

Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity (CROP)

Should I read this?

Yes, if both of these are true:

- You have a criminal conviction history, especially one that caused you to lose an occupational license.
- You have finished your sentence for this crime.

What does a CROP do?

It can make it easier to get work, housing, and/or an occupational license if you have served your criminal sentence.

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- ❖ If you want to get or get back an occupational license, you must also be otherwise qualified for the license.
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How does a CROP work?

You file a court petition asking a judge to sign a Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity for you. After the judge signs it, the Superior Court Clerk sends the Certificate to State Patrol. State Patrol notes it in your records.

Employers, licensing agencies, or landlords doing a criminal history check on you will see the CROP, and:

- A **licensing agency** cannot then deny you an occupational license just of your criminal record.

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- ❖ There are some exceptions to this. See *Does a CROP apply to all licenses*, below.
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- **Employers and landlords can** (do not have to) consider a CROP when deciding to give you a job or housing.

Does a CROP guarantee I will get a job?

No. Employers do not have to hire you even if you have a CROP.

Does a CROP seal my criminal record?

No.

Will a CROP apply to future criminal problems I might have?

No.

Can I get back my right to have a gun?

No.

Am I eligible for a CROP?

Yes, if all these are true:

- You have no class A felonies. Check your judgment and sentence paperwork if you have a felony conviction. The paperwork should say what type of felony it is.

- Your criminal record does not include sex offenses. (See RCW [9.94A.030](#).)
- Your criminal record does not include certain other crimes under RCW [9.94A.835](#), [13.40.135](#), or [9.94A.535\(3\)\(f\)](#).
- You have met all your sentencing requirements.
- You have had no new arrests, convictions, or pending charges since completing your sentence.

❖ [RCW](#) stands for [Revised Code of Washington](#). This is our state's laws.

Can I get a CROP for juvenile offenses?

We do not recommend a CROP for juvenile offenses. It costs more and unseals the record. Instead, you should seal your juvenile records using [Sealing Juvenile Court Records](#) (printable forms and instructions) or [interview](#) (asks you questions, creates forms from your answers).

The judge ordered as part of my sentence that I pay the court and/or the victim. I am still making payments. Can I still get a CROP?

Yes, if one of these is true:

- You are up-to-date in your payments.
- OR
- You have good cause to not be done.

Does a CROP apply to all licenses?

No. It does not work for these occupations, among others:

- Law enforcement
- Lawyers
- Firearms dealers
- Many licenses involving financial responsibility or fiduciary duty (**examples:** accounting, bail bond agents, escrow agents)
- Many licenses involving work with vulnerable people such as seniors, young children, or people with disabilities
- Some licenses related to health care (**examples:** nursing, doctors, physicians assistants)

The full list is here: [RCW 9.97.020\(a\)](#).

When can I get a CROP?

There is a waiting period, depending on what your conviction was for:

- Misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor with **no** jail time – one year from sentencing
- Misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor **with** jail time – one and a half years from release
- Class B or C felony – two years from sentencing or release
- Violent offense – five years from sentencing

[RCW 9.97.010\(1\)\(a\)](#).

Where do I get a CROP?

From one of these:

- The Superior Court where you live
- The Superior Court where you were sentenced or adjudicated (if this happened in a court of limited jurisdiction like District Court, you must go to the Superior Court in the same county)

❖ If you file in the county where you live, that court can decide not to hear your case. [RCW 9.97.020\(7\)](#). You can re-file in another county.

How do I get a CROP?

- Use [File a Petition for Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity](#). It has forms and instructions. Or get the forms yourself from the state courts' website: www.courts.wa.gov/forms.
- File your case. Pay the filing fee or, if you cannot afford to pay it, get the judge to waive (excuse) it. [Ask the Court to Waive Your Filing Fee](#) has the forms and instructions. Or use our do-it-yourself interview program, Washington Forms Online, to complete the forms at WashingtonLawHelp.org.
- Give the prosecutor in the county where you are filing notice of your case.

- Go to a hearing **if** the court schedules one.

Where can I read the CROP law?

Here: [RCW 9.97](#).

What if I need legal help?

- Apply online with [CLEAR*Online](#) - nwjustice.org/get-legal-help or
- Call CLEAR at 1-888-201-1014

CLEAR is Washington's toll-free, centralized intake, advice and referral service for low-income people seeking free legal assistance with civil legal problems.

- **Outside King County:** Call 1-888-201-1014 weekdays, 9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
- **King County:** Call 211 for info and referral to a legal services provider weekdays, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm. You may also call (206) 461-3200, or toll-free 1-877-211-WASH (9274). You can also get info on King County legal service providers at www.resourcehouse.com/win211/.
- **Persons 60 and Over:** Seniors age 60 or over may call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111, regardless of income. Assets limits may apply. Seniors in King County may call 2-1-1.

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers can call CLEAR or 211 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) using the relay service of your choice.

CLEAR and 211 will conference in free interpreters when needed.

Free legal education publications, videos and self-help packets covering many legal issues are available at WashingtonLawHelp.org.

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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