcare for your baby to make it easier for you to take classes. There are GRADS classes in 21 traditional and alternative schools across Washington State.</p> <p>See a list of GRADS Programs across the state at the website of the State of Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction : http://www.k12.wa.us/CareerTechEd/GRADSProgram.aspx</p> <p>If there isn't a GRADS class in your area talk to your school counselor about what kind of programs your school district offers.</p> <p><u>Text4Baby:</u></p> <p>If you are expecting a baby or your baby has already arrived, check out text4baby.org to learn more about this valuable program and to sign up for timely health and safety tips by text message. These messages are provided as a service to you and are 100% free.</p> <p><u>Child Profile:</u></p> <p>Another program called Child Profile sends health promotion materials to all parents of kids aged birth to six years in Washington State. The materials contain age-specific information on your child's development, including information about immunizations, growth, safety, nutrition, and other parenting issues. There are a total of 17 mailings timed to correspond with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended schedule of well-child visits. For the first 18 months, mailings are sent every 3 months. From 18 months to 6 years, mailings are sent every 6 months. You can sign up to receive Child Profile materials at the website of the Washington State Department of Health.</p> <p><u>Other Resources:</u></p> <p>Washingteenhelp.org has links and contact information for great parenting support resources.</p> <p>Other places where you can find a parent support group in your community include libraries, community centers, churches, hospitals, and clinics.</p>
<p>Birth Control</p>	<p>Where can I get birth control?</p> <p>Planning when you will have a baby helps you take control over your life and health care. Washington State offers family planning health care coverage through the Take Charge program for teens who meet medical assistance eligibility requirements. Teens who do not meet medical assistance eligibility requirements may be eligible for low cost family planning and reproductive health services through local family planning clinics.</p> <p>You can find Family Planning Clinics that accept DSHS insurance and offer sliding fees for the uninsured at resources.parenthelp123.org</p>

<p>Health Care for My Baby</p> <p>Prenatal (Pregnancy) Care</p>	<p>What kind of medical treatment can I receive for my unborn child?</p> <p>Prenatal care is the care you receive from a health care provider, such as a doctor or midwife, during pregnancy. During prenatal care visits, your health care provider will make sure you and the developing fetus are healthy and strong. These regular checkups are your chance to learn how to manage the discomforts of pregnancy, have any testing you may need, learn warning signs, and ask any questions you may have.</p> <p>Begin prenatal care as soon as you know you're pregnant. If you are 18 to 35 years old and healthy, you will probably have a "low-risk" pregnancy. If so, plan to have prenatal care visits about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • every four or six weeks, from the first to seventh month of pregnancy (the first 28 weeks) • every two or three weeks in the eighth month (from week 28 to 36) • every week in the ninth month (from week 36 until delivery) • If you have a high-risk pregnancy, your health care provider may ask you to come in for prenatal care more often. <p>Your health care provider may offer you certain tests during your pregnancy. These tests are used to make sure that you are healthy and the fetus is doing well. Your health care provider will let you know what tests you may want or need, and when you will need them.</p> <p>There are many physical and emotional changes that occur during pregnancy, and you may experience other discomforts that are new to you. You should discuss these changes and any questions you may have with your health care provider at your prenatal care visits. More information on what to expect can be found at washingteehelp.org:</p>
<p>Health Care for My Infant/Child</p> <p><i>Health Insurance</i></p>	<p>How Do I Get Health Insurance for My Baby?</p> <p>If you had pregnancy medical insurance through DSHS, then your baby will have medical care covered through his/her first birthday. Otherwise, there are free or low-cost insurance programs through Washington State that you and your baby may qualify for like Apple Health For Kids. Read about the details and find out if you are eligible at ParentHelp123.org.</p>
<p><i>How to Find a Doctor</i></p>	<p>How Do I Find a Health Care Provider for My Baby?</p> <p>Choosing a health care provider for your baby isn't something you want to have to rush to do right after your baby is born. Start looking while you are pregnant, several months before your due date. Your choice of health care provider will depend on if you have insurance and what that insurance covers, what type of providers are available in your community, and what kind of care you need. Finding someone you like and trust may take some time, but it is very important.</p> <p>Community Clinics: Community clinics provide general medical care for families, accept DSHS medical insurance (Provider One), and offer a sliding fee scale for the uninsured:</p> <p>Children's Dental Clinics: Dental clinics that provide services for children, accept DSHS insurance and may offer sliding fee for the uninsured.</p> <p>https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/childrens-dental-clinics</p>

Financial Assistance	<p>What kind of financial assistance can I get while I am pregnant? And after my child is born?</p> <p>The Women, Infants and Children ("WIC") program provides health screenings, free nutrient rich foods, breastfeeding support, nutrition education and referrals to other health and social services for pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children under five.</p> <p><i>You may be eligible for WIC food and other services if you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live in Washington State.• Are pregnant, a new mother, or have a child under five years of age.• Meet the income guidelines• Are at nutritional risk (being pregnant or nursing teen usually qualifies) <p><i>What Does WIC Provide?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checks or Vouchers for Nutritious Foods<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Women and children receive checks or vouchers to buy over \$50 worth of milk, cheese, fresh fruits and vegetables, cereal, juice, whole grains, eggs, and peanut butter or beans. WIC does not provide all of the food that you need in a month, but can help you find other sources as well.○ All babies receive checks for baby food (fruits and vegetables) and baby cereal. Fully breastfeeding babies receive checks for additional baby food (fruits and vegetables), baby cereal, and baby food meats. For babies who are not breastfed, WIC provides checks for iron fortified formula.○ During summer months at participating WIC clinics, you may be able to receive checks for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These checks allow you to purchase up to \$20 per person of Washington grown fresh fruits and vegetables at authorized Farmers Markets. To read more about the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, visit http://extension.wsu.edu/farmersmarket/Pages/default.aspx.• Breastfeeding Support, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Information about the special benefits of breastfeeding.○ Information to help you decide if breastfeeding is right for you and your baby.○ How to continue breastfeeding when returning to work or school.○ Encouragement and help to continue breastfeeding.○ Connecting with other breastfeeding moms.• Health Screening, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Weighing and measuring to monitor growth.○ Identifying health risks.○ Checking blood iron levels.
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- [Immunizations](#)
- [Nutrition and Health Education](#)
- How to use foods to improve your child's and your own health.
- Parenting, especially about feeding your children.
- Healthy lifestyle choices - being active, avoiding tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.
- Help getting other services for which you may be eligible, including
 - Medical and dental care
 - [Basic Food Program](#)
 - Access to food via food banks, community meals, etc.
 - [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#) (TANF)
 - [Drug and alcohol treatment](#)

How do I get WIC?

1. Make an appointment at a WIC clinic. A list of clinics (including addresses, telephone numbers, website links, hours and services provided) can be found here:
<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/wic-nutrition-program-for-women-infants-children>
2. Talk with a WIC health professional at your appointment.
3. If eligible, you will be given coupons for nutritious foods, such as milk, cheese, eggs, cereals high in iron, peanut butter or dried beans or peas, and fruit or vegetable juices high in vitamin C. If you exclusively breastfeed your baby, you may also receive other items like carrots and canned tuna fish.

Special formulas or nutritional supplements are also available to women and children participants with certain medical conditions. Ask for a WIC Substitution Form and have your doctor complete the form for you.

4. You can use your coupons at any authorized grocery store or farmer's market that you select.

Important things to know:

- If you are homeless, a permanent address is NOT required for WIC eligibility. You may be able to use the address of a shelter, a relative or friend, or even the local WIC office itself if you do not have a permanent address. [See [Washington State WIC Policy and Procedure Manual, Vol. 1, Chapter 19: Special Clients](#)]
- Pregnant/nursing/parenting teens who are in the Foster Care, Kinship care or a group home are automatically "income eligible". If you are not in Foster Care, you may be asked to provide information about how much money you make, if any.
- Only you (or your baby) should eat the foods given to you by WIC. These foods should not be given to others (including other people living in a shelter), and should not be used in group meals. You may be asked to provide information about the shelter to verify that these conditions can be met.

<p>Child Support and Parenting Plans</p> <p><i>Child Support</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>You will not be eligible to receive WIC checks while you are living in an institution</u> (for example, jail, mental institutions, long term care facilities, drug and alcohol treatment centers, etc.), <u>if the institution provides all of your meals</u>. However, you may still be able to receive other Program benefits, such as nutrition education, health assessment and referrals. You can start receiving WIC checks again when you are released from the institution if you are still within a current eligibility period. • <u>If you move, you can transfer your WIC to another clinic</u>. Ask for a transfer card. <p>Pregnancy and Baby Supplies</p> <p>Many organizations require attending classes or enrolling in a program in order to receive help with pregnancy & baby supplies. Please call to confirm details on services offered. Supplies may include items such as maternity & baby clothes, diapers, formula, cribs, strollers & car seats. For resources across Washington state:</p> <p>Baby Clothing and Supplies: https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/baby-clothing</p> <p>Clothing Banks: https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/clothing-banks</p> <p>Do Both Parents Have to Care for Their Child?</p> <p>Yes. Parents legally must care for their children physically, emotionally, and financially. If you are the mom, your legal duties start when your baby is born. If you are the dad, these duties start when the law recognizes you as the legal father. If you do not want to be involved in your baby's life, whether you are the mom or the dad, you are still required to provide financial support for your baby.</p> <p>What Exactly Is Child Support?</p> <p>Child support is money paid by a parent to the person who is taking care of their child (usually the other parent) to help support the child. Child support should be used to provide your child with clothes, food, medical care, a place to live, and child care if needed.</p> <p>How Much Is Child Support?</p> <p>A court will decide how much child support will be paid. The amount is based on many things, including both parents' incomes, whether either parent is paying for child care or health insurance, how much time your child spends with each parent, and a formula called the Washington State Child Support Schedule. If you have an idea of both parents' income, you can use the child support calculator located at the DSHS website to help estimate your financial responsibility.</p> <p>How Do I Collect Child Support?</p> <p>You can either make an informal agreement with your child's other parent about paying child support, or you have more formal options which may work in your best interest. These include a formal DCS agreement, an administrative child support order when one parent receives benefits for the child, or make it part of a parenting plan. You can ask the Division of Child Support for help collecting child support. Their services are usually free. Contact them at (800)457-6202.</p>
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<p><i>Parenting Plans</i></p>	<p>What Exactly Is a Parenting Plan?</p> <p>A parenting plan is a legal document, approved in court, that outlines which parent your child will live with, the amount of time your child will spend with each parent, which parent will make major decisions about your child, and how you and your child's other parent will work out major disagreements.</p> <p>How Do I Form a Parenting Plan?</p> <p>You may file the paperwork yourself. The court will usually approve a parenting plan that both parents agree on. If you and your child's other parent disagree, the court will decide on the parenting plan after a hearing or a trial. For help making these important decisions, talk to an adult you trust. For help figuring out how to properly complete and file the forms, try consulting with an attorney.</p> <p>Where Can I Find Help?</p> <p>You might discuss your decisions with a parent, teacher, or other trusted adult. You can also call the Division of Child Support, who are the experts in the field of paternity and child support, for help at (800) 457-6202. They will not give legal advice but they will share information.</p> <p>WashingtonLawHelp.org has lots of good legal information and resources about how to complete parenting plans.</p> <p>The CLEAR Hotline at (888) 201-1014 can help you find an attorney if you can't afford one.</p> <p>Your county may have free help for family law issues. For example, if you live in King County, learn about their family court service and the family law clinics offered by the King County Bar Association.</p>
<p>Education</p>	<p>How can I stay in school?</p> <p>Becoming a parent while you are in school is very challenging, but it is also very important. Graduating from high school will set you and your baby up for a better future.</p> <p>There are alternative school or separate program (discussed above [cross-reference/link]) for teen parents if you wish, or there are also a variety of other programs designed to help pregnant and parenting teens reach their high school graduation goals.</p> <p>If you are a pregnant teen or a teen mother, you have the right to finish your education. Specifically, you have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay in school and stay in your regular classes while you are pregnant and after your baby is born• Participate in all school and extracurricular activities, including sports and honors programs, if you are medically able to do so. Your school may require you to give them a letter from your doctor saying that you are medically able to participate in school activities, but only if it requires all other students who see a doctor for a health problem to do the same.• Participate in special programs for pregnant students, if one is available, and if you voluntarily choose to do so. No one in your school can force you to go to a special program. No one in your school can force you to take a special class for pregnant and parenting teens, either.

<p>Child Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have excused absences for health problems related to your pregnancy or childbirth. • Follow your doctor's advice to stay home from school for as long as your doctor says you should. • Return to your regular classes and activities after your baby is born at the same academic status you had before you left school because of your pregnancy. <p>Your school may not discriminate against you for being pregnant or being a mother. This means that your school must treat your pregnancy and childbirth the same as any other equivalent medical conditions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If other students who miss school for health reasons receive make-up assignments from their teachers, then you are entitled to receive make-up assignments for the classes you miss because of pregnancy and childbirth. • If home schooling is available for students who need to stay home due to a medical condition, then you are also entitled to home schooling if your doctor says that you need to stay home from school because of your pregnancy or childbirth. <p>If you think your rights to stay in school and succeed have been violated, call the ACLU of Washington for support at (206) 624-2180 or The National Women's Law Center at (202) 588-5180.</p> <p>What parenting classes can I take and who pays for them?</p> <p>If you are eligible for First Steps [cross-reference/link], you and your support person can attend group childbirth education (CBE) classes for free when the classes are taught by a Health Care Authority approved CBE educator. CBE usually starts during the 3rd trimester and the topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to have a healthy pregnancy • Warning signs in pregnancy and what to do • Nutrition • Breastfeeding • Birthing plan • What to expect during labor and delivery, how to manage pain and a hospital tour • Newborn care and changes to expect at home after the baby is born • Safe sleeping position, car seat safety, and well-child care <p>Your school may also have a GRADS program (see above) that provides some parenting skills classes.</p> <p>If I go back to school, who will take care of my child? If I have to work to support my child, who will take care of my child while I am working?</p> <p>When you return to school or work after having a baby, you will need to figure out who will take care of your baby while you are gone. You want to make sure that your baby is well cared for. Deciding who will take care of your baby is a very important decision, and the most obvious or easiest choice is not always the best one for your baby.</p>
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What Are My Child Care Options?

There are a lot of child care options, ranging from large child care centers to small, family-like settings, to making an agreement with a relative or friend. Some communities also have free Early Head Start programs for teen parents that help from before birth to age 3. It's important to choose the child care that works best for your family and meets your baby's needs.

How Do I Find the Right Child Care?

To find a child care provider anywhere in Washington, visit the websites of [Child Care Aware of Washington](#) or [Child Care Resources](#).

If you have chosen a relative or friend as an informal caregiver, it's smart to write up a contract that establishes ground rules. That way everything is clear. This will help you avoid problems and address problems if they do come up.

Check out these websites to help you choose the best child care provider for you:

- [Choosing a child care provider](#)
- [Evaluating child care providers](#)
- [Information about Early Head Start](#)

Additionally, here are some other important things to think about when choosing a child care provider, even if it is someone you know very well:

- Are the staff and other children immunized? Immunizations protect you and your child from preventable diseases.
- Is the home or day care center free of mold and other harmful substances like secondhand smoke?

How Do I Pay for Child Care?

Washington State has a program called [Working Connections Child Care](#) (WCCC) that helps low-income families pay for child care. To apply for WCCC, call the DSHS Customer Service Center at (877) 501-2233 (Monday–Friday 8am–5pm). Before you call, make sure that you've decided on your child care provider and you have a schedule of times when you'll need child care. If you have questions about child care, you can talk to someone who will work through your questions with you. Call [Child Care Aware of Washington](#) at (800) 446-1114.

What's My Backup Plan?

Sometimes, your regular child care may fall through. Most likely this will be a temporary problem. Maybe either your child or your child care provider got sick. Have a backup plan figured out in advance so you don't get stressed out when you have to rearrange things at the last minute. Most backup options fall into two main categories: find someone else to care for your child, or stay home yourself.

How Can I Find a Backup Person?

Ask your main child care provider if they have someone else lined up in case of an emergency. If they do, ask to meet their backup person in advance to make sure you are comfortable with them. It is also a great idea to make your own backup list of people you can call in an emergency. Think about relatives and neighbors, and research your local [babysitters](#), [crisis nurseries](#), and sick child care options through the [yellow pages](#) or local hospitals. Remember to always leave your caregiver with [emergency contact numbers](#) so they are prepared if anything comes up.

What if I Need to Stay Home Myself?

You may occasionally need to take the day off from work or school to care for your child. Plan ahead on using some of your sick/vacation days at work for this purpose, if you have them available. You can also talk to your boss about making up later for the time that you have to take off.

You might also take turns with your partner, a relative, or a neighbor that you trust. It may be easier to get a couple of hours off work and split the day with someone else that you trust in caring for your child. You may be able to take a school project home, or work from home if you have that flexibility with your job.

Other Resources:

- [Child Care Aware of Washington](#) helps you find child care in your community.
- At [Child Care Resources](#) you can find child care in King County through a free online search.
- The [City of Seattle](#) provides early learning and family support programs—including child care payment assistance.
- The [Homeless Child Care Program](#) helps families who are homeless find and pay for child care.
- Child Care Aware of Washington’s website provides an overview of the different kinds of child care services available [here](#) and [here](#).
- [Child Care Aware](#) has a lot of information about child care for new parents.
- Find an [Early Head Start](#) site in your community.

XIII. DOMESTIC AND DATING VIOLENCE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	
<p>What is Domestic Violence?</p>	<p>What is Domestic Violence?</p> <p>Although there are many acts that may fall within the definition of domestic violence, this handbook focuses on the legal definition of domestic violence and what help is available to you if you are a victim of domestic violence.</p> <p>Accordingly to the law, Domestic Violence occurs when a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) causes you physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or causes you to fear immediate physical harm, bodily injury or assault; (b) sexual assaults you; or (c) is stalking you. <p>The person causing or threatening the harm, or stalking you, must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a family member (this includes parents, siblings, children, spouses, stepparents, stepchildren, grandparents and grandchildren); • someone you live with or lived with in the past; • someone you have a child with; or • someone you currently have, or have had a dating relationship with. <p>Commonly Used Terms and Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Abuser</u> - the person who commits the Domestic Violence against you. • <u>Civil Order</u> - a Court Order obtained in Civil Court (rather than Criminal Court) that can help protect you and your children from Domestic Violence; examples of Civil Orders include Domestic Violence Orders for Protection, Anti-Harassment Orders, and Restraining Orders. • <u>Criminal Order</u> - a Court Order obtained in Criminal Court that can help protect you from Domestic Violence; examples of Criminal Orders include No-Contact Orders. • <u>Defendant</u> - your Abuser (this term is used in the criminal and civil legal systems). • <u>Domestic Violence Advocate</u> - someone who has special training in Domestic Violence and can help with safety planning, support and connecting you to resources. • <u>No-Contact Orders</u> - also referred to as "Restraining Orders," which generally means the same thing. • <u>Order</u> - a Civil Order or a Criminal Order. • <u>Petitioner</u> - you, when you request an Order for Protection. • <u>Prosecutor</u> - the prosecuting attorney or city attorney in a criminal case.

