



Restoration of Civil Rights Information

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

The Office of the Governor provides a process for the restoration of civil rights for individuals to include those on probation/parole supervisions, who meet the Governor's standards for restoration

Individuals who would like to have their civil rights restored are encouraged to contact the Secretary of the Commonwealth through the website: <https://www.restore.virginia.gov/>

In addition, the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office works with the DOC to proactively identify individuals, each month, being released from incarceration who may meet the Governor's standards for restoration and will get their rights restored without a request.

All individuals, to include those who request restoration of their rights and individuals identified as potentially eligible, will be thoroughly reviewed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office, which includes a check of the individual's record with Virginia State Police, DOC, and other state agencies to ensure the individual meets the Governor's standards for restoration of rights.

Individuals may check their status on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website at <https://www.restore.virginia.gov/>.

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 have an expungement process for felony or misdemeanor convictions; see COV §19.2-392.2, *Expungement of police and court records*
- Is not a pardon
- Is only necessary following felony convictions; misdemeanor convictions and juvenile convictions do not result in the loss of civil rights

Pardon - A person convicted of a felony must first have their rights restored in order to petition for a pardon. For more information on how to request a pardon, contact the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office, Pardons staff at pardons@governor.virginia.gov. Additional information is available at <https://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/judicial-system/pardons/>.

Restoration of Right to Possess a Firearm - To regain state firearms privileges, a convicted felon must apply to the Circuit Court of their jurisdiction of residence for a permit to possess or carry a firearm. Circuit courts may consider the restoration of firearms privileges only after your civil rights are restored; see COV §18.2-308.2, *Possession or transportation of firearms, firearms ammunition, stun weapons, explosives or concealed weapons by convicted felons; penalties; petition for permit; when issued*

Please contact the Restoration of Rights Office at rormail@governor.virginia.gov or toll-free at (804) 692-0104 if you have any questions about the restoration process.

