



Reviewing and getting copies of your medical record

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- ❖ Read this only if you want to see and/or get copies of your medical record from a provider located *in* the state of Washington.
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Can I look at and get copies of my health care provider's medical records?

Usually. There are a few exceptions to this. See "Can my health care provider refuse to let me see or have a copy of my medical records?" below.

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- ❖ Your provider must explain any abbreviations or codes in your medical records.
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How do I exercise this right?

You must **ask your health care provider in writing** to look at and get copies of your medical records. The provider must honor your request "as promptly as required under the circumstances." They generally have fifteen days.

Will my health care provider charge me for copies of my medical file?

Maybe. Your provider can charge a "reasonable fee" for your copies. You may have to pay up front.

In 2022, a health care provider can charge up to \$1.24 a page for the first thirty pages, 94 cents a page after that, and a \$28 clerical fee. [WAC 246-08-0400](#).

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- ❖ **If you need your records because you are appealing the denial of your Social Security disability or SSI application**, you can get a free copy of your medical record once every two years. [RCW 70.02.030\(2\)\(b\)](#).
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Can my health care provider refuse to let me see or have a copy of my records?

Yes, if:

- They believe the information would be harmful to your health.
- It would tell you a source of information who should stay confidential.
- It would endanger someone's health or safety.
- The provider used or gathered the health care information just for a court case.

A provider who turns down (denies) your request for any of these reasons must try to separate out what they believe they should not release, and give you what they can.

A provider who denies your request because of a claim of danger to yourself or another must tell you that you can ask another health care provider review the file to decide if you can look at and get copies of the records. You might have to pay the second provider to do this for you.

My provider has refused to give me copies of my medical file. What can I do?

Talk to a lawyer. You might be able to get a court order forcing your provider to make your records available to you. You can also ask for money damages. If you win, you can also get lawyer's fees and expenses.

If you have a good case, a lawyer may represent you without a fee, and try to get attorney's fees from the other side. A lawyer might talk to you for free to see if you have a good case.

To find a lawyer, contact your local bar association.

What is the state law on this?

Read the [Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) at chapter 70.02](#). Most public libraries and county courthouse libraries have copies of the Revised Code.

Or you can read it online at apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=70.02.

Get Legal Help

- **Apply online** with [CLEAR*Online](https://nwjustice.org/apply-online) - nwjustice.org/apply-online
- **Facing a legal issue in King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call 2-1-1 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) weekdays 8:00 am - 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.
- **Facing a legal issue outside of King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm or apply online at nwjustice.org/apply-online.
- **Facing Eviction?** Call 1-855-657-8387.
- **Facing Foreclosure?** Call 1-800-606-4819.
- **Seniors (age 60 and over)** with a legal issue outside of King County can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111.
- **Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers** can call any of these numbers using the relay service of your choice.

CLEAR and 2-1-1 will provide interpreters.

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

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