



RIGHTS RESTORATION

10 THINGS VIRGINIANS SHOULD KNOW

1

RIGHTS GET TAKEN AWAY UPON FELONY CONVICTION, BUT CAN BE RESTORED

Once you are convicted of a felony in Virginia, you are automatically denied some civil rights: the right to vote, hold public office, serve as a juror, serve as a notary public, and carry a firearm. The Virginia Constitution gives the Governor the sole power to restore those rights, except the ability to carry a firearm. "Rights restoration" refers to the process of regaining your rights after completing all terms of a sentence, including probation and parole.

2

FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT IMPACTS THOUSANDS OF VIRGINIANS, ESPECIALLY AFRICAN-AMERICANS

In 2016, over 7% of Virginia's adult population was not eligible to vote due to felony disenfranchisement. That figure was even worse when factoring in race. African-Americans accounted for an incredible 53.8% of the disenfranchised population, despite comprising only 19.4% of Virginia's adult population. Felony disenfranchisement has stripped entire neighborhoods of a voice in their own communities.

3

APPLY ONLINE, CALL, OR MAIL A FORM TO HAVE YOUR RIGHTS RESTORED

To ensure fastest review by the Governor, you can request the restoration of your rights online through the Secretary of the Commonwealth (SOC) at: **restore.virginia.gov**. You will need to type in your name, date of birth & last 4 digits of your social security number. You may also click on 'Printable Contact Form' to mail your application, or call the SOC at **(804) 692-0104**.

4

THE REVIEW PROCESS TAKES APPROXIMATELY 2-3 WEEKS

The Governor considers factors like active warrants and pre-trial holds. If he approves, you will receive a letter in the mail confirming your rights have officially been restored. You may also check your restoration status online at: **restore.virginia.gov** under 'Look Up Your Status' or call **(804) 692-0104**.

5

IF APPROVED, YOU WILL RECEIVE A PERSONALIZED RESTORATION ORDER

But note that if you applied for restoration from April 22 through July 22, 2016, and have not yet received a confirmation letter, the Governor may still be reviewing your case. Remember, you may also check the status of your restoration online at: **restore.virginia.gov** under 'Look Up Your Status' or call **(804) 692-0104**.

6

ONCE YOUR RIGHTS ARE RESTORED, REGISTER TO VOTE!

You can access the voter registration application at any state agency or register online at: **vote.virginia.gov**.

7

THE SOC WILL RELEASE A LIST OF NEWLY RESTORED PERSONS EVERY MONTH

The list will only be available upon request and will be included in a Virginia Senate document as it has been historically.

8

RESIDENTS OF ANY STATE WHO WERE CONVICTED IN VA MAY APPLY TO THE SOC

If you were convicted in Virginia and now live in another state, you may apply to restore your rights. If you were convicted in another state and now live in Virginia, call the SOC to ask about restoration of your rights at **(804) 692-0104**.

9

VIRGINIA'S FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT LAW IS UNIQUELY HARSH

Virginia is one of only four states with a law that permanently disenfranchises people with past felony convictions.

10

THERE ARE MANY IMPORTANT REASONS TO SUPPORT AUTOMATIC RESTORATION

There have been several pushes, though unsuccessful so far, for the General Assembly to amend the state constitution to institute an automatic restoration process. After all, evidence shows that democratic participation such as voting reduces recidivism. Our laws should encourage citizens to re-build their lives, not add unnecessary barriers to exercising the fundamental right to vote.



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