

RCW 9.94A.640 Vacation of offender's record of conviction. (1)

Every offender who has been discharged under RCW 9.94A.637 may apply to the sentencing court for a vacation of the offender's record of conviction. If the court finds the offender meets the tests prescribed in subsection (2) of this section, the court may clear the record of conviction by: (a) Permitting the offender to withdraw the offender's plea of guilty and to enter a plea of not guilty; or (b) if the offender has been convicted after a plea of not guilty, by the court setting aside the verdict of guilty; and (c) by the court dismissing the information or indictment against the offender.

(2) An offender may not have the record of conviction cleared if:

(a) There are any criminal charges against the offender pending in any court of this state or another state, or in any federal court;

(b) The offense was a violent offense as defined in RCW 9.94A.030 or crime against persons as defined in RCW 43.43.830, except the following offenses may be vacated if the conviction did not include a firearm, deadly weapon, or sexual motivation enhancement: (i) Assault in the second degree under RCW 9A.36.021; (ii) assault in the third degree under RCW 9A.36.031 when not committed against a law enforcement officer or peace officer; and (iii) robbery in the second degree under RCW 9A.56.210;

(c) The offense is a class B felony and the offender has been convicted of a new crime in this state, another state, or federal court in the ten years prior to the application for vacation;

(d) The offense is a class C felony and the offender has been convicted of a new crime in this state, another state, or federal court in the five years prior to the application for vacation;

(e) The offense is a class B felony and less than ten years have passed since the later of: (i) The applicant's release from community custody; (ii) the applicant's release from full and partial confinement; or (iii) the applicant's sentencing date;

(f) The offense was a class C felony, other than a class C felony described in RCW 46.61.502(6) or 46.61.504(6), and less than five years have passed since the later of: (i) The applicant's release from community custody; (ii) the applicant's release from full and partial confinement; or (iii) the applicant's sentencing date; or

(g) The offense was a felony described in RCW 46.61.502 or 46.61.504.

(3) If the applicant is a victim of sex trafficking, prostitution, or commercial sexual abuse of a minor; sexual assault; or domestic violence as defined in RCW 9.94A.030, the victim or the prosecutor of the county in which the victim was sentenced may apply to the sentencing court or the sentencing court's successor to vacate the victim's record of conviction for a class B or class C felony offense using the process in RCW 9.94A.648. When preparing or filing the petition, the prosecutor is not deemed to be providing legal advice or legal assistance on behalf of the victim, but is fulfilling an administrative function on behalf of the state in order to further their responsibility to seek to reform and improve the administration of criminal justice. A record of conviction vacated using the process in RCW 9.94A.648 is subject to subsection (4) of this section.

(4) (a) Except as otherwise provided, once the court vacates a record of conviction under subsection (1) of this section, the fact that the offender has been convicted of the offense shall not be included in the offender's criminal history for purposes of determining a sentence in any subsequent conviction, and the offender shall be released from all penalties and disabilities resulting from

the offense. For all purposes, including responding to questions on employment applications, an offender whose conviction has been vacated may state that the offender has never been convicted of that crime. A conviction that has been vacated under this section may not be disseminated or disclosed by the state patrol or local law enforcement agency to any person, except other criminal justice enforcement agencies. Nothing in this section affects or prevents the use of an offender's prior conviction in a later criminal prosecution, and nothing in this section affects the requirements for restoring a right to possess a firearm under RCW 9.41.040.

(b) A conviction vacated on or after July 28, 2019, qualifies as a prior conviction for the purpose of charging a present recidivist offense occurring on or after July 28, 2019, and may be used to establish an ongoing pattern of abuse for purposes of RCW 9.94A.535. [2021 c 237 s 2; 2019 c 331 s 3; 2012 c 183 s 3; 2006 c 73 s 8; 1987 c 486 s 7; 1981 c 137 s 23. Formerly RCW 9.94A.230.]

Short title—2019 c 331: See note following RCW 9.94A.637.

Effective date—2012 c 183: See note following RCW 9.94A.475.

Effective date—2006 c 73: See note following RCW 46.61.502.

Effective date—1981 c 137: See RCW 9.94A.905.