

(<http://www.virginia.gov/>)

Restoration of Rights

If you have lost the right to vote as a result of a felony conviction in a Virginia court or a U.S. District court, you must have your rights restored to qualify for voter registration. The restoration of rights restores the rights to vote, to run for and hold public office, to serve on juries and to serve as a notary public.

Persons who have been convicted of a violent crime, a crime against a minor, or an election law offense must submit an application to request their rights be restored (click here for more information). Persons with any other felony convictions are automatically eligible for restoration of rights if the following criteria are met.

How to Request Your Rights be Restored:

- If you are a non-violent offender currently incarcerated under the Department of Corrections or on supervised probation, you do not need to contact our office. The Department of Corrections provides a monthly listing to the Secretary's Office of those offenders who may qualify for restoration of rights. Any individual that meets the criteria will be mailed a letter and grant order to either their last known address or their home plan address.
- If you have had a past non-violent felony conviction(s) and have not had your rights restored to date, you can submit a request to our office online or by mail.
 - Complete the Online Request Form (<https://solutions.virginia.gov/RestorationOfRights>)
 - Complete and mail in the Restoration of Rights Contact Form (</media/1800/20130715-FINAL-CONTACT-FORM-AUTO-ROR.pdf>).
- If you have been convicted of a violent crime, a crime against a minor, or an election law offense (see complete list here) you must submit an application to request your rights be restored.
 - Application for Restoration of Rights (</media/2593/application-for-restoration-of-rights.pdf>)

Criteria for Restoration of Rights for Non-Violent Offenders:

- Have been convicted of a non-violent felony in a Virginia court or a U.S. District Court
- Have completed serving the prison sentence and been released from probation or parole
- Have paid all court costs, fines to the Commonwealth and restitution to the victims, satisfied all court-ordered conditions, and have no pending felony charges.

Criteria for Restoration of Rights for Violent/More Serious Offenders:

In order to be eligible for restoration of rights by the Governor, an applicant who has been convicted of a violent felony must:

- Have been convicted of a non-violent felony in a Virginia court or a U.S. District Court
- Be free from any sentence served and/or supervised probation and parole for a minimum of three years.
- Not have any misdemeanor convictions and/or pending criminal charges in the three years immediately preceding the application.
- Not have had a DWI or DUI in the three years immediately preceding the application.
- Have paid all court costs, fines, penalties and restitution and have no felony or misdemeanor charges pending.

Click here to see the list of more serious crimes which require an Application for Restoration of Rights

If you have been convicted of a crime on this list, you must complete an application and mail it to our office. You can download the Application for Restoration of Rights (</media/2593/application-for-restoration-of-rights.pdf>) or you may call our office to request a form be mailed to you.

On your application, be sure to provide the specific offense(s) and the exact date(s) of sentencing. If you do not have this information, you can get it by requesting a Criminal History Record through the Virginia State Police at (804)674-2000 or online at their website, www.vsp.state.va.us (<http://www.vsp.state.va.us/>).

The Secretary of the Commonwealth Office will conduct a criminal history check on all applicants. Petitioners will be sent notice of the Governor's decision within 60 days from the time an application is considered complete. Applications are considered complete once the Secretary of the Commonwealth has received all copies of court documentation and criminal records. Petitions are reviewed in the order in which they are received AND complete.

If your petition for restoration of rights is denied, you do not have the right to appeal the decision. You may reapply one year from the date on your letter.

More about Restoration of Rights:

The restoration of civil rights:

- Does not restore the right to possess a firearm,
- Will not expunge or remove a criminal conviction (Virginia does not have an expungement process for felony or misdemeanor convictions. Va. Code §19.2-392.2)
- Is not a pardon.

- Restoration of rights is only necessary following felony convictions. Misdemeanor convictions and juvenile convictions do not result in the loss of civil rights.

A person who has been convicted of a felony must first have his or her rights restored in order to petition for a pardon. For more information on how to request a pardon, please click here (</judicial-system/pardons/>).

To regain state firearms privileges, a convicted felon must apply to the circuit court of his or her jurisdiction of residence for a permit to possess or carry a firearm. Circuit courts may consider the restoration of firearms privileges only after civil rights are restored. (Va. Code §18.2-308.2)

Please contact our Restoration of Rights Division toll-free at 1-855-575-9177 if you have any questions about the restoration process.

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