What can I do to get the best police response?

- Be as calm as possible so that you can accurately describe what happened;
- Ask for an interpreter if you speak little or no English;
- Explain every detail of what happened to the police;
- Show the police all of your injuries, bruises, areas of tenderness or pain, and any damaged property;
- Give the police the names of any witnesses;
- Tell the police of any other incidents of abuse that have happened in the past;
- Show the police all past court documents such as Civil Orders or Criminal Orders;
- Ask the police to make a report and ask for the officer's card, name and badge number; and
- Ask for the case number of the police report and a phone number so you can call to follow-up on the case.

How do I press criminal charges against my abuser? What if I don't want to press criminal charges?

Police reports are sent to the Prosecutor, who will decide whether or not to file criminal charges against your Abuser. It is not your decision. If no charges are filed, you should receive notice and information on how to request that charges be filed.

What happens if my abuser is charged with a crime?

If the Prosecutor files criminal charges against your Abuser, you are likely to be ordered (subpoenaed) to come to court as a witness and testify (i.e., tell the court) about what happened. The Prosecutor represents the State of Washington, not you. You do not need an attorney in order to appear as a witness. The Prosecutor should spend some time with you before trial discussing your testimony. Call them if you have any questions. Many offices will give you an advocate to help you through the process, and you should request one if you have to testify in a criminal case.

Do I need a lawyer to press criminal charges? Will it cost me anything to press criminal charges?

No, you do not need a lawyer to press criminal charges against your Abuser, and pressing criminal charges against your Abuser will not cost you anything.

How long does a court proceeding take? What if I need protection immediately?

Sometimes it takes months before a case comes to trial and you should take steps to protect yourself from your Abuser. If you fear further injury or harassment from your Abuser, tell the Prosecutor or your Domestic Violence Advocate that you want a No-Contact Order ([see below](#)). This order states that your Abuser cannot have any contact with you while awaiting trial, whether they are in or out of jail. If you report a violation of the order, the police must immediately arrest your Abuser.

- **How much does it cost?** There is no fee for this Order.
- **How long does it last?** Only as long as the criminal case is pending.
- **Who represents the victim?** The victim is not directly represented by an attorney, but the Prosecutor's office and court appointed domestic violence professionals are available to assist the victim to understand the process and assist with requesting a Criminal Anti-Harassment No-Contact Order if necessary.
- **What if the Order is violated?** If the victim calls the police to report a violation of the Order, the police are required to arrest the abuser. The victim may also go to court to request that criminal and contempt charges be filed against the abuser.

Anti-Harassment Order (Civil Order)

- **Who may get this Order?** A victim who has been subjected to seriously alarming, annoying, or harassing behavior without a legitimate or lawful purpose. The abuser can be a stranger.
- **Who is protected by the Order?** The victim.
- **How do you get this Order?** The victim petitions for the Order in the judicial district where the abuse occurred or where the Abuser is living at the time the petition is filed. The clerk of the court can provide further instructions.
- **Where do you get this Order?** District Court. In some instances the Superior Court may agree to grant the Order.
- **What can this Order do?** Restrain an abuser from any contact with the victim; restrain an abuser from coming within a certain distance of victim's home or workplace; require an abuser to surrender weapons; restrain an abuser from coming to the school of the victim or their child(ren); and/or restrain an abuser from keeping the victim under surveillance.
- **How much does it cost?** The basic filing fee for this Order is \$93-\$120 (District Court), or \$110-\$120 (Superior Court). A low-income victim may request that the court waive the fees.
- **How long does it last?** A temporary Order will last days. A full Order will last up to one year, renewable.
- **Who represents the victim?** The victim may represent him or herself or be represented by an attorney. However, the victim does not have the right to a free lawyer.
- **What if the Order is violated?** If the victim calls the police to report a violation of the Order, the police may arrest the abuser for a misdemeanor. The victim may also go to court to request that civil contempt charges be filed against the abuser.

Domestic Violence Protection Order (Civil Order)

- **Who may get this Order?** A victim of Domestic Violence. Victims 16 years old or older can petition for this Order on their own behalf. Victims under 16 years old must have a parent, legal guardian or next friend petition on their behalf.
- **Who is protected by this Order?** The victim and possibly the victim's child(ren). The Order may protect a youth from his or her parent.

- **How do you get this Order?** A victim who is at least 16 years old files a petition in the county where the victim lives or has fled to avoid abuse. A victim who is under 16 years old must have a parent, legal guardian or next friend (someone who is at least 18 years old chosen by the victim, and who can act in the victim's best interest) file the petition. The clerk of the court can provide further instructions.
- **Where do you get this Order?** Municipal, District or Superior Court.
- **What can this Order do?** Restrain the abuser from entering or coming within a certain distance of a residence, workplace, school or child(ren)'s school or daycare, or threatening or harming the victim or any child. It can order the abuser to leave a shared home or attend treatment/counseling. The victim may be awarded temporary custody of child(ren) or the use of essential personal effects, including pets, and use of a vehicle.
- **How much does it cost?** There is no fee for this Order.
- **How long does it last?** The court decides how long the Order will last. If the Order restrains the abuser's contact with his or her minor child(ren), it may only last for a year, but it may be renewed.
- **Who represents Victim?** The victim or a lawyer. However, the victim is not entitled to a free lawyer.
- **What if the Order is violated?** If the victim calls the police to report a violation of the Order, the police are required to arrest the abuser. The victim may also go to court to request that civil contempt charges be filed against the abuser.

Restraining Order (Civil Order)

- **Who may get this Order?** Anyone who is a party (involved in a court action) where the other party (the party to be restrained) is the spouse or is the parent of a child in common.
- **Who is protected by this Order?** The victim and possibly the victim's child(ren).
- **How do you get this Order?** You can request this Order if you have filed for or are responding to an action for divorce, legal separation, parentage, or child custody modification.
- **Where do you get this Order?** Superior Court.
- **What can this Order do?** Restrain the abuser from entering or coming within a certain distance of a residence, workplace, school or child(ren)'s school or daycare; from harming or harassing the victim or any child(ren); from contacting the victim or any child(ren); from removing the child(ren) from the jurisdiction of the court; or from disposing of property. The victim may be awarded temporary custody of any child(ren) unless there is a related marital dissolution in which case the Family Court would have the right to decide who gets temporary custody of any child(ren).
- **How much does it cost?** There is no fee for this Order. However, any related marital dissolution (such as a divorce) proceeding would require a fee.
- **How long does it last?** The court decides how long it will last. It may only last for a year, but it may be renewed.

<p>Special Circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who represents the victim? The victim may represent him or herself or be represented by an attorney. However, the victim is not entitled to a free lawyer.• What if the Order is violated? If the victim calls the police to report a violation of the Order, the police are required to arrest the abuser if the Order so states. The victim may also go to Court to request that civil contempt charges be filed against the abuser. <p>What do I do with my Order?</p> <p>If your abuser violates an Order you may elect to call the police to report the violation. The police are required to enforce your Order and, in many cases, arrest your abuser. Your Order can only be enforced if you call the police. You should carry a certified copy of your Order with you at all times. If you do not want to call the police then you may ask the court for a contempt finding against the abuser if you are not in immediate danger and feel that you can wait for the court process to finish (many weeks).</p> <p>Do the Domestic Violence laws protect me if I am LGBTQ?</p> <p>Yes. The law protects all persons regardless of sexual orientation. There are programs and resources dedicated to helping LGBTQ victims of Domestic Violence.</p> <p>What if I cannot work or have medical bills as a result of the Domestic Violence? Can someone help me with this lost income or costs I may experience as a result of the Domestic Violence?</p> <p>If your injuries from the abuse required medical care or made you unable to work, Washington law allows victims to take unpaid leave from work (see below). You may also seek unemployment insurance benefits if you have to leave your job because of or to avoid Domestic Violence.</p> <p>For expenses, you may be able to seek money from the Crime Victims' Compensation program. The Crime Victims Compensation program requires you to file a report with the police within 1 year of the date the crime occurred. You have 2 years from the date you making the report to law enforcement to file an application for benefits with the Crime Victims Compensation program. The state does not have to file charges or successfully convict the Abuser of the crime for you to qualify for victim compensation. Law enforcement officials are required to inform you about this law, or you can ask them about it. You may qualify for benefits even if you're still living with the perpetrator (the abuser).</p> <p>What if I need time off from work to get medical treatment, find a new place to live, or go to court?</p> <p>In certain circumstances, you and your family members may be entitled to take paid or unpaid "domestic violence leave" from your job following a Domestic Violence incident. This could mean taking reasonable leave from work, taking intermittent leave, or working a reduced work schedule, provided that the leave is for the purpose of seeking or obtaining legal or law enforcement assistance, medical treatment, social services, counseling, or relocation/safety planning assistance, in each case relating to the Domestic Violence incident.</p>
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You will be required to provide your employer with notice of your intention to take leave, as well as verification of your status as a Victim, or a family member of a Victim, which could mean providing a copy of a police report or a Protection Order. Your employer must keep this information confidential unless you give your consent for your employer to share this information with someone else, or if your employer is ordered by a court or administrative agency, or required by law, to share this information with someone else.

What if my abuser caused damage to my property?

If your Abuser caused damage to your property, you can file criminal charges with the police. Criminal charges may be filed whether or not an Order for Protection has been approved.

What if I am, or my Abuser is, part of a Native American Tribe?

The laws of the tribe will be relevant only if the Domestic Violence occurs on tribal land.

Not all Indian tribes in Washington have adopted specific Domestic Violence codes. There is no uniform tribal domestic code; therefore tribes that have adopted Domestic Violence codes may have different provisions and relief granted under their codes. Some tribes have specific Domestic Violence codes, while other tribes rely on general criminal or civil statutes to address the issue.

What assistance with the criminal and civil process is available if English is my second language?

Courts in Washington are required to provide interpreters at no cost for limited English proficient ("LEP") persons in all court proceedings, including civil and criminal proceedings. Courts must provide LEP persons with meaningful access to court functions that are conducted outside of the courtroom (e.g., court clerk-information counters, intake or filing offices, cashiers, records rooms, sheriffs' offices, probation and parole offices, alternative dispute resolution programs, pro se clinics, criminal diversion programs, and detention facilities). Courts must also provide interpreters or bilingual staff to ensure that LEP persons are able to communicate effectively with court appointed or court supervised personnel.

Additionally, the [Washington courts website](#) includes a number of Domestic Violence resources in Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

What if my abuser doesn't live in Washington state?

If your Abuser is not a resident of Washington state, it may still be possible for you to obtain an Order for Protection in certain circumstances, including if your Abuser is served with the Order in Washington state, responds to court proceedings in Washington state, or commits the acts of Domestic Violence in Washington state.

What if I am in divorce proceedings with my abuser?

You can consider seeking a Restraining Order when you file for or respond to an action for divorce, paternity, or child custody modification, as described above. Normally, No-Contact Orders between the parties in a divorce or concerning their child(ren) will be managed by the Family Court. The exception is if there is Domestic Violence requiring a police response in which case a criminal case could run at the same time as the divorce proceeding.

<p>Domestic Violence Affecting Lease and Landlord relations</p>	<p>What if my landlord is going to evict me for Domestic Violence-related complaints? What if I need to terminate my lease early because I've been a victim of Domestic Violence? What if no one will rent to me and my children because I am a victim of Domestic Violence?</p> <p>Both the fair housing laws and the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act have provisions designed to protect or assist victims of Domestic Violence, including certain protections against evictions, certain early termination rights for leases, and certain protections against discriminatory leasing practices. These protections apply regardless of your immigration status.</p> <p>Where applicable, victims may contact the Fair Housing Center of Washington if you need assistance with landlord-tenant matters following a Domestic Violence incident: 1-888-766-8800.</p> <p>What can I do if I never want my abuser to find me again?</p> <p>You could consider a Confidential Identity Change (which is a change of your name and Social Security Number), but this is a very extreme step and you should speak with a Domestic Violence Advocate who can explain the consequences and procedures to you.</p> <p>Additional Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-562-6025• The National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 or 1-800-787-3224• CLEAR: 1-888-201-1014 (for low -income victims living in Washington State outside of King County)• Fair Housing Center of Washington: 1-888-766-8800• Legal Voice: (206) 621-7691.• Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 206-389-2515 (Seattle) or 360-586-1022 (Olympia)• Washingtonlawhelp.org
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XIV. IDENTIFICATION

IDENTIFICATION	INTRODUCTION
<p>When Proof of Identity Documents are required.</p>	<p>When will I need to show proof of my identity?</p> <p>There are a lot of times when you will need to show proof of your identity, including when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting a Social Security number • Registering for school • Applying for financial aid for school • Getting a job • Applying for a driver's license • Opening a bank account • Renting an apartment • Applying for government benefits, such as public assistance
IDENTIFICATION	PROOF OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS
<p>Proof of Identity Documents</p> <p>Documents in a Foreign Language</p> <p>Documents Rejected</p>	<p>What will I need to prove my identity?</p> <p>The exact documents you need may vary depending on the purpose and, in some cases, your age.</p> <p>In general, for most purposes, you will need a valid driver's license or state identification card or instruction (learner's) permit. You may also need your Social Security number.</p> <p>What if I only have foreign documents?</p> <p>If you present authentic foreign documents, the licensing department will make every effort to read and interpret them. The licensing department may need to fax your document to another location. If no bilingual staff members are available, the licensing department may ask you to provide a certified English translation by an approved contracting agency along with the original document.</p> <p>What happens if my documents aren't accepted?</p> <p>If the licensing department can't accept your identification documents, you may request an additional document review by speaking with the driver licensing office ID Review Specialist. If the specialist is unable to determine positive identification, the licensing department may refer your documents for further evaluation.</p>

IDENTIFICATION	HOW TO OBTAIN IDENTIFICATION
<p>Getting a Washington State Driver's License</p>	<p>How do I obtain a Washington State ID card?</p> <p>You can apply in person at any licensing office. If this is your first Washington State ID you can save time by pre-applying online before you go. Record your confirmation ID number you get online. You will be asked for this number when you get to the driver's license office.</p> <p>For further information on this please visit http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/gettingidcard.html</p> <p>What do I need to bring with me?</p> <p>Some common documents that may be used for proof of identity are a U.S. passport, Immigration ID, driver's license (Washington or out-of-state).</p> <p>For further information on the documents you can use to prove identity, click on the link below: Proof of Identity.</p> <p>Will I need a Mailing Address?</p> <p>Yes. You will need to list an address on your ID card as well as be able to receive your permanent ID card in the mail.</p> <p>Will I need to complete an application?</p> <p>Yes. You can do this in person at any department of licensing office. You can save time by pre-applying online.</p> <p>Is there an application fee?</p> <p>Yes - \$35. You can pay the fee with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash • Check • Credit or debit card (at most locations) (A vendor-charged convenience fee is added if you pay with a debit or credit card at a driver licensing office.) <p>You will also need to pay an additional \$45 fee to obtain your driver's license once you have met all of the licensing requirements.</p> <p>Will I need to have my photograph taken, and if yes, what can I wear?</p> <p>Yes. You will have to have your photograph taken. You will be asked to remove anything that covers your face or head (like a hat or sunglasses). Exceptions will be made for valid medical and religious reasons.</p> <p>When will I receive my ID?</p> <p>Before you leave the licensing office, you'll get a temporary ID. Your permanent ID will be processed and mailed to you within 7–10 days. If for some reason you haven't received your ID within 30 days, return to any driver licensing office.</p>

Washington State Driver's License	How do I obtain a Washington State Driver's license? If you are under 18, you must apply for an instruction (learner's) permit before you can apply for a driver's license.
Age and Other Requirements for a Driver's License	Where do I find out more information about an instruction permit? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call the Washington State Department of Licensing ("DOL") customer service line at (360) 902-3900, or• Find information online, or• Visit in person at any driver's license office. How old do I have to be to apply for a Washington State Driver's license? <p>You must be at least 16 years old.</p> What other requirements are there? <p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pass a traffic safety education course.• Have an instruction permit for at least 6 months.• Have at least 50 hours of supervised driving practice (including 10 hours at night) with someone who has been licensed for 5 years or more.• Not have any traffic violations within 6 months of applying for the license.• Not have been convicted of any alcohol or drug offense while holding an instruction permit. What if I am between 16-17 years old? <p>You must have had your instruction permit for at least 6 months from the date of issue before you can apply for your driver's license.</p> What if I am under 16? <p>You must have had your instruction permit for at least 6 months and be within 60 days of your 16th birthday.</p> Do I need to have a parent or legal guardian with me? <p>If under 18, you must have a parent or guardian present with you at the licensing office to sign a Parental Authorization Affidavit to confirm your driving practice and grant you permission to get a license or bring in the signed and notarized Parental Authorization Affidavit if they can't go to the office with you.</p> Where do I get the Parental Authorization Affidavit? <p>You can download the form online or pick one up in person at the driver licensing office.</p>

- Selective Service card with your current residential address.
- Vehicle title (not a super service title with a tamper proof tape over the VIN and Title number).
- Documents issued by a bank in the last 30 days which include your current residential address, such as an account statement, credit card statement or mortgage statement.

What documents are not acceptable?

Cable, internet or satellite TV bills

What if the documents do not include my correct name or current address?

Your documents must include your name and current Washington residential address. It's illegal to present fraudulent documents. If your documents are found to be fraudulent, you won't be able to reapply for 364 days.

What happens after I apply using verification of Washington residence documents?

Within 2 weeks, you will be sent a letter and form to request an appointment with the licensing department to review your documents. You will need to complete the form and send it back by mail or fax, following the instructions on the form. Then you will be contacted by the licensing department to schedule an appointment and meet in person to verify your proof of Washington residence. After verification of your Washington residence address, you will be issued a driver's license, photo instruction permit, or ID card.

Will I need to complete an application?

Yes. You can do this in person at any driver licensing office. You can save time by [pre-applying online](#).

Is there an application fee?

Yes. [Fees vary depending on what license or permit you want.](#)

Will I have to take a test?

Yes, you will need to take a written knowledge test and a driving test.

Do I need to make an appointment to take these tests?

You will need an appointment to take the driving test. The written test can be taken without an appointment.

Are there any other tests?

Yes. You will need to pass a vision screening and demonstration of color recognition. If you wear contacts or glasses you should bring them with you to your appointment.

