

What is a voting restoration pardon for people on parole and post-release supervision?

Starting April 2018, almost everyone on parole and post-release supervision will get a voting restoration pardon that restores the right to vote soon after their release or by summer 2018 if they were released earlier. People do not need to apply for this pardon. For more information, see “Voting Restoration Pardons” on the Governor’s clemency website, <https://www.ny.gov/services/apply-clemency>.

Does a voting restoration pardon mean I am pardoned for other purposes?

No. A voting restoration pardon only affects your right to vote. It is not a pardon for other purposes. For example, if asked on a job application if you have been convicted of a crime for which you have not been pardoned, you should answer yes even though you received a voting restoration pardon.

These FAQs are general information only, not legal advice for your specific situation.

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VOTING AND CRIMINAL RECORDS

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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! MOST PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS IN NEW YORK CAN VOTE!

There is an excellent chance that you can vote with your criminal record unless you are currently incarcerated for a felony and do not have a certificate of relief from disabilities. If you have only misdemeanor or violation convictions, your criminal record does not affect your right to vote. Only felony convictions limit your right to vote. The good news is that recent changes have expanded voting opportunities for people with felony convictions. You can read more below.

Can I vote with my felony conviction?

You **can** register to vote with a felony charge or conviction if you are:

- ▶ In jail
 - ▶ Awaiting trial, or
 - ▶ Serving a sentence for a felony conviction and you have a certificate of relief from disabilities for that conviction,
- ▶ On probation,
- ▶ On parole or post release supervision and
 - ▶ You received a voting restoration pardon – which almost everyone on parole has recently gotten or will soon get. Check the Parolee Lookup website. Or
 - ▶ You received a certificate of relief or good conduct, or
- ▶ Finished with your sentence

You **can not** register to vote with a felony conviction if you are:

- ▶ In jail or prison for a felony conviction and do not have a certificate of relief for that conviction.
- ▶ On parole or post release supervision and have not yet received a voting restoration pardon, certificate of relief, or certificate of good conduct. Check the Parolee Lookup website, <http://www.doccs.ny.gov/ParoleeLookup/Lookup.aspx> — most people on parole received limited pardons for voting.

Can I vote if I have misdemeanor or violation convictions?

Misdemeanor and violation convictions do not affect your right to vote. This is true even if you are in jail, on probation, or serving another sentence.

If I am eligible to vote, do I need to register to vote?

Yes if:

- ▶ You have never registered to vote, or
- ▶ You registered to vote before being sentenced to jail or prison for a felony conviction.

You can register through the Department of Motor Vehicles website, www.dmv.org/ny-new-york/voter-registration.php or by providing a paper form in person or by mail to your county board of elections.

If I am eligible to vote in New York, can I vote in all elections – federal, state and local?

Yes.

How do I vote if I am in jail awaiting trial or serving time for a misdemeanor or violation?

You may vote with an absentee ballot. Complete and mail a form requesting an absentee ballot. You can get a form from the Board of Elections website, <https://www.elections.ny.gov/votingabsentee.html>.