



LEGAL RESOURCES

Issue Spotting. Legal Resources.

Kathy Jensen, Northwest Justice Project

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Northwest Justice Project

- Free legal services for low income
- Family Law, Domestic Violence
- Housing
- Public Benefits
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Victims of Crime
- Consumer Law
- Tribal Law
- Legal Financial Obligations
- Special Education/504
- Intake through CLEAR (888) 201-1014
- Direct referral from professionals

Family Law

- Parenting Plan
- Child Support
- Property and debt issues
- Drug/alcohol issues
- Family Violence

Family Law Tips

- Do not ignore any legal paperwork served on you and read it.
- Go to court. If not, the other side gets what they asked for.
- Both parents have equal rights to children unless court order says otherwise.
- Court forms mostly check the box now.
- Best interests of the children.
- Gather evidence and be prepared for court.

Family Law Tips

- Follow parenting plan and do not withhold children without court order.
- Relocation of children requires notice to the other parent and, in some cases, a court hearing. Judge can force to return if move without following relocation rules.
- Mediation is not a favored dispute resolution process when domestic violence is involved.

Family Law Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Court forms: <https://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/>
- Family Law Court: <https://www.spokanecounty.org/1397/Family-Court>
- YWCA/Domestic Violence: Call 509-477-3656 or <https://ywcaspokane.org/programs/legal/>
- DSHS Child Support Calculator: <https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/dcs/SSGen/Home>

Family Law Resources

- Volunteer Lawyers Program: OPEN INTAKE LINE: (509) 324-0144
Monday afternoons from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. OR
Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
<http://www.spokanebar.org/volunteer-lawyers-program/>
- Northwest Justice Project: CLEAR: 888-201-1014 Monday-Friday from 9:15 am to 12:15 pm
 - People over 60: CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111 <https://nwjustice.org/get-legal-help>

Housing

- Evictions by Landlords/Unlawful Detainer Actions
- Public Housing Evictions
- Accommodations
- Mobile Home Park Evictions
- Habitability issues

Housing Tips

- It is illegal for a landlord to lock a tenant out, turn off utilities, or take property no matter what.
- Landlords must give proper notice. If month-to-month, 20 days before the end of the rental period with no reason required. If rental agreement/lease, follow the terms in the agreement.
- Failure to pay rent: 3 day notice to pay rent or vacate.

Housing Tips

- If breach rental agreement: 10 day notice to comply or vacate.
- If waste or destroy property: 3 day notice. No option to comply or fix.
- If do not comply, landlord files Unlawful Detainer action. Must do certain steps or required to move without a court hearing.
- Can negotiate with landlord for partial payment, extended time to move, etc. until Writ issued and Sheriff comes to ensure moved out.

Housing Tips

- Accommodations: Landlord may be required to make reasonable accommodations for disability-related requests, including modifications.
- Protections for Domestic Violence survivors: can terminate lease early under certain circumstances.
- If in housing owned by Public Housing Authority: grievance process then Unlawful Detainer.
- Subsidized housing – will likely lose voucher if evicted.
- Follow habitability rules/process – DO NOT STOP PAYING RENT

Housing Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Center for Justice: <https://cforjustice.org/legal-services/a-housing-dispute-or-homelessness/>
- Northwest Justice Project
- Volunteer Lawyers Program
- Spokane Bar Association, Housing Justice Project: Sign up at the Courthouse
- Washington Human Rights Commission for reasonable accommodations/modifications

Wrongful Termination

- Discrimination is illegal when people are treated differently because of their age, sex, race, marital status, national origin, disability, religion, or because they might want to join a union.
- Most employment is “at will” meaning you can be fired for no reason (except illegal reasons). You can also quit your job at any time for any reason.
- Employer must provide safe workplace, free from recognizable dangers, must fix problems with direct relationship to health and safety.

Wrongful Termination

- Illegal to terminate if missed work for domestic violence, jury duty, reasonable breaks, failed to pay child support, proper complaints, etc.
- If 8+ employees, illegal based on service animal, disability, protected status, military status, deliberately make hostile work environment.