Establishing Residency in Washington	Will I need to have my photograph taken, and if yes, what can I wear?
When You Will Receive Your License	<p>Yes. You will have to have your photograph taken. You will be asked to remove anything that covers your face or head (like a hat or sunglasses). Exceptions will be made for valid medical and religious reasons.</p>
	How do I establish residency in Washington?
	<p>You're considered a Washington resident when you do any of the following:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrive in Washington and begin establishing a home in the state.• Register to vote.• Receive state benefits.• Get any Washington State license at resident rates.• Receive in-state tuition fees.
	Where can I find out more information about establishing residency in Washington?
	<p>You can find more information online.</p>
	When will I receive my license?
	<p>Before you leave the licensing office, you'll get a temporary license that will allow you to drive for 45 days. Your permanent Washington driver's license will be processed and mailed to you within 7–10 days. If for some reason you haven't received your new license within 30 days, return to any driver licensing office.</p>
	Will I need a mailing address?
	<p>Yes. You will need to list an address on your license as well as be able to receive your permanent license in the mail.</p>
	If I have foreign documents, can I use them to verify my proof of identity?
	<p>Yes. If you present authentic foreign documents, the licensing department will make every effort to read and interpret them. The licensing department may need to fax your documents to another location. If no bilingual staff members are available, the licensing department may ask you to provide a certified English translation by an approved contracting agency along with the original documents. Please note that a valid, unexpired foreign passport is considered primary proof of identity.</p>
	What happens if my documents aren't accepted?
	<p>If the licensing department can't accept your identification documents, you may request an additional document review by speaking with the driver licensing office ID Review Specialist. If the specialist is unable to determine positive identification, the licensing department may refer your documents for further evaluation.</p>

<p>Getting a Birth Certificate</p>	<p>How do I get a copy of my birth certificate?</p> <p>You can order your birth certificate through the Center for Health Statistics by walk-in same day service, by mail, online or over the phone.</p> <p>You will generally need to know your parents' full names and your place of birth in order to complete the necessary forms.</p> <p>If you were born in a state other than Washington, the requirements for obtaining a birth certificate may differ - see link for different state requirements.</p> <p>Where do I go for Walk-in Service?</p> <p>Center for Health Statistics Department of Health 101 Israel Road SE Tumwater, WA 98501</p> <p>For further information please call (360) 236-4300.</p>
<p>Documents Needed for Birth Certificate</p>	<p>What documentation will I need?</p> <p>You will need to complete an Ordering Form, which can be picked up and completed in person or downloaded online.</p> <p>Is expedited delivery available?</p> <p>Yes. Expedited delivery is available at an additional cost.</p>
<p>Ordering Birth Certificates Online</p>	<p>Can I order my certified birth certificate online?</p> <p>Yes. However, the Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, does not accept credit cards for online orders of vital records so orders will need to be made through an independent company that the Washington State Department of Health has partnered with to provide you this service: VitalChek Network, Inc. VitalChek can be reached through its website. An additional fee is charged by VitalChek for using this service, and all major credit cards are accepted, including American Express®, Discover®, MasterCard® or Visa®</p>
<p>Birth Certificate Costs</p>	<p>What are the fees associated with ordering my certified birth certificate online?</p> <p>First Copy: \$20.00 Additional Copies: \$20.00</p> <p>How long does it take to receive my certified birth certificate?</p> <p>On average, most agency locations tend to process Express delivery orders in 3-5 business days, and Standard Mail orders in 7-10 business days. Express delivery orders are those where any UPS or FedEx delivery service has been selected. Standard Mail orders are those where U.S. Postal Service Standard Mail has been selected as the delivery method.</p>

Obtaining Your Social Security Number	<p data-bbox="451 268 1328 306">I don't have a Social Security number – how do I get one?</p> <p data-bbox="451 323 1414 415">To obtain or replace a social security card, you will need to (1) provide documents proving U.S. citizenship, age and identity; (2) complete an application; and (3) either mail or take the application and documents to a social security office.</p> <p data-bbox="451 432 1263 462">See http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm for further information.</p>
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XV. CONSUMER AND CREDIT

Consumer Credit	Credit Basics
	<p>What is credit and why does it matter?</p> <p>Your credit is a basic "score" of your financial reputation as a borrower and informs others, such as banks and other lenders, how likely you are to pay them back if they loan you money. When you borrow money from companies and banks, your credit is usually tracked by three national credit reporting bureaus called Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. These bureaus will be notified if you are late in paying your bills or if you ever fail to fully pay back a loan or other debt, which can result in you being considered to have "bad" credit.</p> <p>Having good credit is important for a number of reasons. For instance, people with good credit will often find it easier to obtain loans (including student loans) and will often be given those loans at better interest rates. Obtaining a better interest is good, because it means you will pay less money over the life of the loan. An example is below:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Frank and Wayne are each approved for a \$100 loan from Bank Orange. Bank Orange will pay each person \$100 today, and as a cost for this service, Frank and Wayne will be required to pay Bank Orange back the \$100 loan a year from today plus interest at the rate set by the bank for each person. The bank checks Frank's credit, sees that it is good, and sets his interest rate at 5%. Wayne, however, has bad credit and so his interest rate is set at 10%. At the end of the year, Frank will be required to pay Bank Orange back \$105, whereas Wayne will have to pay the bank back \$110.</p> <p>You always need to be careful when buying items with credit. It can be tempting to view credit as "free money" or ignore that one day your purchases on credit will need to be repaid, but remember: you will always have to pay it back later, and you will usually have to pay it back with interest, too. Credit, while potentially a valuable tool, also has very real and very serious risks. If you take on too much debt, you may risk personal bankruptcy or a default under your loans. If you default on a loan to buy a car or a home, the lender may be entitled to take possession of the car or home (or some of your other possessions) and sell them in order to recoup the money that they loaned to you. In short, mismanaged credit can be incredibly damaging.</p>

How does credit affect my personal financial health?

Your credit determines your "borrowing costs" for debt and affecting whether lenders are willing to lend to you in the first place. In other words, if you need a loan to buy a car, pay for school, or for any other reason, and you have bad credit, the lender is either going to reject your application or ask you to pay more money to obtain the loan.

How does credit affect my personal financial health?

Debt is a component of the personal finances of many people, and if used properly, can be a very helpful tool. Debt can be either good or bad, depending on the circumstances.

A good example of "good" debt is a manageable loan you take to make a sensible purchase that you legitimately need but can't afford to pay for in full up front. For example, if you need a car to get to work or school, it might be sensible to get an automobile loan from a bank to buy a car. However, even if you legitimately need something, you need to make sure you don't take on more debt than you can afford to pay back: if you can only afford to make the monthly loan payments on a \$3,000 car loan, you should not take out a \$10,000 loan in order to buy a nicer car.

Even good debt should be used to make only sensible purchases; for example, it would be foolish to take out a five-year loan to buy an old car with reliability problems, only for the car to break down in year one, leaving you stuck making loan payments for the next four years for a car you cannot drive!

Bad debt includes debt you've taken on for things you either don't need or can't afford, like a plasma TV bought on a credit card or a car you can't afford. Additionally, bad debt can include loans with unusually high interest rates such as payday loans, which charge such high interest rates for the loan that many people can not afford to pay them back (in general, payday loans and cash advances are to be avoided for this reason).

Even debt that in some ways seems like a good idea can end up being a bad decision in certain circumstances. That's why it is always important to think very seriously and carefully when making the decision to buy anything using credit.

Do I have a credit history?

If you've never rented an apartment, had an account with a utility company or purchased anything on credit, you probably don't have any credit history. You can check to see if any credit history is being reported for you by requesting a copy of your credit report from the credit bureaus (more information on this below). Your credit report will include information about your:

- **Identity:** this includes your name, address, marital status, your date of birth, number of dependents, previous addresses, and Social Security number.
- **Employment:** this includes your present position, length of employment, income and previous jobs.
- **Credit History:** this consists of your credit experiences with companies who have extended credit to you in the past (for example: what loans you have taken and whether you have repaid them)
- **Public Record:** this includes civil lawsuits and judgments, bankruptcy records, or other legal proceedings recorded by a court.

How do I get a copy of my credit report?

Everyone is legally entitled to request a free copy of his or her credit report once a year. To order your free copy, go to www.annualcreditreport.com or call (877) 322-8228. You can order a report from all three credit bureaus at once or one at a time from each credit bureau throughout the year. Unless otherwise necessary, only order your credit report through the source above; all other sources will likely require you to pay a charge and may have hidden fees.

The law doesn't require the credit bureaus to provide you with your credit "score" for free but you can obtain that information separately for a fee. In most cases, be wary of any companies or individuals other than the three credit bureaus that offer to provide you with your credit score; these are, at best, often expensive services with hidden fees or, at worst, scams. You may wish to consult www.creditkarma.com, which is a legitimate site for obtaining a free copy of your credit score. Credit scores can range from the low 300s to the mid-800s.

- Above 720 is excellent;
- Between 719 and 680 is good;
- Between 679 and 620 is average;
- Between 619 and 580 is poor;
- and below 580 is bad.

Upon request, the credit bureau must disclose to you all of its information and its sources for that information. This includes identification of anyone who obtained a copy of your credit report in the past two years, plus the names of all others who requested credit reports or other information about you in the last six months.

Who else can request my credit report?

Any business, individual, or government agency may request your credit report for its legitimate business needs - including doing business with you. If a company requests your credit report in connection with you getting a loan from them or opening a credit card with their company (or something similar), this is called a "hard" request. If a number of hard requests are made for your credit report in a short period of time, this can indicate to lenders that you're desperate for a loan and thus drag down your credit score. But if a company or individual requests your credit report purely for informational purposes (that is, not in connection with giving you a new loan or new credit card), this is called a "soft" request and it will not affect your credit score.

In addition to the free annual report, the credit bureaus must provide you with a free copy of your file if you have been denied credit within the last 30 days, subject to certain rules.

What should I do if there are errors on my credit report?

If you find an error in your report, notify the credit bureau who provided you the erroneous report (or all three, if the error shows up on all three reports) as soon as possible in writing. The credit bureaus maintain websites for submitting and addressing errors:

Equifax www.equifax.com/answers/correct-credit-report-errors/en_cp

Experian www.experian.com/disputes/

TransUnion www.transunion.com/corporate/personal/creditDisputes.page

The bureau is required to investigate the items in question within 30 business days of receiving your notice of dispute unless they deem your dispute frivolous. If an error is fixed, a copy of your fixed credit report will be sent to you. A corrected version can be sent by the bureaus, at your request, to anyone who received the report in the past six months. Job applicants can have corrected reports sent to anyone who received a copy during the past two years. If the new

investigation does not solve the problem, you may have the bureau include your version of the disputed information in your file; this statement will be included in all future issues of your report.

How do I establish credit?

There are a few things you can do to help establish credit. The first one is to open and maintain a checking account and possibly even a savings account at a local bank or credit union. This is helpful in two ways:

- When you have active bank accounts in good standing, you are proving that you can manage money. While bank accounts aren't typically a part of your credit score, lenders can use this information to determine whether or not you are a credit risk.
- Establishing a relationship with a bank or credit union will improve your chances of obtaining a loan or credit card through that bank or credit union. If you already do business with a bank or credit union, it should be your first place to look. Your bank knows you and values your business. This existing relationship should carry some weight when seeking credit.

Once you have an established checking account, you could apply for a credit card through your bank or credit union. It is best to apply in person with your local branch and explain to the bank or credit union officer that you are trying to establish a good credit history. The limit will undoubtedly be very low but that prevent you from running up a big balance. When you make an initial purchase with it, when you get the bill, pay off the balance in full. Once the card is active, it will be reported to the credit bureaus and you will begin to establish your credit history. For this reason, it is important to maintain a good payment history on this card so your credit history can build upon it. You will need to be disciplined and use it properly. Don't treat this new purchasing tool as free money, but only as a means to establish a good credit history. If you pay off your credit card bill every month on time, you are building good credit. This will mean you pay no fees and get to borrow money for free..

Are there options if I cannot get a credit card?

If you are unable to get even a low limit credit card from your bank, consider getting a department store credit card. Generally, store cards have a very high interest rate. But they do help establish credit if you pay the bill on time and if they report to the credit bureaus.

How do I repair bad credit?

Repairing a bad credit history takes time. Only a consistent pattern of changing your spending habits and paying your bills on time over time can raise a bad credit score. Paying your bills in full or paying more than the minimum amount due will also help. Establishing a manageable and realistic budget can often help you strategize a plan for paying your bills. If you have bad credit or a large amount of debt and can't seem to stick to a budget or manage your money carefully, you may want to inquire about credit counseling, which may be available for free through your community's public recourses. Beware, however, of credit

repair programs offered by private businesses, as these can be scams that can end up costing you even more. As a general rule, be very careful of anyone asking you to pay them money to help you get out of debt.

What are the differences between credit cards and debit cards?

Debit cards are linked to the funds currently deposited in your bank account. When you purchase things using a debit card, the amount spent is automatically deducted from your bank account. Debit cards can be a good way to track your spending, as your monthly statements will track how you use your card, and since your bank balance goes down with each transaction, you are less likely to overspend. However, if you do use your debit card to spend more than is currently in your bank account, the bank will typically still allow the purchase to be made. Banks call this "overdraft protection," but you will be charged significant fees and other charges to use it. As a rule, over drafting on your account should always be avoided, and you should be careful to ensure you do not use your debit card to spend more than is currently in your bank account. You do not build credit by using a debt card.

Credit cards allow you to use the funds of your credit card company to initially pay for a purchase, up to a certain set limit. You will then later pay the credit card company back for this purchase with interest. While credit cards can be a good tool for building up credit, the fees and interest rate charges often make them more harmful than helpful. Always be careful when using credit cards.

Despite the risk of credit cards, it may be helpful to obtain a credit card that is used only for emergencies. This can be used as a way to pay for truly urgent, emergency needs when they arise.

How do I understand the credit card application and pick the best card for my needs?

The financial terms of the credit card, such as its rates, fees and charges, are in almost all cases the most important terms to consider. Some things to consider are:

- Does the card charge an annual fee?
- What is the [Annual Percentage Rate](#), or borrowing rate? Is the borrowing rate a special low introductory rate that applies for a short period after I start using my card and, if so, what is the normal rate and when will it kick in? Is there a different rate for transferring card balances or getting a cash advance?
- What is the grace period on the card? The grace period is the time during which you will not have to pay interest or other fees on the borrowed amount. It is usually the time between the day you receive the bill and the payment due date.
- What is the minimum interest charged if you are late on payment?
- What are other fees and penalties?

There are other features of credit cards including rewards programs such as earning cash back or points for purchases. The card may offer consumer protection in the form extended product warranties, free fraud prevention/monitoring services, or zero/no liability for transactions fraudulently made by others if your credit card is

stolen. While these services or features can be helpful, always keep in mind the fees and charges that will apply to your use of the credit card first when considering whether a credit card is right for you.

What information should or should not be required on a credit card application?

The information asked for on an application is very extensive and personal, so be careful in determining that the application itself is from a legitimate source. Pre-approved credits applications sent in the mail may be fraudulent, and should usually be avoided. Also, be very careful of credit card offers provided to you over the internet or via e-mail, as these can be scams. It is always best to sign up for a credit card in person.

When completing the application, you will need to provide your legal name and may be asked for your maiden name or any aliases you have gone by in the past. The lender will need your birth date, Social Security number, mailing address, phone numbers, and an email address. If you apply online, the email address will usually be used to provide confirmation that your application has been received. The application will ask about your yearly gross income; that is, your earnings before taxes and other deductions. They may ask for employer contact information to verify your job and income. The application may ask about your monthly rent or mortgage, and how long you've lived at your current residence (note: you will need to give an address). In addition, some applications will ask about your monthly expenses and ongoing debt such as car or student loans that you currently are paying.

What are some online resources for comparing cards?

The major card companies, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover, each have their own website that will help you understand credit cards in greater detail and "comparison shop" between cards. There are also third-party websites that allow for comparison shopping; even though these can be helpful in some ways, you should still be careful when using these websites. Some reputable sites that might help are **bankrate.com**, **cardhub.com**, and **creditcards.com**.

How do I manage my credit card?

Use your credit card responsibly. Only purchase what you can reasonably afford to pay for at the end of the month or, ideally, only for emergency needs. To goal is to establish a good credit history: it's never a good idea to put everything on credit in order to defer payment until later or buy things you can't really afford. It is better to simply make a few sensible purchases that you know you can repay at the end of the month, and then pay your bill off in full at the end of the month. Doing this consistently for a few months or years will help you build good credit over time. You should only carry a maximum of one credit card.

Keep your receipts until you receive your monthly credit card statement and have verified that the charges on your bill are accurate. Once you've verified the charges, either store or properly dispose of credit card receipts which may have your name and credit card number on them. If you dispose the receipts, be sure to do so safely by shredding or otherwise mutilating them so that other people cannot read them - this information should be kept confidential.

You should only share your personal information, particularly your Social Security number, with trusted sources and for legitimate reasons. Never shares your PINs or account passwords with others.

Why should I try to pay my credit card bill fully and on time each month? What can happen if I do not take care of my credit?

The first reason you should try to pay off your credit card bill every month is because it will save you money: if you pay in full every time, then the credit card company won't charge you interest.

A second reason for paying off your bill fully each month is that not doing so can reflect poorly on your credit report. As a general rule, carrying an unpaid balance on your credit card that exceeds 30% of your borrowing limit can result in a lowering of your credit score. For example, say you obtain a credit card with a \$1,000 borrowing limit. You then use the card to make \$500 in purchases. Your bill comes at the end of the month, and you only pay the \$15 minimum payment. The remaining balance on your card after your credit card company receives your payment is \$485. As the remaining or "carried" balance exceeds 30% of your borrowing limit, your credit score could be effected.

What should I do if I lose my credit card or see fraudulent charges on my statement?

If you lose your credit card, or if you suspect fraudulent transactions have been committed by a thief using your credit card, by law your liability for any transactions that occur by someone wrongfully using your card should be capped at \$50.00 if you immediately notify your credit card company. Call the credit card company right away explaining the fraud; do not wait. In addition, it is crucial that you notify the credit card company of the fraudulent charges in writing. It is also crucial that you specify the amount and date of the unauthorized charge. Direct your inquiry to the address your credit card company has specified for "Billing

Enquiries"; do not send it to the address where you typically send your bill. Keep a copy for your records. You will not be liable for any new charges made on the card after the date you notify the company.

Please note that it is your responsibility to actively monitor your credit card statements. If you move, or if a thief steals your identity and changes the address on your card, you're still required to notify the credit card company within 60 days of the date of a fraudulent or incorrect statement to avoid or minimize your liability for any improper payments. Thus, it is important for you to know when your statement arrives each month and promptly contact your credit card company if your statement is late.

