

DURING COVID-19

Have you or a loved one been arrested during COVID-19?

Currently, although some counties have announced policies not to file certain types of non-urgent cases, people are still being booked into jails regularly for issues such as allegations of criminal law violations, probation revocations, and bench warrants.

Although courts are running on a very limited basis, **all** courts in Washington State are holding release hearings.

- If your family or community member was recently booked on allegations of a new criminal law violation, they will have initial appearances and, if charges filed, an arraignment hearing without delay. For other bookings, a release hearing may need to be set by an attorney.

If your family or community member is booked into a jail, you should immediately contact their attorney or, if no attorney is assigned or you are unsure, contact the county's public defender's office.

- King County Department of Public Defense: (206) 296 - 7662
- Snohomish County Office of Public Defense: (425) 388 - 3500
- Pierce County Public Defense: (253) 798 - 6062
- Spokane County Public Defense: (509) 477 - 4246
- Others can be found online

If your family / community member has underlying health conditions that made them particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, it is critical that this information is relayed to their defense attorney. If you are able to collect medical documentation confirming their underlying health condition, provide that information to the defense attorney as well. If the health condition is very urgent, you can contact the jail – often they are not able to provide information to family / community members, but they will still take information from you.

- The Washington State Supreme Court, by emergency order, is requiring courts to consider underlying health conditions that make a person particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 (as defined by the CDC) when determining if a person should be released. Some courts require medical verification.

If your family / community member calls you from the jail, remember **all calls are recorded and reviewed by the police / prosecutor's office.** Do not discuss the alleged incident on the phone, no matter what the substance of the conversation.

Many of our state's jails claim to be implementing social distancing within the facilities, including special "droplet protection" units for those who are most vulnerable and decreasing general jail populations to allow more space within the facilities. Most jails have this information publicly available online. However, there is still urgent concern for those in custody.

The information contained in this document is not legal advice. If you have questions about the rights outlined in this resource or have experienced health care discrimination and would like to consult with a lawyer about your situation, please make an appointment at QLaw Foundation's free LGBTQ+ Legal Clinic at [www.qlawfoundation.org](http://www qlawfoundation.org) or by calling 206-235-7235.