

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/  
Form 8-K  
March 16, 2010  
**UNITED STATES**  
**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549**

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**FORM 8-K**

**CURRENT REPORT**

**PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): March 16, 2010

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**STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION**  
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

<b>Washington</b> (State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	<b>0-20800</b> (Commission File Number)	<b>91-1572822</b> (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)
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**111 North Wall Street, Spokane, Washington 99201**  
(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip Code)

**(509) 458-3711**  
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

**Not Applicable**  
(Former Name or Former Address, if Changed Since Last Report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)

Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

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**INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT**

**Item 7.01. Regulation FD Disclosure.**

Sterling Financial Corporation (“Sterling”) today issued a press release providing an update on its plan to improve its capital position, which includes announcement of the receipt of a letter from the United States Department of the Treasury (“Treasury”) with regard to a proposed conversion of Sterling's preferred stock held by Treasury. The text of the press release is included as Exhibit 99.1 to this report and a redacted version of the letter from Treasury is included as Exhibit 99.2 to this report. The information included in Exhibits 99.1 and 99.2 is considered to be "furnished" under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.**

(d) The following exhibits are being furnished herewith:

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Exhibit Description</u>
99.1	Press release text of Sterling Financial Corporation dated March 16, 2010.
99.2	Letter received from United States Department of the Treasury.

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**SIGNATURE**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

**STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION**

(Registrant)

March 16, 2010

By: /s/ Daniel G. Byrne

Date

**Daniel G. Byrne**

Executive Vice President, Assistant Secretary and  
Principal Financial Officer