What should I do if I lose my debit card or see fraudulent charges on my account?

If you notify your bank or credit union of your lost card or any fraudulent charge within two business days, your liability for any fraudulent withdrawals or uses of the card will likely be limited to \$50.00 (note: this liability limit has been agreed to by many banks, credit unions, and debit card issuers, but you will of course need to refer to the liability limits given by your bank / debit card issuer, as these limits may differ). If you notify your bank or credit union between three and 60 business days after the card has been used fraudulently, your maximum liability for the fraudulent use of the card will likely be \$500.00 (but again this varies). After 60 days, you will be on the hook for the whole amount. This underscores the importance of checking your bank or credit union statements on a regular basis.

You should contact your bank or credit union / card issuer as soon as you know of or suspect a problem; accordingly, a phone call may be your best option. However, you should send a follow-up letter by mail to ensure your issue is properly handled and to confirm you timely notified the bank / issuer. Please note that if you timely report a fraudulent use of your card, it may still take a while (sometimes up to two months) for a bank or credit union to investigate the claim and put the money back in your account.

What happens if my bank or my credit card company has a security breach? What can I do to protect myself?

In the State of Washington, companies are required to notify citizens of the state if the citizens' personal information (specifically, their Social Security number, driver's license number, or their account / credit card number) is disclosed. Companies will not be required to provide such notice if doing so would impede an ongoing criminal investigation. Other than requiring notice in certain circumstances, the rights afforded to victims of a security breach are somewhat unclear.

	<p>If a company that has your personal information experiences a data breach, you should do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor any accounts that could be affected by the data breach; • obtain your credit report to determine if any fraudulent charges / contracts / etc., have been made in your name; • subscribe to a credit reporting or fraud resolution service, if your credit card company offers it (there may or may not be a fee associated with this); • ask to be issued a new card if the breach is of debit card / credit card information; and • place a fraud report or credit freeze on your credit report if warranted.
<p>CONSUMER AND CREDIT</p>	<p>IDENTITY THEFT</p>
	<p>What is identity theft?</p> <p>Identity theft occurs when someone steals or wrongfully obtains key pieces of your personal information - such as your name, your birth date, your address or place of residence, your Social Security Number or your credit card number – and then uses that information without your permission (and often without your knowledge) to commit crimes in your name.</p> <p>One of the scariest things about identity theft is that the thief is an imposter pretending to be you when conducting business with other people. You will have a very difficult time convincing others – particularly those that do not personally know you – that you did not commit the acts that the thief committed in your name.</p> <p>Some common, and scary, examples of identity theft are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thief wrongfully obtains your personal information and then uses it to open a credit card in your name. Then, the thief goes on a shopping spree at the mall and racks up a large bill. When the bill becomes due, the credit card company will send it to you and claim you are responsible since your name and personal information were used to open the account. • A thief obtains your credit card information and uses it to obtain a cell phone account. The cell phone company will send you the monthly bills thinking the account has been opened and is being used by you. <p>It is often hard to know that identity theft has occurred until it is too late. For example, you may find out your identity has been stolen when you check your bank statement and see fraudulent charges, or when you are contacted by a collections agency regarding a debt you did not personally incur. This is one of the reasons why it is so important to actively protect your key personal information and regularly check your bank statements and credit report (more information on this is below).</p>

How can people steal my identity?

- Relationships: Anyone, including family, friends, former roommates, etc., that may have access to your information -- perhaps by still receiving your mail or having some of your bills or other personal information in their possession -- may, unfortunately, be a threat for identity theft. Think carefully of anyone who may have access to your personal information.
- Plain Old Stealing: Do you think that a thief is just trying to get his hands on the money in your wallet? Think again! Thieves may steal your wallet to gain access to your driver's license, your credit card information, and other personal information you carry around with you.
- Dumpster Diving: Thieves will rummage through your trash to find old bills, receipts, or other documents with your personal information on it.
- Skimming: Thieves will place a special reader or storage device on ATMs and other credit card swiping devices that stores the numbers of swiped credit or debit cards.
- Pretexting: Thieves will contact you or your bank, landlord, etc. pretending to have a legitimate reason for needing your personal information -- most often, posing as a bank or a government official -- and trick you or that person into giving your information away.
- Phishing: Thieves will set up a legitimate-looking but fraudulent business or website, and, believing it is a real business, you will provide your personal information or credit card information.

What can I do to protect myself from identity theft?

- Safeguard your personal information: Be diligent in protecting your wallet, your key documents, and any place that contains your personal information. Don't carry sensitive personal information, such as your Social Security Number, your PIN numbers or your Passport (if you have one) with you unless absolutely necessary.
- Limit your risk exposure: Don't keep all of your personal information in one place; if a thief gets to it, he or she has everything! Make up "difficult" passwords for online accounts, and use different passwords at each site you access. Don't provide personal information over the internet when using a public computer, e.g., at a library, school or community center, because this information may be accessible to others who use that computer after you. Avoid saying your personal information, particularly your Social Security Number, out loud in public.
- Don't give away your personal information: Unless you're absolutely certain a person is contacting you from a legitimate institution or for a legitimate reason, never disclose sensitive personal information like your Social Security Number to anyone. Often, it can be hard to know who is legitimate or not. In such situations, ask for some form of identification and always err on the side of caution. Don't let the other person pressure you into disclosing what you feel you shouldn't disclose. And don't provide personal information via email, text or voicemail messages; legitimate businesses will not ask for information in this way.

- Actively monitor your accounts and bank statements: If you check your bank accounts every day, you can easily spot when fraudulent charges are made. And, typically, if you spot the fraudulent charges early enough, you won't be responsible for them!
- Check your credit report at least annually: You are entitled to a free credit report every year. Your credit report will show your loans, leases, contracts (such as cell phone contracts) and credit cards taken out in your name. If you check this at least annually, you can ensure that no fraudulent obligations have been taken out in your name.
- Properly dispose of documents with your personal information on it: If possible, shred or destroy any documentation which contains your personal information.

What should I do if my identity is stolen?

For a detailed checklist of steps to take, please consult the FTC's reference "Taking Charge: What to do if Your Identity is Stolen" at: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/idtheft/idth04.pdf.

First, contact one of the national credit reporting companies and ask for a "fraud alert" to be placed on your credit report.

A fraud alert can help prevent the thief from committing more crimes with your stolen identity. When you contact one of the credit reporting companies, they will contact the other two on your behalf.

Equifax 1 800 525 6285
Experian 1 888 397 3742
TransUnion 1 800 680 7289

When you call, be sure to order a copy of your credit report from each company. Read your reports carefully to see if the information is correct. If you see mistakes, unknown debts, unfamiliar obligations or other signs of fraud, contact that credit reporting company immediately to discuss and follow up any discussions with written requests that the company clear up such matters on your report.

If you have confirmed that your identity has indeed been stolen, you could also take the following steps:

- Request that an "extended" fraud alert be placed on your file. The extended fraud alert will last for seven years, and will require any institution seeking to issue credit in your name – such as a bank or credit card company – to contact you before doing so.
- Request a credit freeze. When a credit freeze is issued, credit cannot be issued in your name to anyone for any reason, and no one will be allowed to access your credit report under any circumstances. The State's Attorney General Office has provided step-by-step [instructions](#) for obtaining a credit freeze.

Second, close all accounts that you think or know have been tampered with by the thief.

	<p>If you suspect that someone has fraudulently used your card or account, call and speak with someone in the security or fraud department of the corresponding company. Follow up with each company in writing, outlining the specific fraud that you believe has occurred, and include copies of supporting documents, such as bank statements; keep the original copies of these for your records. If the identity thief has made charges or debits on your accounts, or has fraudulently opened accounts, ask the company for the forms to dispute those transactions. Direct all forms to the "Billing Inquiries" department of the bank / credit card company. It would also be helpful to ask each company for a copy of the documents / forms used by the identity thief to open accounts or conduct business in your name.</p> <p>Close affected accounts and open new ones. When you open new accounts, use new Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) and passwords. Avoid using easily available information like your mother's maiden name, your birth date, the last four digits of your Social Security number, your phone number, or a series of consecutive numbers.</p> <p>Third, file a police report.</p> <p>If possible, file the report in person at your local police station. Bring copies of all documentation you have that prove that your identity has been stolen. (To help with filing of your police report, you may wish to first obtain an Identity Theft Affidavit from the Federal Trade Commission; see below). Ask the police if an "Order Correcting Public Records" can be obtained. This will be helpful in responding to demands for payment from banks and other creditors. Be sure to keep a copy of the police report for your files, because you'll need this to restore your credit, or to respond to demands for payment from creditors.</p> <p>Fourth, file a report with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC)</p> <p>You can file a complaint with the FTC using the online complaint form or by calling the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline, toll-free at (877) ID-THEFT (438-4338); TTY: (866) 653-4261, or by writing Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580. Be sure to call the Hotline to update your complaint if you have any additional information or problems. When you file your complaint, you will be given the option to obtain an Identity Theft Affidavit from the FTC. You should do so. This document can be helpful in filing your police report or otherwise proving your status as an identity theft victim to creditors.</p>
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CONSUMER AND CREDIT	COMMON SCAMS / QUESTIONS
	<p>How do I protect my information when shopping online? What should I look for before entering my personal information or credit card number to complete a purchase on a website?</p> <p>Shop only at sites you trust. If you shop with your credit card online, only go to websites that you trust. Avoid clicking on email links because these links could take you to a fake website that's set up for the sole purpose of stealing your credit card information. Instead, go directly to the real website by typing the web address directly into your internet browser.</p> <p>Don't make online credit card purchases from a public place. Public computers and networks are less secure so there's a greater chance that your credit card information can be stolen when you use it on a public computer. These computers could have software that will capture all your keystrokes, including your login information and credit card number. Your credit card information can even be stolen when you use your personal laptop on a public wireless network.</p> <p>Protect your computer from viruses and hackers. Make sure your computer is protected from hackers that could send your internet browser to a fake website by loading the most recent anti-virus and anti-spyware software onto your computer.</p> <p>Check with the Better Business Bureau. If you're using your credit card online at a store you're not familiar with, check the Better Business Bureau for other consumer reports before entering your credit card information. Don't use your credit card at any website that has a poor customer service record with the Better Business Bureau.</p> <p>Use a credit card online instead of a debit card. Credit cards offer more protection against fraudulent charges than a debit card. With credit cards, your maximum liability for fraudulent charges is \$50. However, with debit card fraud, you could be liable for up to \$500. Not only that, if your debit card is compromised, the money lost will come directly from your bank account and it could take days or weeks to get it back.</p> <p>Make sure the credit card entry page is secure. Only enter your credit card information on secure websites. You can check a website's security by checking the URL. On the page that you enter your credit card information, the URL in your browser's address bar should begin with "https://" and there should be a lock in the lower right corner.</p> <p>Print your online credit card receipts. When you use your credit card online, always print a copy of your receipt or confirmation. Then, compare the amount on your receipt to the amount on your billing statement to make sure the totals match.</p> <p>What should I do if someone I don't know asks me to wire money?</p> <p>Many scams are perpetrated via requests for a person to wire another person or business a certain sum of money by way of Western Union or MoneyGram. Often, the scheme will involve the victim receiving a check for a certain amount (which will be a fake check) with instructions to wire a certain portion of that amount to another person; the rest can be used to cover fees, or processing, or something similar. When the victim wires the funds, his or her money is gone forever! And then, when the victim tries to cash the check, he or she learns that it was a fake check. As a general rule, you should not wire money to anyone that you do not know very well.</p>

How do I protect myself from online scams?

- Auctions (eBay): Auction sites like eBay can be abused by scam artists, particularly when it comes to arranging for payment for goods or services purchased. To prevent fraud during payment, use trusted third-party payment services like PayPal to transfer money for purchases made. Unless absolutely required, do not give your payment information to the seller, and only do so if you can ensure they are to be trusted. If you're the seller of goods, ensure that your purchaser pays you through PayPal or another trusted payment site.
- Classifieds (Craigslist): Be wary of fake "buyers" on Craigslist or other classified services; they will often be from overseas, or send checks for amounts in excess of the agreed upon sale price, or insist on payment being made by way of wire transfers. If you're selling goods, insist on cash or payment via a third party site like PayPal. Do not accept checks unless you have contacted the buyer's bank and ensured it has adequate funds to cover the purchase price. If you're the buyer, only agree to pay once you've seen the goods and confirmed that you will receive the same. Avoid agreeing to make payment by way of wire transfer.

What other scams should you be aware of?

- Cancellation Rights: Many contracts that consumers enter into provide consumers with few opportunities to cancel or terminate the contracts. For example, a contract may require three months' notice or more before cancellation is allowed, or may require termination fees to be paid. Always ask questions about cancellation policies and termination rights when you enter into an agreement. Also, note that Washington State law provides for specific [rights](#) in certain circumstances that will override any contrary language in the contract you sign.
- Sweepstakes: Someone will contact you claiming you won a prize, a free cruise or a sweepstakes, and it will all sound too good to be true; it is. Be wary whenever something sounds too good to be true, when you have to send a certain amount of money to claim your prize, or when someone offers to send a courier to your house to pick up payment or deliver your prize. These are surefire signs of a scam. Anytime someone asks you to pay to receive a prize you supposedly won, run away!
- Work From Home / Secret Shopper / Inheritance Schemes: Often, you'll see ads for certain jobs or opportunities that, like the prizes and sweepstakes described above, sound too good to be true. For example, you may be offered an opportunity to work from home, or be a "secret shopper," or claim your inheritance from a long-lost relative living in a foreign country. These are almost always scams, and typically involve you sending certain amounts of money by wire transfer in order to participate. As mentioned above, do not send money by wire transfer if you do not know the person very well.

What should I do if I am scammed?

First, contact the person or business that you think has scammed you. At first, a simple phone call may be enough to resolve the matter, particularly if the issue is just a misunderstanding. If the phone call does not resolve the issue, write the alleged scammer a letter outlining the way in which you think you've been harmed (assuming you can find contact information for the scammer). Always keep a copy of all letters you write as evidence. Depending on the nature of the scam, you should also consider filing a police report. Compile all evidence of the scam you have in writing.

If warranted, and if the amount you've lost is \$5,000 or less, consider filing a lawsuit in small claims court. You will not need to have an attorney to bring the suit in small claims court. The Washington State Attorney General's Office has an overview of how to file a claim [here](#).

If you cannot resolve the issue through the means above, and the scammer is a legally existing business, contact and report the scammer with the Better Business Bureau ([BBB](#)). You could also consider filing a complaint with the Washington State Attorney General's Office, the Federal Trade Commission, or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (add links)

How do I limit my solicitations by mail or phone?

To limit the amount of junk mail you receive, contact the Direct Marketing Association ([DMA](#)) at (212) 768-7277. There may be a small fee for this service, so please be sure to ask the DMA exactly what the fee will be and what services you will receive in exchange for that fee. Do note, however, that sending unsolicited commercial mail (such as advertisements you didn't ask to receive) is not technically illegal in Washington. So you, unfortunately, will not be able to rid your life – or your mailbox – of junk mail entirely.

To limit the number of calls you get from telemarketers, add your phone number to the National Do Not Call Registry (NDNCR) by visiting its [website](#) or dialing (888) 382-1222. Allow approximately a month for your phone number to be registered. If someone calls you claiming to be from the NDNCR, do not give your information to this person; this is a scam, and the only way to be added to the NDNCR is to call or visit its website. If you suspect you have been a victim of telemarketing fraud, report it to the Washington State Attorney General's Office at (800) 551-4636 and the National Fraud Information at (800) 876-7060.

How can I limit the amount of spam email I receive?

To limit the junk or spam email you receive, consider the following:

- Do not post your email address in public: If you keep your email address a secret known only to you and close contacts, you reduce the likelihood of your email address ever being provided to spammers. Particularly, do not publicly display your email address on social media sites like Facebook or other "public" sites like chat rooms, newsgroups, online discussion forums, eBay or Craigslist.
- Unsubscribe: If you have consented to receiving emails from certain business or other organizations, ask that business or organization to remove you from its list of recipients for "blast" or mass emailings; this can be done by clicking the "Unsubscribe" link at the bottom of these emails. (Note: be careful about even opening emails from sources you do not recognize, as some can include viruses!)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't let companies use your email address: Usually when you buy goods online or sign up for an online service, you will be asked if you consent to being sent advertisements or other materials; just say no, unless there's a particular reason you'd like to receive daily mailings from that company.• Activate your email spam filters: If your email provider has a spam blocking feature / filter available, activate it to reduce the amount of spam you receive.• Consider having two email addresses: It may be helpful to keep a "personal" email address that you use purely for correspondence (e.g., sending notes to friends and family) and a "public" one that you use when doing business online or signing up for chat rooms, discussion lists, or other online programs.
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XVI. PUBLIC BENEFITS

PUBLIC BENEFIT	GENERAL
<p>What Types of Benefits Are Available?</p>	<p>What sources of public benefits are available to me?</p> <p>Depending upon your circumstances you may be eligible for one or more of the public benefit programs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), • State Family Assistance (SFA), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), • Social Security Disability Insurance and Survivor Benefits (collectively, SSI) which provide cash that can be used to pay for general living expenses. <p>There are also programs that provide assistance for specific types of benefits such as food assistance (Basic Food), emergency benefits (Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN), Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP), and Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA), childcare assistance (working connections, seasonal, and homeless), financial aid and medical benefits (Medicare and Apple Health).</p> <p>Different programs have different eligibility requirements and you may be eligible to receive benefits under more than one program (e.g., TANF and Basic Food). However, TANF, SFA and RCA are designed to provide general assistance so you will only be eligible to receive benefits under one of these programs.</p> <p>Where do I find more information about the public benefits available to me?</p> <p>You can find information about TANF, SFA, RCA, Basic Food, emergency assistance, childcare assistance, financial aid and medical benefits on the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) website or at your local DSHS Community Services Office (CSO) or by phone at 1-800-865-7801 or 1-877-501-2233.</p> <p>Information about SSI can be found at the Social Security Administration website. You can also get information over the phone at 1-800-772-1213 or by going into your local social security office.</p> <p>In addition, a brief overview of the benefits provided by TANF, SFA, RCA, Basic Food, emergency assistance, childcare assistance, financial aid, and SSI can be found in this Chapter XII. Information about Medical Benefits (Medicare and Apple Health) is contained in Chapter IX and if you are looking for information about financial aid you should also read Chapter IV, which discusses issues relating to education.</p>

- Living with parents, another adult relative, a legal guardian or in a DSHS approved living situation; and
- Attending high school or GED program or, if already a high school graduate, participating in WorkFirst or looking for a job.

More information can be found [here](#).

