

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Board's Authority?

The Washington State Constitution, Article III, Section 9, provides the Governor the authority to grant pardons, as does RCW 10.01.120. The Clemency and Pardons Board (Board) has been established within the Office of the Governor pursuant to RCW 9.94A.880 and RCW 9.94A.885. The Board receives Petitions from individuals, organizations, and the Department of Corrections for review and commutation of sentences and pardoning of offenders in extraordinary cases, and makes recommendations on those Petitions to the Governor. RCW 9.94A.885(1). In addition, the Board receives Petitions from individuals or organizations for the restoration of civil rights lost by operation of state law as a result of convictions for federal offenses or out-of-state felonies. The Board may issue certificates of restoration limited to engaging in political office. RCW 9.94A.885(2).

Do I need an attorney to handle my application?

No, you do not need an attorney to represent you in the clemency process.

Is there a filing fee for the application process?

No, there is no fee involved. This service is provided free of charge by the State of Washington.

If my case is scheduled for hearing, do I have to attend the hearing?

No, it is not a requirement for any petitioner to attend the clemency hearing, although in most cases, the Members of the Board will have questions about the Petition or the underlying case which could bear weight on the Board Member's decision on whether or not to vote to recommend the requested relief. Consequently, it is highly recommended that the Petitioner attend the hearing.

What if I am incarcerated, how do I represent myself?

If you are incarcerated, you may request to appear at the hearing telephonically by contacting the Board's staff in writing. Arrangements will be made with the DOC to make you available by telephone on the date your petition will be heard.