

# HOW TO GET YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE BACK AFTER A FELONY CONVICTION IN IOWA



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## YOU CAN REGISTER TO VOTE IF ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TRUE:

- You are an Iowa resident
- You are at least 17 years old (and will be 18 by Election Day)
- You have given up your right to vote in any other place (you'll swear to that on your registration form)
- You have not been declared by the court to be incompetent to vote (unless the court certifies you are no longer incompetent)
- You are a U.S. citizen
- You haven't been convicted of a felony or you were convicted of a felony, and your right to vote was restored (see the chart below)

## I WAS CONVICTED OF A CRIME. CAN I VOTE?

Before your voting rights will be restored, you must have completed your criminal sentence. That means you've discharged any probation or parole. You need to have entered into a payment plan but you need not have paid in full your court costs, restitution, and fines.

If you were convicted of this crime...	And completed your sentence within this time...	... Here's what you need to do to vote after you have completed your sentence:
Any misdemeanor in Iowa or any other state	Any time	You can vote.* You never lost your voting rights. Only felonies can disqualify you from voting. However, if you are still in jail you may have to vote by absentee ballot.
Any felony in Iowa	Before July 4, 2005	You can vote.* Your rights were automatically restored.
	After July 4, 2005 but before January 14, 2011	You probably can vote.* Your right to vote was probably automatically restored—but if you never received notice in the mail after you completed your sentence, you should check with the Office of the Governor at 515-281-5211. The Governor's office maintains a list of people whose right to vote was restored.  If you are on the list maintained by the Governor's office, you can vote; if you are not on the list, you must go through the five steps detailed on the next page to get back your right to vote.
	After January 14, 2011	You cannot vote until the Governor restores your right to vote. Go through the five steps detailed on the next page to get back your right to vote.
Any out-of-state felony	The Governor's office has said that if you have received a restoration of rights from another state after being convicted of a felony by that state, it does not require you to apply for a second restoration to vote in Iowa. However, if the state that disenfranchised you did not restore your voting rights, you will have to apply to have a restoration of your voting rights from the Iowa Governor before registering to vote in Iowa.*	
Any felony in Iowa resulting in a deferred judgement	Anytime	You can vote as long as you have successfully discharged probation.*

\* You still need to register to vote. See page 2.

## HOW CAN I REGISTER TO VOTE?

You can register to vote at the polls on Election Day. You can also pre-register by getting a mail-in voter registration form at <https://sos.iowa.gov> or calling 515-281-0145 (business hours Monday to Friday); or from your county auditor's office; or when you get a driver's license or apply for services at government agencies; or from most libraries, colleges, and high schools.

If you have an Iowa driver's license or non-operator ID, you can also register to vote online. Go to <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/pdf/voteapp.pdf>.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT QUALIFIED TO VOTE AND I VOTE ANYWAY?

**Current Iowa law makes it mandatory to go through the formal process of getting your right to vote back from the Governor if you have a felony conviction.\***

- It is critically important that you not skip this process. That's because there are very severe, felony-level penalties for registering to vote or voting if you know you aren't qualified.
- It is registration fraud to willfully swear falsely to the oath that you take when you register to vote, saying you have not been convicted of a felony (or that if you have been, your right to vote was restored).
- It is vote fraud to willfully submit a ballot or an absentee ballot that you know is materially false, fictitious, forged, or fraudulent, as well as to willfully make a false or untrue statement in an application for an absentee ballot or to make or sign a false certification or affidavit in connection with an absentee ballot.
- It is perjury to sign a voter registration form with false information of material facts that the person knows to be untrue.

*\* Unless your right to vote was restored automatically, prior to January 14, 2011. (See chart on front for details.)*

## QUESTIONS? NEED HELP?

Still unsure if you are eligible to vote? Call the Governor's Office at 515-281-5211 (during business hours Monday through Friday.) If the Governor's Office is not responsive or you need more help, email the ACLU of Iowa at [legal.program@aclu-ia.org](mailto:legal.program@aclu-ia.org).

## WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The ACLU of Iowa is collecting stories from people who apply to the Governor's Office to have their right to vote restored. We would like to speak with you before you apply.

In addition, if you are not receiving fair, timely treatment and/or responses from the Governor's Office, please let us know. With your permission, we will use these stories to advocate for a better, fairer process.

To share your story, email us at [legal.program@aclu-ia.org](mailto:legal.program@aclu-ia.org). Be sure to tell us why you are calling and how to contact you.

**ACLU**  
Iowa



Kim Reynolds  
GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

Adam Gregg  
LT. GOVERNOR

**Application for Restoration of Voting Rights  
(and the Right to Hold Public Office)**

**1. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a U.S. Citizen?  Yes  No

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street City State Zip Code

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. CRIMINAL FELONY CONVICTIONS**

Most Recent Felony Conviction: \_\_\_\_\_

When was your conviction? \_\_\_\_\_

Where was your conviction?  Iowa (County: \_\_\_\_\_)  Federal Court  
 Another State (State and County): \_\_\_\_\_

Did you receive a deferred judgment?  Yes  No

When did you complete your sentence, including any probation or parole? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you paid all fines, costs, and restitution ordered?  Yes  No  
If not, have you entered into a payment plan?  Yes  No

Are you still on probation or parole for any other felony convictions?  Yes  No  
If yes, please explain on the back of this application or a separate sheet of paper.

**3. AFFIRMATION AND RELEASE**

I swear or affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, my application is complete and true.

I authorize the Governor's Office to obtain any records pertaining to me on file with any state agency or the Iowa Judicial Branch. I agree that this information may be used by the Governor in making a decision regarding my application for restoration of citizenship rights.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail or deliver to: Office of the Governor, Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.*