Can I receive TANF support if I am receiving public assistance?

TANF is public assistance provided by the State of Washington. If you are already receiving other forms of financial support, such as SSI, you may not be income-eligible for TANF. In general, TANF requires that applicants have limited income and less than \$1,000 in resources (e.g., bank account, car, etc.) to be eligible.

How long may I get TANF?

Generally, you may receive TANF for up to 5 years (60 months), so long as you remain eligible.

Who is exempt from the TANF 5 year (60 month) lifetime limit?

DSHS does not count months of assistance towards the 60 month time limit if you are:

- An [adult caretaker](#) who is 1) not a member of the assistance unit; and 2) is receiving cash assistance on behalf of a child unless you are an ineligible parent. An ineligible parent is a natural, adoptive or stepparent as defined in WAC 388-454-0010 who receives a TANF/SFA grant for his or her child but is ineligible to receive TANF/SFA assistance;
- An unemancipated pregnant or parenting minor living in a DSHS-approved [living arrangement](#); or an adult and you are living in [Indian country](#) or an Alaskan Native village and you are receiving TANF, SFA, or GA-S cash assistance during a period when at least 50% of the adults living in Indian country or in the village were not employed.

How will I be paid TANF?

You may receive TANF benefits via an Electronic Benefits Transfer ("EBT") debit card. Cash and basic food benefits are electronically sent to JP Morgan and then made accessible to clients using an EBT debit card. Alternatively, you can receive funds via Electronic Funds Transfer ("EFT") into your bank account if you have one.

If you receive food assistance (see Basic Food below), you will be issued an EBT Card. This card is also called a "**Quest Card**." You use this card like a debit card to purchase food items at stores.

To receive TANF benefits, do I have to go to work or school?

Generally, TANF recipients are required to work or participate in work-training programs. There are exceptions for parenting teens and for teens who have not graduated from high school or received a general education development certificate (GED).

To be eligible for TANF, an unmarried pregnant or parenting minor who has not completed high school or a GED program must participate in educational activities leading to the attainment of a high school diploma or GED. But, if you have been emancipated or you have a child that is less than 12 weeks old, you will not be required to attend school in order to qualify for TANF. There is no requirement to attend school if you already have your high school diploma or your GED.

Additional details may be found [here](#).

What if I am pregnant or have a newborn?

An unmarried pregnant or parenting minor may be eligible for TANF only if the minor (i) has been emancipated by a court, or (ii) lives in a home approved by DSHS, and (iii) has a protective payee (i.e., someone assigned to ensure that assistance funds are used for their intended purpose).

What if I don't want to live with my parents or legal guardian?

You must live with your parents or your legal guardian unless:

- The parent or legal guardian does not want you to live with them;
- You or your child are being or have been seriously harmed either physically, emotionally or sexually in the home of the parent or legal guardian;
- Substantial evidence exists of an act or failure to act by the parent or legal guardian that presents imminent or serious harm to you or your child if they lived there; or
- DSHS determines that it is in the best interest of you or your child to waive the requirement of living in the home of a parent or legal guardian.

May I live with the father or mother of my child if he or she is 18 years or older?

No. A home that includes the other natural parent of the minor's child or unborn child is not eligible for TANF if:

- The minor is under age 16; and
- The other parent is 18 or older and meets the age [criteria](#) for rape of a child.

However, under certain circumstances, if you are living with your boyfriend or girlfriend's parents, it may be possible for his or her parents to receive a non-needy relative grant.

Can my child get help if I don't comply with all these rules?

Your child may be eligible for a child-only grant, but your child will have to have a protective payee appointed and approved by DSHS.

If I apply for TANF will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?

Unless there is evidence that your parents have abused or neglected you, DSHS will report that it is providing TANF support to you.

PUBLIC BENEFIT	NON- NEEDY RELATIVE GRANT – TANF or SFA
<p>What if I cannot get TANF in my own name?</p>	<p>What is the non-needy relative grant?</p> <p>If you are living with someone other than your parents or legal guardian they may be able to get a TANF or SFA non-needy relative grant. These grants are available to individuals who have a child living with them and are responsible for the care and control of the child.</p> <p>How does a relative/legal guardian qualify/apply?</p> <p>You can get the application at your local CSO, or you can call 1-877-501-2233 and ask that an application be sent to you. You may complete an online application. You will have to pass a background check to obtain assistance and demonstrate that the child is living with you.</p> <p>Do I have to be living full-time with an individual for the individual to receive a non-needy relative grant?</p> <p>Yes. Usually, however, certain exceptions may apply for temporary absences and joint living situations. For more information contact DSHS.</p> <p>Does the individual have to be my legal guardian?</p> <p>Not necessarily, but they need to be providing the same kind of care as your parents should provide.</p> <p>Can someone receive a non-needy relative grant at the same time I get TANF?</p> <p>No. However, the individual you are living with can both be eligible for TANF and receive a non-needy relative grant on your behalf.</p> <p>Can my boyfriend's/girlfriend's/family friend's parents receive a non-needy relative grant if I live with them?</p> <p>Possibly, if they are adults and are acting in the place of your parent.</p> <p>If someone applies for a non-needy relative grant on my behalf, will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?</p> <p>DSHS makes a reasonable effort to contact the parent with whom the child last lived when it finds out that a child applying for assistance lives with someone other than the child's parent. It communicates to the parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within seven days of the date it approves assistance for the child; • how to ask for family reconciliation services from DSHS; and • how to request the child's address and location. <p>DSHS does not notify the parent when there is evidence to support a claim that the parent has abused or neglected the child.</p> <p>You may find more information here.</p>

	<p>If someone applies for a non-needy relative grant on my behalf will it count against my later eligibility for TANF benefits?</p> <p>It will most likely count against later eligibility, although there are some hardship exemptions such as for pregnant or parenting minors.</p>
<p>PUBLIC BENEFIT</p>	<p>SFA (STATE FAMILY ASSISTANCE)</p>
<p>Can I still get a cash benefit if I am not eligible for TANF?</p>	<p>Who is eligible for SFA?</p> <p>You are eligible for SFA if you are not eligible for TANF because you are: (i)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualified alien as listed in WAC 388-424-0015 and have been in the United States for less than 5 years; • A nonqualified alien as defined in WAC 388-424-0001, who meets the Washington State residency requirements as listed in WAC 388-468-0005, • A 19 or 20 year old student that meets the education requirements of WAC 388-404-0005 (but, if you are age 18 or older and have already met the requirements to finish the educational program, you are no longer eligible for TANF or SFA.) • A caretaker relative of a 19 or 20 year old student that meets the education requirements of WAC 388-404-0005, or • A pregnant woman who has been convicted of misrepresenting their residence in order to receive benefits from 2 or more states at the same time. <p>Do I have to be living with my parents or legal guardian to receive state family assistance?</p> <p>Not necessarily, but you must be living with an adult who is acting as a parent. To get TANF or SFA, a child must live with a parent, other relative, court-ordered guardian, court-ordered custodian, or other adult acting <i>in loco parentis</i>. More information can be found here.</p> <p>Is there a limit on the amount of assistance I can receive?</p> <p>Yes, you may receive assistance for up to 60 months.</p> <p>Are there any exceptions to the lifetime limits?</p> <p>These are the same as the TANF exceptions. See section on TANF.</p> <p>If I apply for SFA, will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?</p> <p>If there is evidence to support a claim that your parent has abused or neglected you, your applying for SFA will not need to be reported. Otherwise, it will be.</p>

	<p>Absent evidence of abuse or neglect, DSHS will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent with whom you last lived when it finds out that a child applying for assistance lives with someone other than the child's parent. It will tell the parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within seven days of the date they approve assistance for the child; • how to ask for family reconciliation services from DSHS; and • how to request your address and location.
PUBLIC BENEFIT	REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA)
<p>What if I am an immigrant and not eligible for benefits under either TANF or SFA?</p>	<p>Are there any benefits available to me if I just immigrated to the U.S.?</p> <p>Possibly. You may be eligible for RCA if you meet all of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have resided in the United States for less than eight months; • you meet the immigration status requirements; • you meet the income and resource requirements; • you meet the work and training requirements; and • you provide the name of the voluntary agency (VOLAG) which helped bring you to this country. <p>You may obtain additional information here.</p> <p>How long is this benefit available?</p> <p>Generally, eight months.</p> <p>If my parents/legal guardian is already receiving RCA and I no longer want to live with them, can I apply for RCA for just me (and my children)?</p> <p>Yes, but you must meet the RCA requirements independently.</p> <p>Do I have to provide any special documentation to receive RCA?</p> <p>Yes, you will need to be able to provide documentation to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have resided in the United States for less than eight months; • you meet the immigration status requirements; • you meet the income and resource requirements; • you meet the work and training requirements; and • you provide the name of the VOLAG which helped bring you to this country.

	<p>Can I receive RCA if I am eligible for TANF or SSI? No.</p> <p>Can I receive RCA if I am a full-time student? No.</p> <p>If I apply for RCA will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian? Unless there is evidence that your parents have abused or neglected you, DSHS will report that it is providing RCA support to you. You can get details here.</p>
PUBLIC BENEFIT	BASIC FOOD PROGRAM
<p>How is my benefit calculated?</p>	<p>Who is eligible to participate in Basic Food? Eligibility for Basic Food depends on citizenship or alien status, residency in the State of Washington, provision of a social security number, participation in certain employment and training programs (if applicable), and income limitations.</p> <p>Eligibility for Basic Food is determined at the level of "Assistance Units" (AUs). An AU is the group of people who live together and whose income and resources count towards determining eligibility. If you are under the age of 18 and do not live with your parents, you will be included in the AU of the adult you live with, unless you (1) are emancipated, (2) get TANF in your own name, or (3) are not dependent on the adult in the AU because you get and have control of income of at least the TANF payment standard. If you are a "boarder", <i>i.e.</i>, in foster care or pay a reasonable amount for lodging and food, you may not get Basic Food benefits in a separate AU.</p> <p>How much can I earn and still receive Basic Food benefits? What income is taken into account for Basic Food? For a <u>one-member AU</u>, your gross monthly income must be less than \$1,180 and your net monthly income must be less than \$908, after a standard deduction of \$147. Certain types of income may <u>not</u> be counted when calculating income and benefits. Some examples of such income are loans (except student loans), certain education assistance, and certain employment training programs (but note that Workforce Investment Act payments made to children who are not under parental control do count). You may obtain additional information on income requirements here.</p> <p>Will my parents' or legal guardian's income be taken into account even if I do not live with them? Since AUs are based on co-residency ("live in the same home"), parents' or legal guardians' income should not be taken into account if you do not live with them.</p>

	<p>If I have roommates, will their income be taken into account?</p> <p>The income criteria for Basic Food eligibility is based on the income of your AU. Roommates belong to your AU if you regularly buy and prepare food together or you provide meals for them and they pay less than a reasonable amount for such meals. However, if a roommate is a boarder or a "roomer", <i>i.e.</i>, someone who pays for lodging but not meals, you can choose if he or she is included in your AU. A boarder will not be able to get Basic Food as a separate AU.</p> <p>Spouses, parents, and children under the age of 22 who live with you are automatically considered members of your AU; they may not be excluded from the AU under the above mentioned exclusionary rules for boarders or roomers.</p> <p>Do I have to be employed to receive Basic Food?</p> <p>Generally, there is a work registration requirement for able-bodied persons between the ages of 16 and 59 who receive Basic Food; but there are certain broad exemptions. There is no requirement to work if you are under the age of 16. Additionally, you are exempt if you are 16 or 17, not the head-of-household, and attend high school or a GED program or are enrolled at least half time in an approved employment training program. You are also exempt if you are 18 or older and enrolled at least half time in an accredited school, a training program, or an institution of higher learning.</p> <p>What if I am going to school?</p> <p>In addition to exemptions for individuals 16 and older who are attending high school or GED (see section (g) above), special "eligible student" categories are applicable if you are a student between the ages of 18-49 and are attending certain categories of institutions beyond high school (or a GED).</p> <p>If I apply for Basic Food benefits, will my application need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?</p> <p>To receive Basic Food benefits, you will need to provide your social security number. DSHS will generally not contact your parents; however, certain information from your Basic Food application information may be shared with federal and state agencies for "official use."</p>
<p>PUBLIC BENEFITS</p>	<p>EMERGENCY CASH AND FOOD BENEFITS</p>
<p>What should I do if I need assistance right away?</p>	<p>What if I am already receiving public benefits (e.g., TANF, SFA, RCA) and I have an emergency?</p> <p>Washington has three emergency assistance programs that you may be eligible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN) is a cash grant for current TANF and RCA recipients who have an emergency housing or utility need. • Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) is a cash program for families or pregnant women who face an emergency and do not have the money to meet their basic needs.

<p>Allowable Expenses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA) is an emergency grant for families who do not get TANF but who are so low-income that they are eligible for TANF. <p>More information about the available emergency assistance programs can be found here.</p> <p>What types of expenses qualify as an emergency expense?</p> <p>The types of expenses qualifying as emergency expenses may differ by program. In general, if any of the following apply to you, you are likely in an emergency situation where you may be able to get emergency expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eviction • No food • Homelessness • Pregnancy medical • Daycare needed due to work • Utility shut off • Domestic violence • Medical emergency • Non-receipt of benefits • Circumstances which present harm to yourself or others <p>AREN specifically covers rent, security deposits, mortgage payments, taxes, or fees to prevent eviction or foreclosure or get new housing or housing subsidies. You can get help if you are fleeing domestic violence or are homeless. In addition, AREN also provides funds for repairs to your home or relocation when defects pose a risk to health or safety. However, this requires you ask the landlord for repairs and that it costs less than relocation. You can also get utilities help through AREN. Covered expenses include repairs, deposits, fees and services necessary for electricity, water, sewer, fuel for heating and cooking, and basic local telephone service (if needed for health or safety).</p> <p>CEAP covers expenses for food, shelter, clothing, minor medical issues, utilities, household maintenance, transportation to get a child to a home where s/he can be cared for, and money for job-related transportation or clothing.</p> <p>More information about Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA) is found later in this Chapter and may also be accessed here.</p> <p>More information about AREN may be found here.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p>	<p>Do I qualify for emergency food assistance?</p> <p>If you have very little money and are in need of food, you may qualify for emergency food assistance. You have to be eligible for food assistance (see “F” on Basic Food above) and have little or no money, or not enough money to cover your rent and utilities, or have a destitute or seasonal farm-worker household member whose available cash does not exceed \$100.</p>

Application	<p>Do I qualify for emergency cash assistance?</p> <p>To be eligible for cash assistance under AREN or DCA, you must meet three eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• meet the eligibility requirements for TANF, SFA, or RCA;• have an emergency housing, utility or other need; and• have a good reason that you had insufficient funds to pay your housing or utility costs. <p>To be eligible for cash assistance under CEAP you must be a pregnant woman or be part of a family with dependent children (including families that have stopped receiving TANF grants).</p> <p>You must also be a resident of Washington State and demonstrate that you need emergency funds for one or more "basic requirements," including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• food, shelter, clothing, minor medical care, utilities, household maintenance supplies, necessary clothing; or• transportation costs to accept or retain a job; or• transportation for a minor who is not in foster care to a home where care will be provided by family members or approved caretakers. <p>You should know that there is no citizenship requirement or legal alien status requirement to receive CEAP.</p> <p>How do I apply for emergency benefits?</p> <p>You can apply for emergency services online or at your local Community Services Office. You will need to complete an application for benefits and provide your social security number to DSHS.</p> <p>How long will it be before I know if I will be granted emergency aid?</p> <p>DSHS will decide if you are eligible for cash and food assistance within 5-7 days. Food benefits usually start the day DSHS receives your application and cash benefits usually start on the day DSHS has all the information to decide if you are eligible.</p> <p>AREN cash assistance may also be able to provide help through electronic benefit transfer, under which money is put directly into your account, usually on the same day.</p> <p>If I apply for emergency benefits will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?</p> <p>To receive emergency benefits, you will need to provide your social security number. DSHS will generally not contact your parents. However, if your parent or legal guardian requests your address and location, DSHS will provide this information, unless there is evidence to support a claim of abuse or neglect</p>
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PUBLIC BENEFIT	DIVERSION CASH ASSISTANCE (DCA)
<p>What it is the difference between DCA and TANF?</p> <p>Eligibility</p> <p>Restrictions</p>	<p>What is DCA? DCA provides alternative assistance for families who have a short-term need and do not wish to receive TANF assistance. It is an emergency grant to a family facing a temporary financial crisis. You may get up to \$1,250 in any 12 month period. The amount you get cannot exceed \$1,250 and may be less.</p> <p>Who is eligible for the DCA program? If you are eligible for TANF or SFA, you may get DCA. Your family must choose between TANF or SFA and DCA. You may not get them both at the same time.</p> <p>Are there any restrictions on how I use funds received from the DCA program? DCA can cover "many needs" including help with transportation (such as car repairs), childcare, medical, housing and food expenses.</p> <p>Does the DCA program have the same eligibility criteria as TANF? Yes, the eligibility criteria are the same as TANF.</p> <p>How long can I receive DCA? DCA is capped at \$1,250 for any 12 month period. Also, you are eligible for only one 30 day period per year.</p> <p>Do I have to repay DCA benefit if I go on TANF later? Yes, a family that goes on TANF within a year will have to pay back a pro-rated portion of the diversion grant it received. If your family does apply for TANF within one year of getting Diversion Assistance, DSHS will collect any repayment owed out of your monthly TANF grant by reducing the grant by five percent.</p> <p>If I take DCA does it count against my 60-month lifetime limit for TANF benefits? No, you will not use any of your 60-month lifetime limit for TANF benefits.</p> <p>If I apply for DCA will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian? To receive DCA, you will need to provide your social security number. DSHS will generally not contact your parents. However, if your parent requests your address and location, DSHS may need to provide this information, unless there is evidence to support a claim of abuse or neglect.</p>

PUBLIC BENEFIT	FINANCIAL AID & WELFARE BENEFITS
<p>Can I get benefits for college or vocational training?</p>	<p>What type of financial aid is available?</p> <p>Both the federal and state government has financial aid programs available. In addition, there are special educational programs available to former foster youth.</p> <p>This Chapter discusses some of the benefits available; however, you should also read Chapter IV which discusses various educational issues. General information about the types of financial aid awards can be found here.</p> <p>Will receiving financial aid affect my other public benefits? Do I need to include the value of my public benefits when completing my financial aid worksheet?</p> <p>Most students who get benefits from DSHS (e.g., TANF, SFA, RCA and Basic Food) can also get financial aid with little or no effect on their benefits. This website can help you better understand the interaction between your public benefits and financial aid.</p> <p>Information on what benefits need to be reported on your application for financial aid can be found here.</p> <p>Are there special educational programs available to foster youth?</p> <p>Yes. As a foster youth you may be eligible for the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Advocacy Program, which provides direct advocacy, consultation, information, and referral services to foster youth; • Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV), a national program for youth who qualify and are likely to age out of the foster care system. ETV offers financial help to current and former foster youth to attend colleges, universities, or vocational or technical programs. The ETV program aims to help students in their own efforts to secure financial aid to enroll in postsecondary programs; • Extended Foster Care Program, which replaces the Foster Care to 21 program and provides eligible youth ongoing placement and foster care services from age 18 up to age 21 wishing to pursue their High School Diploma, General Equivalency Diploma (GED), College Degree, or Vocational Certification; • Various Scholarship Programs, such as the College Bound Passport for Foster Youth and the Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth; and • State Need Grant and State Work Study. <p>More information about these programs, including eligibility information, can be found here.</p> <p>Does financial aid have to be used for college?</p> <p>No. Certain types of financial aid, such as ETV and Extended Foster Care, can also be used at a vocational or technical training.</p>

	<p>What documentation do I need to apply for financial aid?</p> <p>Generally, you will need an identification card (or driver's license) and a social security card. You will also need information about the types of income you receive (e.g., W-2s, income tax returns, bank statements, documentation of non-taxable income such as SSI, TANF, etc., records relating to any unusual financial circumstances, etc.). The federal financial aid information is now online so you will also need a valid email address.</p> <p>How do I apply?</p> <p>The application form for Federal Student Aid is online. Links to the application forms and information about the application process for ETV, Extended Foster Care, scholarships for foster children and state grant/work-study programs can be found here.</p> <p>If I apply for financial aid will my parent or legal guardian need to be involved?</p> <p>Depending upon your circumstances you may need to provide some information about your parent's income or living situation when you apply for financial aid. However, you do not need to provide parental information if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have been in foster care, • declared an unaccompanied homeless youth by your high school or the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program, • have been emancipated, or • have children who will receive more than half of their support from you. <p>Even if you don't fall into one of these categories, you may apply to be considered an "independent student."</p>
PUBLIC BENEFIT	CHILDCARE
<p>To qualify for public benefits I generally have to be in school or working. Are childcare benefits available?</p>	<p>When can I get a childcare subsidy?</p> <p>If you need childcare to work or to go to school you may qualify for a childcare subsidy. The childcare subsidy programs can help you pay for childcare through either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Connections Child Care, which pays for childcare subsidies to eligible households with parents who are working or are participating in a DSHS approved work or educational activity and whose children meet citizenship requirements; • Seasonal Childcare, which pays for childcare subsidies to eligible seasonally employed agricultural families who live in designated counties and are not receiving TANF benefits; and • Homeless Childcare, which offers short-term free childcare for some homeless families that are not eligible for another childcare subsidy program.

