

# Resources for Newly Elected Officials

## **I won the election and have been certified the winner. What do I need to do next? RCW 29A.04.133**

### **Oath or Affirmation of Office**

After the election results have been certified, every person elected to an office in the State of Washington, including jurisdictions within counties, cities, and towns, is required by the Washington constitution and/or statutes to take an oath or affirmation of office prior to serving. The oath or affirmation of office must comply with the appropriate statute or, if none is specified for that office, in accordance with the oath or affirmation set forth in RCW 29A.04.133. Depending on the office and tradition, the oath or affirmation of office may be taken or attested either verbally or in writing.

### **How should the oath or affirmation of office be administered to a candidate?**

RCW 29A.04.133 requires that the oath or affirmation of office be administered and certified by any officer or notary public authorized to administer oaths, without charge. Six positions are specifically qualified by statute to administer oaths:

Judges and Notary Publics	RCW 5.28.010
Clerk of the Courts	RCW 2.32.050
County Commissioners	RCW 36.32.120
County Auditors or Deputies	RCW 36.22.030
Town Clerks	RCW 35.27.220
School Officials	RCW 28A.343.360

### **Where to obtain a blank oath or affirmation of office**

- Pierce County Elections (web and office).
- Cities, Towns, School Districts and Special Purpose Districts Clerks.
- Pierce County Council (for County Offices)

Note: this oath is unique to County positions.

### **Filing your oath or affirmation of office**

Once the oath or affirmation of office has been taken for a local or county office, the original must be filed with the Elections Division. Elected officials may wish to complete a second original oath for retention or display purposes.

Oaths of office for supreme court justice, court of appeals, and superior court judge are filed with the Secretary of State.

### **Bond**

A qualified candidate may also be required to post a bond. If so, it is not the responsibility of the County Auditor to verify that such bond has been posted.

### **To learn more about public office**

Newly elected officials may wish to contact their local city or town clerk, school superintendent as well as fellow council members and commissioners to learn more about their jurisdiction and the duties required. See the tables below for more information regarding oaths and the timelines for assuming office.

<b>Oaths/Affirmations of Office</b>	<b>Where Original Oaths/Affirmations are Filed</b>
President/Vice President	Verbal
US Senator	Verbal
US Representative	Verbal Oath on convening of Congress
State Legislators/State Wide Offices	Verbal Oath on convening of Legislature (Reference State Constitution, Article III, Section 4)
Supreme Court Justice	Secretary of State (Reference State Constitution, Article IV, Section 28)
Court of Appeals and Superior Court Judges	Secretary of State (Reference RCW 2.06.085)
District Court and Tacoma Municipal Court Judges	County Auditor (Reference RCW 36.16.060)
County Offices, City, Town, Special Purpose and School Districts	County Auditor (Reference RCW 36.16.060)

<b>Timelines for Assuming Office</b>	
President/Vice President	12 noon, January 20 <sup>th</sup> (Reference US Constitution, Amendment XX, Section 1)
US Senator	12 noon, January 3 <sup>rd</sup> (Reference US Constitution, Amendment XX, Section 1)
US Representative	12 noon, January 3 <sup>rd</sup> (Reference US Constitution, Amendment XX, Section 1)
State Legislators/State Offices	2nd Monday in January (Reference RCW 44.04.021)
Supreme Court Justice	2nd Monday in January (Reference RCW 2.04.071)
Court of Appeals Judge	2nd Monday in January (Reference RCW 2.06.070)
Superior Court Judge	2nd Monday in January (Reference RCW 2.08.070)
District Court and Municipal Court Judge	2nd Monday in January (Reference RCW 3.34.070)
County Offices	January 1st, after elected and qualified (Reference RCW 29A.04.133, 29A.60.280; County Charter 4.80)

City Offices	January 1st, after elected and qualified (Reference RCW 29A.04.133, 29A.60.280)
Special Purpose Districts, Fire Protection, Park & Rec, Water, Sewer Districts	January 1st, after elected and qualified (Reference RCW 29A.04.133, 29A.60.280)
School Districts	At the first meeting after Certification of General Election (Reference RCW 28A.343.360)

<b>Additional Resources</b>		
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Website</b>
Federal Voting Assistance Program	(800) 438-8683	fvap.gov
Municipal Research and Services Center	(206) 625-1300 (800) 933-6772	mrsc.org
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction	(360) 725-6000	k12.wa.us
Pierce County Council	(253) 798-7777	piercecountywa.org/Council
Pierce County Elections	(253) 798-VOTE (8683) (800) 446-4979	PierceCountyElections.org
Public Disclosure Commission	(360) 753-1111 (877) 601-2828	pdc.wa.gov
Puget Sound Educational Service District No. 121	(425) 917-7600	psed.org
Secretary of State	(800) 448-4881	vote.wa.gov
Washington State Association of Counties	(360) 753-1886	wsac.org
Washington State Auditor's Office	(360) 902-0370	sao.wa.gov
Washington State School Directors Association	(360) 493-9231	wssda.org

# OATH OF OFFICE

STATE OF WASHINGTON )  
 ) ss.  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ )

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear or affirm that I  
am a citizen of the United States and State of Washington; that I am legally qualified to  
assume the office of \_\_\_\_\_;  
(Office and Position)  
that I will support the  
Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Washington; and that I will  
faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of this office to the best of my ability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name)

Subscribed and sworn before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name, Title of Swearing Officer)