LCYC

Youth Homelessness Program

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About LCYC

Our Mission: Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC) protects the interests and safety of youth in Washington by advancing their legal rights. We accomplish our mission through direct legal representation, strong community partnerships, and systemic advocacy.

For main practice areas: 1) Child Welfare, 2) Juvenile Court, 3) Youth Homelessness, and 4) Youth and Family Immigration. Our legal services can range from negotiations to full in court representation. LCYC provides free civil legal services to youth between ages 12-24.

LCYC currently serves young people in the counties of: King, Skagit, Pierce, Clark and Thurston.

LCYC Services

Direct Legal Services

Many people are familiar with criminal legal issues, but not civil legal issues. Civil legal issues are legal issues that impact access to safety and stability. Often, young people do not know that a lawyer can help, and is appropriate to have, in these situations.

Examples of civil legal issues that LCYC can address:

- Benefits
- Child Protective Services
- Education
- Emancipation
- Evictions
- Family Law
- Gender Marker Changes
- Guardianships
- Identity Theft
- Consumer Debt
- Medical Debt
- Name Changes
- Landlord/Tenant
- Orders of Protection
- Restitution
- Record Sealing
- Warrants

Referrals to LCYC

To make a referral to LCYC for legal services, fill out our referral form at:

lcycwa.org/needhelp

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Court Options for Out-of-Home Placement

	DEPENDENCY	CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (CHINS)	EMANCIPATION	MINOR GUARDIANSHIP	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTION ORDER (DVPO)
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS?	Your health, safety, & welfare must be seriously endangered; a risk of imminent harm; you have been abused, neglected, abandoned. RCW 13.34.050	You are in need of necessary services to maintain or reunite your family. RCW 13.32A.030(5)(c)	You must be 16-17 years old and able to manage own affairs (financial and non-financial). RCW 13.64.050	Guardianship is in your best interest and one of the following: parent agrees; parent's rights are terminated; or no parent is willing or able to exercise parenting functions. RCW 11.130.185	You must be experiencing domestic violence from an intimate partner or a family or household member. If you are aged 15 and older, you can file for yourself. RCW 7.105.100
WHEN WILL I GET A HEARING?	When you are taken into custody, the court shall hold a shelter care hearing within 72 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. RCW 13.34.065	The law says 5 or 10 calendar days, but usually around 2 weeks after filing petition. RCW 13.32A.160	No later than 60 days after the petition is filed. RCW 13.64.030	If it's an emergency, the hearing can be right away or within 5 days. Non-emergency hearings are held 60 days after the petition is filed. RCW 11.130.225	Immediate hearings for temporary orders are usually the same day or the next day. Full hearings are usually 14 days after the petition is filed. RCW 7.105.200 RCW 7.105.305
PLACEMENT OPTIONS?	You may be placed with a relative or other suitable adult, in a foster home or shelter/group home. RCW 13.34.060	Crisis residential center, HOPE center, foster family home, group home, or any other suitable residence to be determined by DCYF. RCW 13.32A.160	None. But, you can consent to your own housing like shelter, transitional living program, your own lease, etc. RCW 13.64.060	Any suitable adult interested in your welfare. RCW 11.130.190	None. The protection order only protects against an abusive intimate partner, parent, or household member, so you don't have to live with them.
OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER?	You may lose control over decisions. Placement options may be unavailable. May be eligible for Extended Foster Care at 18.	Out of home placement is up to 6 months. You must be open to reunification services like therapy.	If your parent disagrees, you have to show the court that not being emancipated will be detrimental to you. You might lose some benefits and services.	Emergency guardianships require the petitioner to show: (1) its necessary to prevent substantial harm to your health, safety, or welfare; and (2) no other person appears to have authority, ability, and willingness to act in the circumstances. RCW 11.130.225	It's only a temporary fix. The Judge might not grant it. You have a better chance if the other parent supports the DVPO or if you also file a CHINS or guardianship. If you are under age 15, a family or household member must file on your behalf. RCW 7.105.100

Minor Consent Chart

In Washington state, there are laws that support a minor's right to make their own choices.

LCYC created the Minor Consent Chart to inform minors of the laws pertaining to their ability to access services and necessities on their own, without being emancipated.

This chart is available at:
lcycwa.org/blog/minor-consent

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CAN A MINOR CONSENT?

SIGNING A RENTAL LEASE
YES. Minors can contract for a lease in Washington state at any age. However, because contracts with minors are voidable, rental agencies are unlikely to enter into the contract without parental consent. **RCW 26.28.030**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

BUYING A CAR
NO. In Washington state, it is unlawful to sell a car to someone under the age of eighteen and it is unlawful for a person under eighteen to be the registered owner, unless they are legally emancipated, actively serve in the military, or were the legal owner previously in another state and are now registering in Washington. **RCW 46.12.755**.