<p>What Documentation Do I Need?</p>	<p>Who is eligible?</p> <p>As a homeless youth you may be eligible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Working Connections Child Care</u> if your income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, you are working or are participating in a DSHS approved work or educational activity and your child is a U.S. citizen or resident; • <u>Seasonal Childcare Program</u> if you are an eligible seasonally employed agricultural family who lives in designated counties, have an income at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty guidelines and are <u>not</u> receiving TANF benefits; or • <u>Homeless Childcare</u> if you are homeless and you are engaging in certain qualifying activities. <p>Am I eligible for a childcare subsidy if there are other individuals in my household?</p> <p>Yes; however, your eligibility for CCSP is determined by your household's income and the number of people in your family. Your childcare costs (or co-payments) are determined on a sliding scale. You can get more information here.</p> <p>If I apply for a childcare subsidy will it need to be reported to my parents or legal guardian?</p> <p>You can receive a childcare subsidy without DSHS contacting your parents or legal guardian. However, if your parent or legal guardian requests your address and location, DSHS will provide this information, unless there is evidence to support a claim of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>What information do I need to apply?</p> <p>When applying you may need to provide your name, date of birth, citizenship status, social security number, income, assets and resources, housing costs, utilities, and childcare costs.</p> <p>How do I apply?</p> <p>You may apply by phone at 1-877-501-2233, online, or by coming into your local Community Services Office.</p>
<p>PUBLIC BENEFIT</p>	<p>SOCIAL SECURITY INSURANCE (SSI)</p>
<p>Applying for Benefits</p>	<p>What is SSI?</p> <p>SSI is a federal program that is designed to provide certain groups (including children with disabilities and children who survive the death of a parent and under certain circumstances a grandparent) with cash for food, clothing and shelter.</p> <p>How Do I Know if I am Eligible for SSI?</p> <p>You may be eligible for SSI if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the SSI definition of disability (see http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10026.html); or • qualify for survivor benefits.

<p>What Documentation Do I Need to apply?</p>	<p>Do I qualify as "disabled"?</p> <p>To qualify as a disabled child, you must have a physical or mental condition(s) that very seriously limits your activities, and the conditions must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least one year or to result in death. If you meet the definition of disability for children, have little or no income and resources, and are a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant, you may be eligible for SSI.</p> <p>Am I eligible for survivor benefits?</p> <p>You may be eligible for survivor benefits if you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an unmarried child under age 18 (or up to age 19 if you are attending elementary or secondary school full time), and your parent, or, under certain circumstances a stepparent, grandparent or adopted parent, is deceased but worked while living;• of any age and you became disabled before age 22 and are still disabled; or• if you were married and your spouse died (but worked while living) and you are caring for you and your spouse's child, you may be eligible for survivor's benefits if you worked and your child has a disability. <p>What documentation do I need?</p> <p>To apply for SSI payments you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your social security number (and if you are applying for survivor benefits, your parent's or grandparent's social security number); and• your birth certificate. <p>You may also need to provide other documentation. For example, if you are applying for survivor benefits you will need to provide proof of your parents or grandparent's death; if you are applying for disability benefits you need to provide medical evidence as to the disability.</p> <p>How do I apply?</p> <p>To apply for disability benefits for a child under age 18, you will need to complete an Application for Supplemental Security Income and a Child Disability Report. Prior to completing this information you may want to review the SSI Child Disability Starter Kit which includes a checklist of the information you will need to complete the application and interview.</p> <p>To apply for SSI survivor benefits for a child you will need to either apply for benefits at 1-800-772-1213 or come into your local social security office.</p> <p>If I am a minor, may I receive SSI benefits directly?</p> <p>Depends. While you may be eligible to receive a benefit, the law requires <i>most</i> minor children and all legally incompetent adults to have a representative payee.</p> <p>However, some minors who are living on their own can receive benefits directly, without a representative payee.</p> <p>In all other situations, adult beneficiaries are presumed to be capable of managing benefits. If there is evidence to the contrary, however, SSA may gather evidence and determine there is a need to appoint a representative payee.</p>
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A [representative payee](#) is an individual or organization appointed by SSA to receive Social Security and/or SSI benefits for someone who cannot manage or direct someone else to manage his or her money. The main responsibilities of a payee are to use the benefits to pay for the current and foreseeable needs of the beneficiary and properly save any benefits not needed to meet current needs. A payee must also keep records of expenses. When SSA requests a report, a payee must provide an accounting to SSA of how benefits were used or saved.

How does someone apply to be my representative payee?

To have been appointed as a representative payee, an individual will need to prepare an application ([form SSA -11](#)) and contact the nearest Social Security Administration office for a face-to-face interview.

Do I need my parents' permission to apply for SSI?

Youth who are eligible for SSI can apply for benefits without providing any information or receiving permission from their parents, as long as they can show that they are not living with their parents.

XVII. LAWSUITS IN GENERAL

THE LAW	CIVIL LAW
<p>What Is Civil Law?</p>	<p>In civil law there is the attempt to right a wrong, honor an agreement, or resolve a dispute. A civil lawsuit often involves someone seeking compensation from someone else for example a wrongdoer. This differs from criminal law, where the government pursues charges against someone and a guilty person may be punished by being sent to jail/prison and/or paying a fine to the government.</p> <p>Most civil cases involve disputes related to the performance of a contract, the collection of a debt, monetary compensation for personal injuries, property damage, or family law issues such as divorce. The party suing in a civil case is the plaintiff, and the party being sued is the defendant.</p> <p>When the amount in dispute is less than \$5,000, and the parties are unable to resolve the matter themselves, these disputes can be taken to small claims court.</p>
LAWSUITS	CIVIL LAW
<p>Small Claims Court</p>	<p>What is Small Claims Court?</p> <p>Small Claims Court is a department of the county or district court that is meant to be a relatively quick, inexpensive way to resolve disputes that people have been unable to work out on their own. Small Claims Court is not complicated, and lawyers usually cannot participate. There are no juries, motions, or objections. There is only a small charge for filing the lawsuit, and a trial may be obtained much sooner than in other courts; most trials are short, lasting about 20 minutes.</p> <p>For more information about Small Claims Court, how to file a case, and what to expect, see the 2011 Northwest Justice Project Manual on Small Claims Actions in Washington State.</p> <p>What Kinds Of Cases Can I Take To Small Claims Court?</p> <p>Disputes involving money, up to \$5,000, that you have with a person, a business, or—in some cases—the government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Your friend refuses to pay back the \$200 you loaned him or her. b) Your new \$50 video game will not work. The dealer who sold it to you refuses to refund your money. c) A person took your backpack and sold it. The total value of the backpack, including all items you had inside, is \$475. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Small Claims Court is not</u> for disputes in which you sue to make someone do something – such as perform a service or return property.

<p>How can I pursue a claim for unpaid wages outside of small claims court?</p> <p>Contact the Labor & Industries Division of the Washington State Office of the Attorney General.</p> <p>E-mail</p> <p>Olympia PO Box 40121 Olympia, WA 98504-0121</p> <p>Seattle 800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 Seattle, WA 98104</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examples:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) If you are terminated from your job, you may not sue your former employer in small claims court and get the court to order that you be rehired. (You may sue for unpaid wages, though.)b) You may not sue for the return of a bike in small claims court. (But you may sue for the money value of the bike.)
	<p>How Long Do I have To File My Claim?</p> <p>You must usually file <u>within either two or three years</u> after the problem occurred, but these deadlines generally are set by specific Washington statutes and careful attention needs to be paid to them. If the problem involves a written agreement that was broken, you generally have <u>six years</u> to file. In any event, file your claim as soon as possible. That way witnesses' memories are fresher. Also, you are more likely to have the evidence you need to make a strong case in court.</p>
	<p>Can I sue the government in small claims court?</p> <p>You can only sue government bodies or agencies in certain situations. You may not sue the State of Washington in small claims court. To sue a government body—e.g., a city or county—you usually have to file an "administrative claim" first, and the deadline may be short. To sue a government body or agency, contact the clerk of the governing body you want to sue and ask how to file an administrative claim. If the governing body denies your administrative claim against it, take the written denial to small claims court if the amount at stake permits that. Tell the clerk at the small claims court that your administrative claim was denied and that you now want to file in small claims court.</p>
<p>Should I Try To Settle My Case Out Of Court?</p> <p>Yes. Try to come to an agreement with your opponent before you file your claim in court. Settling out of court is a good idea because fighting your case, even in small claims court, can be stressful. Settling out of court can save you time, money, and frustration. There is also the possibility that you might lose in court or, even if you win, not be able to collect your money.</p>	
<p>HOW DO I SETTLE OUT OF COURT?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <u>Contact the other party/your opponent yourself.</u> Try to reach an agreement.2) <u>Get someone to act as a "mediator."</u> A mediator is a neutral third party who helps you and your opponent settle. Local dispute resolution centers often have mediators who work for free. The Washington State Attorney General's Office or your local Better Business Bureau might be able to help mediate.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Write and send a "demand letter."</u> Do this if you are unable or unwilling to speak with your opponent. In the demand letter, tell your opponent what the problem is. Explain how you want it solved. Say that you plan to sue in small claims court if you cannot come to an agreement. Often a well-written demand letter shows your opponent that you are serious. A demand letter gives the other person or business a chance to reconsider.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you fail to settle out of court, bring the demand letter with you. <p>The demand letter lets the judge know that you tried to reach an agreement before coming to court.</p>	

LAWSUITS	CIVIL LAW
<p>Filing A Claim In Small Claims Court</p>	<p>How Do I File A Claim In Small Claims Court?</p> <p>Go to the district court in the district where your opponent lives or where the business you are suing does business. You can find the location of district courts online.</p> <p>The small claims court is a department of the district court. The district court clerk can tell you whether a particular address is within the boundaries of the court that you have contacted.</p> <p>If you cannot find your opponent's home address after a reasonable amount of effort, you may sue in the district where your opponent works, using that address.</p> <p>If the dispute involves a <u>traffic accident or a bad check</u>, you may sue in the county where the traffic accident or bad check incident occurred.</p> <p>Get A Notice Of Small Claim Form</p> <p>All claims begin with a Notice of Small Claim Form. Ask the court clerk for a Notice of Small Claim form. In some counties, you can ask the court clerk to mail you a blank Notice of Small Claim form. In those counties, you can fill out the form, have it notarized, and mail it back to the court. Other counties require you to sign the completed form in the presence of the court clerk and file the form in person. Ask your local court clerk what procedure is correct in that court. The court clerk may explain the appropriate procedure and supply the basic forms. However, the clerk cannot complete these forms for you, give legal advice, or try to predict how the judge might rule.</p> <p>For more detailed information about the following topics, please see the 2011 Northwest Justice Project Manual referenced above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filing Notice of Small Claims Forms • Notifying your opponent and arranging trial dates • Trial preparation and strategy • Collecting if you win • Appealing a decision if you lose • What if someone is suing you in Small Claims Court? <p>How can I get more legal help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are low-income, you can get legal advice from the Coordinated Legal Education and Referral (CLEAR) line at 1-888-201-1014. Someone there can also tell you if there are free legal services in your county. If you live in King County, call 211. • Washington Law Help has other written information that might be helpful. There are publications about landlord-tenant law, bankruptcy, divorce, domestic violence, wills, and more. Find these materials online at www.washingtonlawhelp.org. • You can also get written information from the Washington State Bar Association (206-727-8213) or the Washington State Attorney General's Office (toll free 1-800-551-4636).

XVIII. IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRATION	PATHS TO LEGAL STATUS AND PERMANENT RESIDENCE
<p>Citizenship Status and Legal Documentation</p> <p>Petitioning to stay in the United States</p>	<p>Who is an undocumented person? How do I know if I am legally in the United States?</p> <p>An undocumented person or person who is here illegally has: 1) entered the country without the U.S. government's permission; 2) stayed longer than the period allowed by the U.S. government; or 3) violated the terms of legal entry.</p> <p>How do I obtain legal immigration status?</p> <p>Even if you are undocumented or in the U.S. illegally, you may be able to apply for legal immigration status.</p> <p>There are different kinds of legal status in the United States. A temporary visa holder has permission to live and/or work in the United States for a specific period of time. Individuals with temporary visas may be able to apply for lawful permanent residence in the United States (a "green card"). A U.S. lawful permanent resident ("green card" holder) has permission to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. A naturalized U.S. citizen has the same rights as a person born in the United States, including the right to vote.</p> <p>In most cases, you must apply for legal immigration status through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the government agency that oversees lawful immigration in the U.S. In some cases, if you have been caught by immigration authorities and you are in deportation proceedings, an Immigration Judge can decide your application for legal immigration status.</p> <p>The type of legal immigration status available to you depends on facts including when and how you came to the U.S., the conditions in your home country and your family background. The following includes general information on some of the ways undocumented youth can apply for legal immigration status. It is very important to seek the advice of an immigration attorney regarding the specific facts for your case.</p>
<p>Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)</p>	<p>What is Special Immigrant Juvenile Status?</p> <p>Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) is a type of status that protects you from deportation and makes it possible to apply for lawful permanent residence (a "green card").</p> <p>If you are undocumented and in foster care, it is very likely that SIJS is an option for you to obtain legal immigration status.</p> <p>What are the SIJS eligibility requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must be 21 years or younger at the time you apply with USCIS. • You cannot be married both when you file your application and when USCIS makes a decision on your application.

<p>T Visas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must either be dependent on a juvenile court, OR under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court (including dependency court or delinquency court), where the court has made a decision about your placement (i.e., in foster care, or with a relative, or in juvenile detention).• The juvenile court must declare that reunification with one or both of your parent(s) is not viable due to abuse, abandonment, neglect, or a similar reason under state law.• The juvenile court must also declare that it is not in your best interest to return to your home country and that it is in your best interest to stay in the U.S. <p>What is a T Visa?</p> <p>You may apply for a T visa if you are someone who has been the victim of human trafficking. Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which traffickers lure individuals with false promises of employment and a better life.</p> <p>The T visa begins as a temporary visa that allows you to live and work in the United States for four years. After three years in this status, you can apply for lawful permanent residence (a "green card").</p> <p>If you qualify for a T visa, you may also be able to apply for T visa status for your immediate family members.</p> <p>What are the requirements for a T Visa?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must be a victim of a "severe form of human trafficking." Severe forms of human trafficking can include situations in which a person was forced or tricked into prostitution, or forced or tricked into working without pay, or forced to work or do something against your will in order to repay a debt.• You must be in the U.S. as a result of the trafficking.• If you are over 18, you must be willing to help authorities with the investigation or criminal prosecution of the acts of trafficking.• You must show that you would face extreme hardship if you had to return to your home country. <p>Even if you do not meet all the requirements for a T visa you may be eligible for a U visa, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) relief, or even SIJS.</p> <p>How do I know if I am a victim of trafficking?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trafficking victims are often unlikely to think of themselves as victims.• Trafficking victims are often not able to escape the control of the trafficker and being forced by the trafficker to work or do something against their will• Trafficking victims may be working long hours, every day of the week and often live where they work.• Trafficking victims may be more afraid of law enforcement than of their traffickers.• Trafficking victims may be ashamed of what they have done.• Trafficking victims may be in debt to their traffickers. Their family members may have been threatened by the traffickers.
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<p>U Visa</p>	<p>What is a U visa?</p> <p>You may be able to apply for U visa if you have been the victim of a crime in the U.S. A U visa begins as a temporary visa which allows you to live and work in the United States for four years. After three years with a U visa, you may apply for lawful permanent residence (a "green card").</p> <p>If you qualify for a U visa, you may also be able to apply for U visa status for your immediate family members. The following are requirements for the U visa:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must have been the victim of a crime listed in the law relating to the U visa. These include rape, torture, trafficking, incest, domestic violence, sexual assault, abusive sexual contact, prostitution, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, being held hostage, peonage, involuntary servitude, slave trade, kidnapping, abduction, unlawful criminal restraint, false imprisonment, blackmail, extortion, manslaughter, murder, felonious assault, witness tampering, obstruction of justice, perjury, or attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation to commit these or similar offenses in violation of federal, state or local criminal law. • You must show that you have suffered "substantial" physical or mental abuse as a result of that crime. • In some cases, if you are under 18 and you were not the direct victim, but your parent or sibling was the victim, you might qualify. • You must have information about the crime and be willing to help the authorities investigate or prosecute the crime. If you are under 16 years old, a parent, or social worker or other person can be the person to help the authorities on your behalf. • You must obtain certification from a law enforcement agency. Examples of a law enforcement agency that can certify a U visa include Child Protective Services ("CPS"), the state or local police, the prosecutor's office or a judge.
<p>VAWA</p>	<p>What if I came from an abusive household?</p> <p>Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") is a law that allows an abused family member to stay in the U.S., apply for work authorization and eventually apply for lawful permanent residence (a "green card").</p> <p>You may be eligible for VAWA if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are under 21 and not married. • You were abused by a parent who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, and you lived with that parent at some point in time, or • If your parent was abused by a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse, even if you yourself were not abused. • You qualify if you are male or female. • The abuse can be emotional or verbal abuse, it doesn't have to have been physical abuse.

