



## Take Back My Vote: How To Restore Your Civil Rights in Virginia

Web: [www.takebackmyvote.org](http://www.takebackmyvote.org)

Call: 1-855-LET-VOTE

Twitter: #takebackmyvote

Over **450,000** Virginians have had their voting and other civil rights taken away because of a past felony conviction. Virginia is one of four states that disenfranchise citizens with felony convictions—*forever*. The only way to restore civil rights is through individual petitions approved by the Governor.

Here's what you need to know and do if you want to regain your right to vote:

### 1. Have your civil rights been taken away?

#### **YES, if:**

- First, you have been convicted of a crime (“guilty” under plea agreement or at trial).
- Second, if the crime of which you were convicted was a felony.
- Third, if your felony conviction was by a Virginia state or federal court (contact the “help” resources if outside VA).

### 2. Are you eligible?

#### **YES, if ALL of the following apply:**

- You have completed your criminal sentence and are no longer under correctional supervision (including probation, required classes, parole, etc). *\*This does not apply to suspended sentences if you are not regularly under probation supervision.*
- You have paid all court-ordered costs that were part of your criminal sentence (including fines, fees & restitution).
- You have waited **two years** after a non-violent conviction or **five years** after a violent conviction *from the date that you completed your sentence.*

Non-violent offenses include drug possession, petit larceny, forgery, felonious driving under the influence. Violent offenses include drug possession with intent to distribute, drug distribution or manufacturing, felonious assault, hit & run. Please check the official list at:

<http://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/JudicialSystem/Clemency/restoration.cfm>.

- You have not had any criminal convictions (felony or misdemeanor) since your last felony conviction. *\*This does not include traffic infractions like speeding tickets.*

### 3. Which application should you complete?

- You should complete the 2-year form if you have a *non-violent conviction*.
- You should complete the 5-year form if you have a *violent conviction*.

#### **4. How do I complete the application?**

##### **2-year application: complete each of the following steps**

- Fill in your name, date of birth, address, & contact information.
- Fill in your felony convictions (as accurately as possible) and the courts where you were convicted.
- Fill in any accomplishments or responsibilities you have to share with the Governor.
- Fill in the dates of your conviction and release from supervised probation (if necessary).
- Sign the affidavit in front of a notary public.

##### **5-year application: complete each of the following steps**

- Fill in your name, date of birth, prison number, address, contact information, employer and your employer's address.
- Fill in your felony convictions, the courts where you were convicted, dates of conviction, and date when you were released from incarceration or supervision probation/parole (if necessary).
- Complete the checklist items numbered 1-8 on the second page of the application, and attach the required documents.
- Sign the affidavit in front of a notary public.

#### **5. What other materials do I need?**

##### **2-year application**

- No other materials are required but include certified sentencing orders and certified proofs of payment from each court of conviction, if possible, to make the process go faster.

##### **5-year application**

- Certified sentencing orders and certified proofs of payment from each court of conviction.
- Letter of Petition (provided).
- Letter from applicant explaining circumstances of conviction(s).
- Cover letters for three letters of reference (provided).
- Three letters of reference from non-family members.

#### **6. What happens after I submit my application?**

- Call the Secretary of the Commonwealth to confirm that your application was received and is complete.
- Wait up to 60-days for notification from the Governor.
- If your application is approved, you must register to vote by the voter registration deadline
- If you want to vote in the November 2012 presidential election, your rights must be restored **and** you must register to vote before October 15, 2012).
- If your application is rejected, there is no explanation or appeals process but you may re-apply one year after your application is rejected.

#### **7. Where can I get more help?**

- Call **1-855-LET-VOTE** (toll-free) to be directed to free 1-on-1 local assistance.
- Visit Advancement Project's website, **takebackmyvote.org**, for other self-help resources.
- Follow us at **#takebackmyvote** for rights restoration news and updates.