Parent/Guardian does need to be notified.

RENTING A STORAGE UNIT
YES. Like rental leases, a minor possesses the right to contract to rent a storage unit in Washington state at any age. However, because contracts with minors are voidable, it may be difficult to find a willing storage facility without parental consent. **RCW 26.28.030**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

SIGNING AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT
YES. Minors over the age of 14 can contract for employment in Washington state and a parent or guardian has no right to their wages if the minor entered the employment contract alone. **RCW 26.28.050**. It is unlawful to employ minors under the age of 14, but this does not apply to farm or household work such as babysitting, certified soccer referee programs, and actors or performers in film, tv, theater productions. **RCW 26.28.060**. It is also unlawful to employ minors under the age of 18 for any dangerous or indecent work. **RCW 26.28.070**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

ENROLLING IN SCHOOL
YES. A minor who does not have a parent or does not have a place to live can get assistance enrolling themselves in school as an "Unaccompanied Homeless Youth" and are entitled to multiple education rights under the **McKinney-Vento Act. 42 U.S.C §11431-11435**. If a minor is living with a parent or guardian, then that parent or guardian is responsible for enrolling the child in school.

Parent/Guardian may need to be notified.

CREATING AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
NO. A parent or guardian of a child is required to be included on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team for students eligible for special education. **34 CFR § 300.321.**

Parent/Guardian does need to be notified.

OPENING OR USING A BANK ACCOUNT
YES. A minor can open their own bank account and freely deposit and withdraw funds without the control of or notification to a parent or guardian. **RCW 30A.22.70**. A minor may not disaffirm transactions with a banking institution. All transaction will be considered valid and enforceable. **RCW 33.20.040**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

PURCHASING OR HOLDING AN INSURANCE POLICY
YES. A minor may purchase life or disability insurance at 15 years of age or older but cannot later disaffirm this contract due to their minor status. **RCW 48.18.020**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

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CAN A MINOR CONSENT?

ACCESSING SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT OR SERVICES
YES. At 13 years of age or older, a minor may consent to outpatient or inpatient substance abuse treatment programs without parental consent and the treatment facility may only notify parents or guardians with the minor's written consent. **RCW 71.34.500**; **RCW 71.34.510**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
YES. A minor can receive outpatient mental health treatment at 13 years of age or older without notification to a parent. **RCW 71.34.530**. If a minor seeks inpatient mental health treatment, they may consent on their own at 13 years of age, but a parent or guardian must be notified unless the professional person providing services has a compelling reason to believe such disclosure would be detrimental to the adolescent or contact cannot be made. **RCW 71.34.500**; **RCW 71.34.510**.

Parent/Guardian may need to be notified.

ACCESSING GENERAL MEDICAL CARE
YES, IF DETERMINED "MATURE". Minors of any age can give consent to access general medical care, such as vaccines, under the Mature Minor Doctrine in Washington state if a physician determines they are capable of understanding and appreciating the consequences of a medical procedure. In determining whether the patient is a mature minor, providers will evaluate the minor's age, intelligence, maturity, training, experience, economic independence, general conduct as an adult and freedom from the control of parents. **Smith v. Seibly, 72 Wn.2d 16 (1967)**. However, the Mature Minor Doctrine is a common law principle not adopted by Washington statute, so application is inconsistent. Some physicians are hesitant to make this determination for fear of liability. **More on the The Mature Minor Doctrine**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified if determined "mature".

ACCESSING GENERAL MEDICAL CARE (FOR UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH)
YES, IF CONSIDERED AN "UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH". SB 5883 authorizes unaccompanied homeless youth to provide consent for general medical care without authorization or notification to a parent or guardian. An unaccompanied homeless youth who is not otherwise authorized to provide informed consent, and is unable to obtain informed consent from a school nurse, school counselor, or homeless student liaison, is authorized to provide informed consent for non-emergency, outpatient, primary care services. **More on SB 5883**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified if considered an "unaccompanied homeless youth".

ACCESSING GENDER AFFIRMING MEDICAL CARE
YES, IF DETERMINED "MATURE". For youth accessing gender affirming medical care, the **Mature Minor Doctrine** again applies. This means youth of any age can consent to gender affirming medical care without a parent if a physician determines that the youth is mature.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified if determined "mature".

ACCESSING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
YES. Youth of any age can provide consent to access birth control services, abortion-related services and prenatal care. **RCW 9.02.100**; **State v. Koome, 84 Wn.2d 90 (1975)**.

Parent/Guardian does not need to be notified.

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Questions?

Contact LCYC

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