<p>Asylum</p>	<p>What if I am afraid of being harmed or killed if I return to my home country?</p> <p>You may apply for asylum in the United States if you have been “persecuted” (very seriously harmed or threatened) in your home country because of your race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. This includes groups based on family ties, clan membership, gender, opposition to cultural practices or social norms, or sexual orientation or sexual identity.</p> <p>Asylum is a form of protection the U.S. government offers that allows a person to live and work legally in the U.S. and to apply for lawful permanent residence (a "green card") after one year.</p> <p>What are the requirements for asylum?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, a person must apply for asylum within one year of arriving in the United States. There are some exceptions to that rule, including if you were a minor, or faced extraordinary circumstances that made it difficult to not apply for asylum within your first year in the U.S. • You must fear being persecuted by the government or a group that your government cannot control. • The harm you fear must be based on your race, religion, political opinion, nationality or membership in a social group. • Certain serious crimes, or having lived safely in another country, can disqualify you from asylum <p>In some cases, asylum has been granted based on severe domestic violence or issues involving gender (such as threat of female genital mutilation in the home country) even if the persecution and abuse was committed by family members.</p>
<p>Temporary Protected Status</p>	<p>What if problems in my home country make it difficult for me to return safely?</p> <p>The U.S. government has designated certain foreign countries for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely. TPS provides temporary permission to stay in the United States and temporary work authorization. TPS is a temporary benefit that does not lead to lawful permanent resident status, although you can still apply for other visa types or lawful permanent residence (a "green card") if you are eligible.</p> <p>What are the Requirements for TPS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A noncitizen only needs to prove that he or she is a national of a current TPS designated country and has been in the United States since a required date. • A noncitizen does not need to prove that he or she will be singled out for persecution in the home country. • A noncitizen cannot be barred from TPS. For example, the noncitizen cannot be subject to one of the criminal (conviction of any felony or two or more misdemeanors in the U.S.), security-related, or other bars to TPS. • A noncitizen must meet all filing requirements during the initial TPS registration or re-registration period.

Eligibility Requirements	<p>Am I eligible for Deferred Action?</p> <p>You may apply for deferred action if you meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Came to the United States when you were under the age of 16;2. Under the age of 31;3. Continuous residence in the United States for at least five years as of June 15, 2007;4. Present in the United States on June 15, 2012;5. Entrance without inspection by June 15, 2012 or your lawful immigration status expired as of that date;6. Either in school, have graduated from high school, have obtained a GED, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and7. Never been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor offense, multiple misdemeanor offenses, or otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety. <p>You must be at least 15 years old to apply for deferred action. If you are under fifteen but otherwise meet the eligibility criteria, you can apply for deferred action once you turn 15 years old.</p> <p>You must pass a background check as part of the application process. If you have ever been arrested by the police, it is particularly important for you to speak with an immigration attorney prior to applying for deferred action.</p> <p>Applications will be reviewed by DHS on a case-by-case basis. Not every person will qualify for deferred action. Because a denied affirmative application for deferred action can, in some cases, lead to deportation, it is important that you consult an immigration attorney before you apply.</p> <p>Will I be able to apply for work authorization?</p> <p>Yes. There is a filing fee of \$380 for Form I-765. The Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will have to be renewed every two years, provided that deferred action has been extended for an additional two year period.</p> <p>How long will I be able to remain in the United States?</p> <p>Deferred action will be granted for two-year increments and can be renewed. DHS may terminate deferred action at any time.</p> <p>If I am granted deferred action under DACA, will I be able to travel outside of the United States?</p> <p>Not automatically. If have been granted deferred action and want to travel outside of the United States, you must apply for advance parole by filing the Form I-131, Application for Travel Document to USCIS. The filing fee for the application is \$360. USCIS will determine whether you have a justifiable reason for traveling internationally. Leisure travel (going on vacation) is not a valid basis for advance parole.</p>
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<p>Immigration scams and notario fraud</p> <p><i>Beware of Individuals or companies particularly notarios that offer to assist you with the application process for a fee. You should only trust reliable sources for information such as government websites or legal aid organizations.</i></p>	<p>Does deferred action confer any other benefits?</p> <p>It is unclear whether deferred action will confer any additional benefits to undocumented youth. Whether a person with deferred action will be able to get a state driver's license or in-state tuition rates for certain colleges will likely depend on the state laws that determine the acceptable documentation to prove state residency.</p> <p>What happens if my request for deferred action is denied?</p> <p>Remember: deferred action is not guaranteed. If your application for deferred action is denied, USCIS may refer your case to ICE and issue a Notice to Appear, which initiates the deportation process. You should always consult with an immigration attorney before initiating the deferred action application process.</p>
<p>IMMIGRATION</p>	<p>BEING UNDOCUMENTED IN THE UNITED STATES</p>
<p>Travel outside of the U.S.</p> <p>Risk of Deportation</p>	<p>Can I travel outside of the United States?</p> <p>No. If you are an undocumented immigrant and leave the United States, you will likely not be allowed to return unless you have a way to return legally (with the government's permission) and you have applied for a waiver that forgives the time you previously spent in the United States unlawfully.</p> <p>What is deportation?</p> <p>If immigration authorities believe that you are in the U.S. illegally or without permission, they can begin the process of trying to return you to your home country. That process is called "deportation," or "removal." "Deportation proceedings" or "removal proceedings" is a court process in which people who are facing deportation are allowed to see a judge who decides if that person has any defense against deportation, or must be deported to his/her home country.</p> <p>Can I be deported?</p> <p><u>Anyone</u> who is not a U.S. citizen can be deported - even people with green cards. Stay out of trouble with the law. Some infractions, even minor ones, can lead to deportation. Here are some reasons that people end up in deportation proceedings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in the United States without permission (not having papers); • Saying you're a U.S. citizen when you're not; • Marrying someone just to help him/her get a green card or so you can get a green card;

<p>Benefits/ Services Available to Undocumented Youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug convictions, or even committing a drug crime that you were arrested for but not charged with;• Stealing;• Violent crimes such as rape, murder, assault, battery;• Domestic violence or violating a protection order;• Gun convictions;• Sex offenses including statutory rape;• Prostitution; and• In some cases, driving under the influence. <p>What do I do if I am approached by the immigration authorities or the police?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If Immigration Service arrests you, remain silent<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Do not answer any questions.○ Do not say anything about where you were born or how you entered the United States.○ Do not show any documents (especially any false documents), except a letter from a lawyer.○ Do not sign anything, especially an Order of Voluntary Departure, without first talking to a lawyer.○ Do tell the Immigration Service official that you want your hearing in the city closest to where you live where there is an immigration court.○ Do ask to talk to your lawyer.• If they come to your home, ask to see a Search Warrant. If the official doesn't show you one, you do not have to open the door and you do not have to show any documents. If you allow them in, you may lose some of your rights. <p>Can I legally work in the United States?</p> <p>No. Unless you have obtained a legal immigration status in the United States and received employment authorization based on that status, you are not authorized to work in the United States.</p> <p>What if an employment application asks for my immigration status? Should I say I am a US citizen?</p> <p>Employers will ask you to provide documentation to show that you are authorized to work in the United States. You should never lie and state that you are a U.S. citizen for any purpose. Doing so is a crime that can have a serious effect on any future application for immigration benefits.</p> <p>If I am undocumented but working, should I pay taxes?</p> <p>Yes. If you are working, you should pay taxes. Failure to do so could negatively impact a future application for a green card or citizenship.</p>
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Can I receive public benefits?

Whether you are eligible to receive benefits depends on your immigration status.

If you are undocumented, you may receive medical coverage under the Alien Medical Program (AMP). The AMP is for noncitizens who (i) have a qualifying emergent medical condition; (ii) would be eligible for [Medicaid](#) if he/she were a citizen; and (iii) are ineligible for a full-scope [Medicaid](#) program due to immigrant status.

Chapter XII Public Benefits, has more details about eligibility for benefits such as [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#) (TANF), [State Family Assistance](#) (SFA), [Diversion Cash Assistance](#), and [Basic Food](#) to learn more about these programs), you must be a “qualified immigrant”.

The following groups are “qualified immigrants”:

- Amerasian lawful permanent residents;
- Asylees;
- Cuban/Haitian entrants;
- Persons granted withholding of deportation or removal.
- Refugees;
- Special immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan;
- Victims of trafficking who have been certified or had their eligibility approved by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR); and
- Lawful permanent residents, parolees, or battered aliens.

If you are granted deferred action under DACA, you are still classified as “undocumented” for the purposes of eligibility for public benefits. You are not eligible for Medicaid. However, you may be eligible for Medical Care Services.

“Nonqualified immigrants” are noncitizens who are lawfully present in the U.S. and who are not included in the definition of qualified immigrants above.

Nonqualified immigrants include but are not limited to:

- Citizens of Marshall Islands, Micronesia or Palau;
- Immigrants paroled into the U.S. for less than one year;
- Immigrants granted temporary protected status; or
- Nonimmigrants who are allowed entry into the U.S. for a specific purpose usually for a limited time are also nonqualified (business visitors, students, and tourists).

Even if you are nonqualified, you may still be eligible for benefits in Washington.

If you are a refugee, the [Refugee Cash Assistance](#) (RCA) Program (click [here](#) for more information) helps refugees by providing cash and medical assistance ([Refugee Medical Assistance](#) (RMA) Program) during their first eight months in the U.S.

If you entered the United States in an immigration status that allows you to receive refugee benefits, you are eligible for RCA and RMA benefits as long as you meet other eligibility requirements.

<p>Social Security Numbers and Identification</p>	<p>Eligible immigration statuses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee , • Conditional Entrant, • Asylee, • Amerasian, • Cuban-Haitian entrant, • Certified as a victim of trafficking and their eligible family members, and • Special Immigrant from Iraq or Afghanistan and their eligible family members. <p>The programs described above are administered through the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. Generally, federal programs, such as social security income, require U.S. citizenship.</p> <p>Can I obtain a Social Security Number?</p> <p>No. You cannot obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) without first obtaining lawful status and employment authorization in the United States.</p> <p>While you cannot obtain an SSN if you are undocumented, you can still apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). You do not need to show that you are lawfully present in the United States in order to obtain an ITIN. You can file a tax return or pay your taxes by using your ITIN. However, the ITIN does not provide you with permission to work in the United States or make you eligible for social security benefits.</p> <p>Can I get an ID or a driver’s license?</p> <p>Yes. Undocumented immigrants in Washington may obtain an ID or driver’s license. Washington does not currently require proof of legal immigration status in order to apply for these documents.</p> <p>For more information on how to apply for an ID or driver’s license, please refer to the section of the Handbook on Identification.</p> <p>Can I open a bank account if I don’t have a Social Security Number?</p> <p>Yes. A bank may accept an ITIN instead of an SSN. You must also be prepared to provide two forms of identification.</p>
<p>Civic Participation</p>	<p>Can I vote?</p> <p>No. Only US citizens at least 18 years old are allowed to vote. Undocumented youth or youth granted legal status as described above (e.g. SIJS, T visa, U visa, asylum, TPS) cannot vote.</p> <p>Can I register to vote?</p> <p>No. Only US citizens at least 18 years old can register to vote. Undocumented youth or youth granted a legal status as described above cannot vote.</p> <p>If you are not eligible to register to vote, do not make the mistake of registering to vote accidentally. Doing so is a serious crime and can lead to your deportation. Registering to vote will also negatively impact your ability to apply for legal status in the United States in the future.</p>

<p>Education</p> <p>A public school cannot require you to provide proof of your immigration status at any time in order to go to school. The school has no legal reason to request, see, or copy any of your immigration related documents (e.g. passport, I-94, visas, I-20s, etc.)</p>	<p>Can I go to school?</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>You have a right to receive public education through the 12th grade, regardless of your immigration status.</p> <p>Public schools cannot provide any outside agency, including the federal government, with your information that would reveal your undocumented status without first getting permission from your parents. Public school personnel are not legally required to enforce U.S. immigration laws.</p> <p>Can I get financial aid for college?</p> <p>No. In order to receive federal financial aid, you must either be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen, which means that you either be a lawful permanent resident (have a “green card”) or must have an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from USCIS showing one of the following designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refugee,• Asylum Granted,• Cuban-Haitian Entrant, Status Pending,• Conditional Entrant" (valid only if issued before April 1, 1980),• Victims of human trafficking, T-visa (T-2, T-3, or T-4, etc.) holder, and• "Parolee" (You must be paroled into the United States for at least one year and you must be able to provide evidence from the USCIS that you are in the United States for other than a temporary purpose and that you intend to become a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.) <p>However, Washington allows undocumented students to pay the same in-state tuition as other Washington residents at the public colleges and universities in the state. Many other states require undocumented students to pay out-of-state or foreign student tuition.</p> <p>Undocumented students residing in Washington are eligible to pay in-state tuition at Washington universities and colleges if they meet the requirements outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resided in Washington for at least three years and have completed a full senior year of high school in Washington and have graduated from a Washington high school or• Received a GED in Washington and have lived in the state for three full years prior to receiving the GED and• Continuously lived in Washington immediately after receiving a diploma or GED. <p>The student must provide an affidavit stating the student will apply for legalization when he/she is eligible to do so.</p>
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Enlistment in the Military	Can I join the military? No. If you are undocumented, you cannot join the military. What is Selective Service? The Selective Service System maintains information about men who could be recruited into the military.
	If I am a male, should I register for the Selective Service when I turn 18? Yes. If you are a male between the ages of 18 and 26 and you live in the United States, then you must register with Selective Service—even if you are undocumented. You can register at any U.S. Post Office and do not need a social security number. Selective Service does not collect any information which would indicate whether or not you are undocumented. Failure to register for the Selective Service could negatively impact your ability to obtain a green card or become a U.S. citizen.

Glossary of Terms

Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN)	a cash grant for current TANF and RCA recipients who have an emergency housing or utility need.
Administrative Claim	a claim filed with the government body or agency in which an action is brought. The claim generally must be reviewed by the government body or agency before a suit in a court can be brought.
AMP	Alien Medical Program
Annual Percentage Rate	Describes the interest rate for an entire year on a loan.
ARY	At-Risk Youth
Assistance Unit (AU)	An AU is the group of people who live together and whose income and resources count towards determining eligibility for Washington's Basic Food program. See Chapter XII, page 128.
Asylum	protection provided by another country for a person who is being persecuted in her home country.
Basic Food	The US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called Basic Food in Washington, helps low income people make ends meet by providing monthly benefits to buy food. http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/food_assistance_program.shtml
Becca Bill	legislation that generally was designed for parents and youths to gain assistance from the courts where family relations have deteriorated and assistance is needed.
Becca Laws	a Child in Need of Services Petition
Boarder	one who is in foster care or pays a reasonable amount for lodging and food. A boarder cannot receive Basic Food benefits in a separate AU. See Chapter XII, page 128.
Building	means any dwelling, fenced area, vehicle, railway car, cargo container, any other area for lodging or business purposes, or for the use, sale or deposit of goods.
Canteen Expenses	money to purchase items from the canteen (or cafeteria) or vending machines) and small purchases
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CBE	Childbirth Education offered as part of the First Steps Program.
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Chemical Dependency	a dependency an individual has to (a) alcoholism; (b) drug addiction, or (c) dependence on alcohol and one or more other psychoactive chemicals. This is commonly called drug addiction.
Child Protective Services (CPS)	The Washington State service responsible for receiving and investigating reports of suspected child abuse and neglect.
CHINS	Child in Need of Services
Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP)	a cash program for families or pregnant women who face an emergency and do not have the money to meet their basic needs.
Co-Residency	Term for those who live in the same house. See Chapter XII, page 128.
Court Appointed Special Advocate	Individuals that represent and advocate on behalf of a child or youth in a foster care system.
CPS	Child Protective Services
Crisis Residential Center	Crisis Residential Center
DACA	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
Dangerous Circumstances	dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence or harm against that individual
Declaration	A written statement that states certain information is true. A declaration is dated and signed and given under penalty of perjury in the State of Washington. Signing a declaration that is false is a serious felony.