Wrongful Termination Tips

- File complaint with appropriate government agency.
- Right to know why fired.
- Law protects you from retaliation for making reports/complaints.
- May not be wrongful if employer has legal basis for termination.
- Act quickly. Specific timelines apply.

Wrongful Termination Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Northwest Justice Project
- Disability Rights Washington:
<https://www.disabilityrightswa.org/resources/employment/>
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: <https://www.eeoc.gov/>
- Washington Human Rights Commission: <https://www.hum.wa.gov/>
- Washington Department of Labor and Industries: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/>

Driver's License Suspension

- Can be suspended for nonpayment of child support, unless in jail/prison and no financial resources. No suspension if getting TANF, SSI, other public assistance income, WorkFirst with no cash grant.
- Can be suspended for nonpayment of traffic infractions or if suspended in another State.
- Could be turned over to collection agency for enforcement.

Driver's License Tips

- For child support suspension: respond within 20 days of Notice of Suspension. Can pay; request hearing; payment schedule; file modification of support amount. DCS can lift suspension.
- For traffic infractions: look for relicensing program and/or request a hearing.

Driver's License Tips

- For collection agencies: offer payoff; monthly payment plan. Do not give current job information, bank accounts, pay by check or debit card. Do pay by credit card or money order. If wages garnished, challenge in court or make payment arrangements.

Driver's License Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Northwest Justice Project
- Center for Justice: <https://cforjustice.org/legal-services/getting-my-license-back/>
- Spokane County Relicensing Program:
<https://www.spokanecounty.org/3120/Relicensing-Program>
- Spokane City Relicensing Program:
<https://my.spokanecity.org/courts/prosecutor/relicensing/>

Legal Financial Obligations

- Fines, fees, and restitution amounts the court imposes at sentencing.
- Accrue interest at 12% per year.
- Must contact county(ies) where sentenced to get total owed.
- Payment in full starts waiting period to get conviction vacated.
- VA, SSA, Tribal, some wages exempt from payment; worker's comp is not.

LFO Tips

- Set up payment plans to get LFO's paid in full.
- If you get help from a needs based program or your income falls below 125% of the federal poverty guideline, court cannot require payment.
- Court cannot use SSDI to pay LFO's.
- File Motion to Remit or Remove LFO's if meet criteria.

LFO Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Northwest Justice Project
- Center for Justice: <https://cforjustice.org/legal-services/legal-financial-obligations-lfos/>

Public Benefits

- TANF: denial, sanction, termination
- Medicaid: denial of prescriptions, medical equipment, medical coverage
- DDA: denial, reduction, termination
- Caregiver: denial, reduction, termination
- Overpayments

Public Benefit Tips

- 90 days to appeal adverse DSHS/HCA decision.
- 10 days or by end of month to get continuing benefits.
- If lose appeal and receive continuing benefits, could have 2 month overpayment.
- Always appeal – can withdraw appeal at any time.
- Equal Access – additional accommodations to access/receive services.



Public Benefits Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Northwest Justice Project
- Social Security Attorneys

Special Education/504

- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Comprehensive Evaluation and re-evaluations
- Goals and related services
- 504 Plan
- Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan

Special Education Tips

- Discuss child's diagnoses and educational concerns with Special Education Director.
- Request special education evaluation if you feel child needs specialized instruction in any area, including behavior.
- If already have individual education plan, ensure progress made and goals are objective and measurable.
- Discipline protections.

Special Education Resources

- Washingtonlawhelp.org
- Northwest Justice Project
- TeamChild: <https://teamchild.org/spokane/>
- Disability Rights Washington:
<https://www.disabilityrightswa.org/resources/education/>
- PAVE: <https://wapave.org/category/learning-in-school/>
- TreeHouse: <https://www.treehouseforkids.org/our-services/academic-support/>

The End!

- You made it through! Congratulations!
- If you have further questions, feel free to contact me. Email is best.
- Email: kathyj@nwjustice.org
- Phone: 509-680-2772
- Please do not give my direct information to clients. Give the CLEAR information.