

Voter Engagement Project

Frequently Asked Questions



1. Does one vote really make a difference?

Absolutely. Every vote counts!

- ✓ Every year, there are very close races in Washington State.
- ✓ In 2004, our governor's race was decided by just 133 votes out of more than 2,800,000.
- ✓ It's important to exercise your right to vote and have your voice be heard. It may be the deciding factor in the next election!

2. Do I need identification to register or vote?

Yes. You'll need the following to register:

- ✓ A current Washington driver's license number or state ID number or the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number.
- ✓ If you don't provide one of the above when you register, you'll be asked for another form of ID when you vote or before.
- ✓ If you still don't have ID when voting, you can cast a **provisional ballot**. This will allow you to vote, but the state holds the ballot until they verify you are eligible to vote.

3. I am not a U.S. citizen, can I still vote?

NO. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you should not register to vote—it's illegal.

However there are other ways to get involved:

- ✓ Encourage your neighbors and friends to vote.
- ✓ Help with voter registration drives.
- ✓ Get involved with campaigns you are passionate about.

4. I have been convicted of a felony, can I still vote?

YES. Under the following circumstances:

- ✓ If you were convicted in a federal court, or a state court outside Washington, you're eligible to register and vote upon release.
- ✓ If you were convicted in a state court in Washington, you're eligible to vote once you're released from jail/prison AND not under Department of Corrections supervision (including probation, parole, or work release).
- ✓ Remember, misdemeanors and juvenile offenses don't affect voting rights.

5. What if I owe fines and court fees, can I still vote?

Yes. Owing money to the state does not automatically disqualify you from voting, however:

- ✓ You are still legally obligated to pay fines and fees.
- ✓ A court can order your voting right be blocked if you continually fail to pay.

6. I am experiencing homelessness - I don't have an address, can I still vote?

Yes. You will have to:

- ✓ List a residential address to determine what precinct you vote in.
- ✓ The address can be a shelter, street intersection, or other location you consider home.
- ✓ In order to receive your ballot you can either have it sent to a trusted and valid mailing address or you can vote in person at your county's polling station.

To learn how your organization can register people to vote, contact:

Alouise Urness, Community and Member Organizer

206.442.9455 x203 | alouise@wliha.org

7. I'm a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or another crime. Can I keep my address private when I register?

Yes. Register for the Secretary of State's Address Confidentiality Program.

- ✓ You can register for the program through a certified domestic violence advocate by contacting the Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.568.6025. **Talk to an advocate before you register to vote.**

8. Can my mailing address be different than my residential address?

Yes. You must list both addresses but they can be different

- ✓ There is a spot to list both. Your residential address is where you actually live and determines what precinct your vote will be cast in.
- ✓ Your mailing address can be any valid mailing address where you receive your mail including a P.O. box, a shelter, a friend or relative, or a service provider.

9. I recently moved, can I be registered to vote in two different places?

No. You can only be registered to vote at your current location.

- ✓ You can update your registration by filling out a new registration card and putting your old address at the bottom.
- ✓ If you fill out the form, your county elections officer should cancel your registration at the old address you listed.
- ✓ **Remember it's actually illegal to vote more than once in the same election.**

10. What if I move after I register but before I actually vote, can I still vote?

Yes. Just make sure to:

- ✓ Tell your county elections office you have a new address so they can update it.
- ✓ The month before an election, they won't change your address. But you will be eligible to vote in your old precinct.
- ✓ If you don't have a ballot by one week before the election, let them know and ask for a new ballot.

11. I really cannot vote by mail, can I still vote?

Yes. Each county has at least one office in which you can vote in person.

- ✓ Each county has an accessible voting location for people with disabilities that you can vote at in-person even if you do not have a specified disability.
- ✓ These locations are open for several weeks before an election, during regular business hours.

12. I don't identify as male or female, do I have to pick a gender to register?

No. You can leave the field blank, however:

- ✓ The county elections office will use your name to make a guess and list that gender.
- ✓ If you don't want to be listed as either male or female, you can contact your county elections office and ask them to classify you as "unknown."

13. Will I risk getting called for jury duty if I register to vote?

Yes. You'll be added to the pool that jurors are selected from, but:

- ✓ The vast majority of people who get called for jury duty aren't selected to be on a jury.
- ✓ Even if you do get called, you can defer your service to a date that works better for you.

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