Decree	a ruling issued by a judge.
Dependency Petition	A court document filed by an interested party, such as a grandparent, non-custodial parent, or any other person who is concerned about the welfare of a child. A dependency petition is the first step in the judicial process to determine if a child or youth is dependent upon the state or agency to become their legal custodian.
Dependency Statute	The Juvenile Court Act is contained in the Revised Code of Washington, Title 13, Chapter 13.34.
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
Disabled child	Pursuant to the qualifications needed for Social Security Insurance, a “disabled child” is one who has a physical or mental condition(s) that very seriously limits your activities, and the conditions must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least one year or to result in death.
Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA)	an emergency grant for families who do not get TANF but who are so low-income that they are eligible for TANF. More information about the available emergency assistance programs can be found here.
Domicile	refers to your true, fixed, and permanent home.
DSHS	Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.
EAD	Employment Authorization Document
Electro-convulsive treatment	a psychiatric treatment in which seizures are electrically induced in anesthetized patients for therapeutic effect. This procedure has been used to treat severe depression and schizophrenia.
Emancipation	Where a court in the State of Washington determines that a person sixteen years of age or older who is a resident of the State of Washington has the ability to manage his or her financial affairs and to manage his or her personal, social, educational, and nonfinancial affairs. Once a court had declared a person emancipated, that person is legally considered an adult and all parental obligations of that person’s parents are terminated.
Emergency assistance programs	Additional benefits that one who is already receiving public benefits (such as TANF, SFA, or RCA) may qualify for if they have an emergency.
Eviction	refers to a landlord requiring, through the legal process, a tenant to move out.
Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)	a service provided through Washington State’s Department of Social and Health Services, Children’s Administration, Division of Children and Family Services. FRS helps families deal with problems such as a child running away or serious problems between parents and their children. FRS seeks to achieve reconciliation between the parent and child, to reunify the family, and to maintain and strengthen the family unit.
Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	Refers to the federal poverty level income standards published by the federal government each year and which can be found at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.cfm .
Fetus	An unborn baby.
Foster Care	a term used for a system in which a minor who has been made a ward is placed in an institution, group home, or private home of a state-certified caregiver referred to as a “foster parent.”
Foster Care to 21	A prior program providing foster care to those over 18 that has now been replaced by the Extended Foster Care Program.
GAL	Guardian Ad Litem
General Education Development (“GED”)	a group of five subject tests, which, when passed, certify that the taker has American high school-level academic skills.
GRADS	Graduation, Reality, And Dual-Role Skills programs for pregnant teens and/or young parents that focus on work and family foundation skills and include student demonstration of skills. leading to high school

	graduation and economic independence
Green Card	Card given to lawful permanent residents as proof of that status
Guardian	An individual appointed by a court to be responsible for the care of another person who the court determines cannot care for himself or herself.
Housing	Housing generally refers to the social problem of insuring that members of society have a home to live in, whether this is a house, or some other kind of dwelling, lodging, or shelter.
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Identity Theft Affidavit	a model form that can be used to report information to many companies, simplifying the process of alerting companies where a new account was opened in a victim's name.
Immunizations	Shots (vaccines) given to children to protect them against certain diseases.
In loco parentis	Latin term for "in the place of a parent," and under the law, one who will effectively be recognized as one
Independent Living Program	a social program aimed at making sure that each eligible individual is able to live independently to their maximum capacity.
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
ITIN	Individual Taxpayer Identification Number
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration ("JRA")	an administration within the Washington Department of Social and Health Services that operates juvenile correctional facilities
Landlord	refers to the person who rents a property to a tenant.
Lawful Permanent Resident	A person who has been granted authorization to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis.
Learning Assistance Program (LAP)	Washington's state-funded program that provides additional academic support to eligible students. LAP funds are available to support programs in grades K through 12 in reading, writing, and mathematics, and in readiness for those subjects.
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or those who are Questioning their sexuality.
Medicaid	A government insurance program for persons of all ages who do not have enough income and resources to pay for health care.
Medical Benefits	Benefits provided for medical services, including programs such as Medicare and Apple Health. (See Chapter XII, p. 121)
Mental Disorder	Any organic, mental, or emotional impairment which has substantive adverse effects on an individual's cognitive (thought) or volitional (action) functions.
Minor	refers to a person under 18 years old. A minor is an "emancipated minor" if s/he went through formal legal proceedings where a court declared the minor free from the control of his or her parents or guardian.
Non-needy relative grant	Cash and medical assistance for children who are in the care of a relative of specified degree or a legal guardian or custodian. http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecsso/non_needy_relative_grant.shtml
Ombudsman Services	a service or appointed official charged with representing the interests of the public by investigating and addressing complaints relating to a violation of rights.
Official Use	Items used only within the designated professional field or organization
Permanency plan	Whenever a child is ordered to be removed from a home, a permanency plan of care must be developed by the agency that sets forth a plan for returning the child to the home of the child's parents or an alternative such as permanent legal custody of another relative or foster care.
Permanency Planning Hearing ("PPH")	a hearing with the purpose to review the permanency plan for the child, inquire into the welfare of the child and progress of the case, and

	reach decisions regarding the permanent placement of the child.
Personal Credit Rating	a credit rating evaluates the credit score of a debtor. It is an evaluation made by a credit rating agency of the debtor's ability to pay back the debt and the likelihood of default.
PPH	Permanency Planning Hearing
Petition	a written application from a person or persons to a governing body or court asking that some authority be exercised to grant relief or privileges.
Power of Attorney	a written authorization to represent or act on another's behalf in legal matters.
Premium	The amount you pay usually on a monthly basis to an insurance company to keep your insurance coverage.
Prenatal	During pregnancy, prior to giving birth.
Protective payee	someone assigned to ensure that assistance funds are used for their intended purpose (See Chapter XII, page 124)
Psychosurgery	is the neurosurgical treatment of mental disorders.
Quest Card	a debit card that is credited with benefits via Electronic Benefits Transfer.
RCA	Refugee Cash Assistance
Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)	If you have just immigrated to the United States, you may be able to receive public assistance so long as you meet the requirements for receiving RCA. See Chapter XII, page 127.
Representative payee	an individual or organization appointed by SSA to receive Social Security and/or SSI benefits for someone who cannot manage or direct someone else to manage his or her money. See Chapter XII, page 136.
Residential Landlord-Tenant Act	Washington has a Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW. 59.18), which defines the minimum duties of landlords and tenants of residential dwellings. For a copy of the Act, you can call the Washington State Office of the Attorney General at 800-551-4636. http://www.wsba.org/News-and-Events/Publications-Newsletters-Brochures/~media/Files/News_Events/Publications/Consumer%20Info%20Pamphlets/Landlord%20Tenant%200211.ashx
RMA	Refugee Medical Assistance
Roomer	someone who pays for lodging but not meals, you can choose if he or she is included in your AU. See Chapter XII, page 129.
Search Warrant	a court order issued by a magistrate or judge that authorizes law enforcement officers to conduct a search of a person, location, or vehicle for evidence of a crime and to confiscate evidence if it is found.
SFA	State Family Assistance
SIJS	Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
Social Security Disability Insurance and Survivor Benefits	(collectively, SSI) which provide cash that can be used to pay for general living expenses.
Squatting	is occupying an abandoned or unoccupied space or building, usually residential, that you do not own, rent, or otherwise have permission to use. Squatting generally refers to a longer duration than trespassing.
SSN	Social Security Number
State Family Assistance (SFA)	A form of public assistance available who are not eligible for TANF. In order to receive SFA, you must be living with an adult who is acting as a parent. See Chapter XII, page 126 for more information.
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, a program that provides temporary cash and medical help for families in need.
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	A form of public assistance that provides temporary cash and medical help for eligible families. In some cases, TANF may also provide assistance to individuals such as teen parents or persons acting in the place of a parent who are in need of financial support. (See Chapter

	XII, p. 122)
Temporary Parental Consent Agreement	a written agreement between the parents and another caregiver stating that the parents have agreed to let another person have temporary custody of their child.
Tenant	refers to a person who lives in a house, apartment building, land, or portion thereof, that belongs to another, usually in exchange for the payment of rent.
TPS	Temporary Protected Status
Trespassing	means wrongfully entering property you do not own, rent, or otherwise have permission to use.
T-Visa	a T-Visa is a type of visa allowing certain victims of human trafficking and immediate family members to remain and work temporarily in the United States if they agree to assist law enforcement in testifying against the perpetrators.
Unemancipated	Usually refers to a minor who is not yet free from the care and custody of parental control due to being under the age of majority, unmarried, not in military service, and/or not declared emancipated by court order. The age of majority varies by state, but is typically 18. http://definitions.uslegal.com/u/unemancipated/
USCIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Service or INS)
U-Visa	a U-Visa lets victims of crimes that occurred in the United States, who meet certain requirements stay in the United States for up to four years.
Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)	legislation that was initially passed in 1994 that provided \$1.6 billion toward investigation and prosecution of violent crimes against women, imposes automatic and mandatory restitution on those convicted, and allows civil redress in cases prosecutors chose to leave unprosecuted. This law has been recently reauthorized.
Voluntary agency (VOLAG)	A Voluntary Agency (VOLAG) provides resettlement assistance and is initially the sponsor of a refugee entering the United States. The VOLAGs contract with the Department of State to provide services such as reception, basic orientation, counseling, food, shelter and health services to refugees. The VOLAGs act as referral sources to the appropriate local agencies for employment and English language training. http://www.cdss.ca.gov/refugeeprogram/PG1529.htm
WIC	Women, Infants and Children program of Washington State that provides health screenings, free nutrient- rich foods, breastfeeding support, nutrition education and referrals to other health and social services for pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children under five.

Helpful Websites

I. BEING A HOMELESS YOUTH

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32a.050>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32A.060>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32a.080>

<http://www.endhomelessnesswa.org/>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32a.010>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32A.150>

II. OPTIONS FOR SAFETY AND STABILITY

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/JuvenileCourt/chins.aspx#howtofile>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.64>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/documents/1603914901EN.pdf?stateabbrev=wa/>

<http://www.vinelink.com/vinelink/initMap.do>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=59>

<http://www.ini.wa.gov/ClaimsIns/CrimeVictims/FileCoverage/Default.asp>

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/>

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/?fa=forms.contribute&formID=7>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=11.94>

III. GENERAL CRIMINAL LAW

<http://dw.courts.wa.gov/index.cfm?fa=home.home>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/JuvenileCourt/diversion/divfaq.aspx#14>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/forms/520039.html>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/JuvenileCourt/diversion/divfaq.aspx#28>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/JuvenileCourt/detention/criteria.aspx>

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/report/default.htm>

<https://www.tipsubmit.com/WebTips.aspx?AgencyID=486>

<http://crimestoppers.com/custom.aspx?p=1>

<http://www.ovc.gov/help/tollfree.html>

IV. EDUCATION

<http://www.abanet.org/child/education>

http://www.naehcy.org/dl/naehcy_faq.pdf

http://www.aclu-wa.org/library_files/Guide%20for%20Public%20School%20Students.pdf

<http://www.naehcy.org/idea.html>

http://www.aclu-wa.org/library_files/Guide%20for%20Public%20School%20Students.pdf

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Safetycenter/Discipline/pubdocs/Suspension-expulsion-rights.pdf>

http://www.naehcy.org/higher_ed.html

<http://center.serve.org/nche>

<http://www.finaid.org/>

<http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/>

V. EMPLOYMENT LAW: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EMPLOYEE IN WASHINGTON STATE

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers/>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-125-030>

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/Wages/PayReq/PayDeduct/default.asp>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.12.450>

<http://www.hum.wa.gov/ComplaintProcess/Index.html>

<http://www1.eeoc.gov/employees/charge.cfm>

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/ClaimsIns/Claims/Guide/phase1.asp>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.12.450>

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Basics/Complaint/default.asp>

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/ComplainDiscrim/WRComplaint/default.asp>

<http://www.hum.wa.gov/ComplaintProcess/Index.html>

<http://www1.eeoc.gov/employees/charge.cfm>

<http://www.esd.wa.gov/uibenefits/apply/eligibility/am-i-eligible.php>

VI. IDENTIFICATION

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/idproof.html#identity>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/preapply.html>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/fees.html>

<https://fortress.wa.gov/dol/dolprod/dsdoffices/>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/teens.html>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/drivertraining.html>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/forms/520003.html>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/moving.html>

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/docs/interpreters.pdf>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/BirthDeathMarriageandDivorce/CertificateOrderingInformation/Walkin.aspx>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/422-046-CounterRequestForm.pdf>

<http://www.vitalchek.com/Campaign?site=2&clickid=600105084139405314>

<http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm>

VII. HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

<http://www.bazelon.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=bdk6FSfUBOQ%3d&tabid=104>

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/forms/guidebook

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/family

<http://www.housingsearchnw.org/>

<http://www.211kingcounty.org/>

<http://www.endhomelessnesswa.org/>

<http://www.tenantsunion.org/>

<http://aptfinder.org/>

<http://www.housingsearchnw.org/LegalServices.html>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=59.18.060>

<http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?s1=22.206.160&s2=&S3=&Sect4=AND&l=20&Sect3=PLURON&Sect5=CODE1&d=CODE&p=1&u=%2F~public%2Fcode1.htm&r=1&Sect6=HITOFF&f=G>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/WA/showdocument.cfm/County/%20/City/%20/demoMode/= %201/Language/1/State/WA/TextOnly/N/ZipCode/%20/LoggedIn/0/doctype/dynamicdoc/ichannelprofileid/15920/idynamicdocid/3733/iorganizationid/1553/itopicID/865/iProblemCodeID/0/iChannelID/7/isubtopicid/1/iproblemcodeid/1630300>

<http://www.solid-ground.org/Pages/Default.aspx>

<http://www.tenantsunion.org/>

VIII. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dbhr/rsn.shtml#dbhr>

<http://www.teamchild.org/>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<http://www.disabilityrightswa.org/>

<http://www.teamchild.org/index.php/resources/136/>

<http://www.teamchild.org/index.php/resources/136/>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/findservice.shtml>

IX. HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL RIGHTS

<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/pregnancy_medical.shtml

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/HealthcareinWashington/HospitalandPatientData/HospitalPatientInformationandCharityCare/CharityCareinWashingtonHospitals/HospitalCharityCarePolicies.aspx>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<http://www.rx.wa.gov/>

<http://www.mrsc.org/mc/courts/supreme/072wn2d/072wn2d0016.htm>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=7.70.050>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/hiv/resources/testing.aspx#why>

http://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=18341724720419717464&hl=en&as_sdt=2&as_vis=1&oi=scholar

<http://www.mrsc.org/mc/courts/supreme/072wn2d/072wn2d0016.htm>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/a-kinship-caregivers-guide-to-consenting-to-h/download/3923480A-D717-24BA-A103-576AD2821D2C?ref=mi5HA>

<http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/nutrition.pdf>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/summer-meals>

<http://www.k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/programs/SummerPrograms/default.aspx>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/food-banks>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICFoods.aspx>

<http://extension.wsu.edu/farmersmarket/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/BreastfeedingSupport.aspx>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization.aspx>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/NutritionEducation.aspx>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/food_assistance_program.shtml

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/TANF_Support_Services.shtml

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/wic-nutrition-program-for-women-infants-children>

X. PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/f2ws03apps/caofficespub/offices/general/OfficePick.asp>

<http://safehavenalliance.org/find-a-safe-haven/>

<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>

<https://text4baby.org/>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/ChildProfileHealthPromotion/HealthPromotionMaterials.aspx>

<http://www.parenthelp123.org/>

<http://www.washingteenhelpparenting.org/being-a-parent/parenting-support>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/family-planning-clinics>

<http://www.washingteenhelppregnancy.org/pregnancy/pregnancy-health-care>

<http://parenthelp123.org/resources/health-insurance-programs/childrens-health-insurance-resources>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/community-clinics>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/ChildProfileHealthPromotion/HealthPromotionMaterials/MaterialsbyTopic/Immunization.aspx>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/immunization-clinics>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICFoods.aspx>

<http://extension.wsu.edu/farmersmarket/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization.aspx>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/NutritionEducation.aspx>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/food_assistance_program.shtml

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/TANF_Support_Services.shtml

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dbhr/>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/wic-nutrition-program-for-women-infants-children>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/baby-clothing>

<https://resources.parenthelp123.org/service/clothing-banks>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<https://www.kcba.org/Membership/Sections/FAMI/>

<http://www.childcarenet.org/>

<http://childcare.org/>

<http://www.childcare.org/families/choosing-provider.asp>

<http://childcareaware.org/parents-and-guardians/child-care-101/evaluating-providers>

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/about>

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/babysitter.html>

<http://www.del.wa.gov/care/other/crisis.aspx>

<http://www.yellowpages.com/>

http://www.abcteach.com/free/f/form_emergencycontact.pdf

http://www.cityofseattle.net/humanservices/children_families/childcare/payment_assistance.htm

<http://www.del.wa.gov/care/help/homeless.aspx>

<http://childcareaware.org/parents-and-guardians/child-care-101/evaluating-providers>

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>

XI. DOMESTIC AND DATING VIOLENCE

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/?fa=forms.contribute&formID=16#formAnchor>

<http://www.fhcwashington.org/>

<http://www.wscadv.org/>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/?fa=forms.contribute&formid=16>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=59.18>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/files/C9D2EA3F-0350-D9AF-ACAE-BF37E9BC9FFA/attachments/392E64C7-908B-3F4E-DE38-FC267EC288E1/3700en.pdf>

<http://www.cob.org/documents/planning/community-development/housing/domestic-violence-housing-rights.pdf>

XII. PUBLIC BENEFITS

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/default.shtm>

<http://www.ssa.gov/>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/eligibility.shtml>

<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/prescreening/home.go?action=Introduction>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/non_needy_relative_grant.shtml

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/TANF_Support_Services.shtml

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/wac/388-454-0005.shtml>

<http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/uscode/18/1/53/1151>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9a.44&full=true#9A.44.073>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/non_needy_relative_grant.shtml

<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/wac/388-428-0010.shtml>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/LivingWithRel.shtml#388-454-0005>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/Ref-C-Cash.shtml>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/LivingWithRel.shtml#388-454-0025>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/FoodAssistanceWorkReq/basicfoodwrexemptions.shtml>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/wac/388-450-0015.shtml>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/wac/388-478-0060.shtml>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/FoodAssistanceWorkReq/basicfoodwrexemptions.shtml>

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/emergency_situations.shtml

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/EA_AREN.shtml

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ms/forms/14_001.pdf

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/diversion.shtml>

<http://independence.wa.gov/finaid/finaid.asp>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/files/C9D2EA3F-0350-D9AF-ACAE-BF37E9BC9FFA/attachments/5FF1A0C4-3824-4FF3-937A-916F75227333/7914en.pdf>

<http://independence.wa.gov/pdf/UniqueSituationFAFSATips.pdf>

<http://www.independence.wa.gov/housing/index.asp>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/>

<http://www.finaid.org/fafsa/fafsa.phtml>

<http://www.independence.wa.gov/finaid/index.asp>

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/help.htm>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>

<http://www.del.wa.gov/care/help/connections.aspx>

<http://www.del.wa.gov/care/help/seasonal.aspx>

<http://www.del.wa.gov/care/help/homeless.aspx>

<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/prescreening/home.go?action=Introduction>

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/findservice.shtml>

<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10085.html>

<http://www.disability-benefits-help.org/content/application-process?qclid=CO3wjv2T5bYCFWLHtAods2EAzA>

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/payee/faqrep.htm>

<http://www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-11.pdf>

XIII. LAWSUITS IN GENERAL

<http://www.lawhelp.org/documents/1650919940EN.pdf?stateabbrev=WA/>

<http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/>

<http://civilrights.findlaw.com/enforcing-your-civil-rights/civil-rights-laws.html>

<http://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/documents/ReferenceMaterials/Publications/Pro%20Se%20Manual.pdf>

XIV. FOSTER CARE

http://www.courts.wa.gov/court_rules/?fa=court_rules.display&group=sup&set=JuCR&ruleid=supJuCR09.2

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ea/DSHSRegMap.pdf>

<http://www.nwirp.org/>

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<http://www.k12.wa.us/TitleI/LAP/default.aspx>

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<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.165>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.225&full=true#28A.225.020>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32A.040>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=13.32A.150>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.225.090>

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<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=71.34.750>

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<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=71.34.335>

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