

10 FACTS

ABOUT VIRGINIA CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION

THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- 1 Once you are convicted of a felony, **four *civil rights* are taken away**: right to vote, right to hold public office, right to serve as a juror, and right to serve as a notary public.
- 2 Virginia's law disenfranchises over **372,000 people** who have completed their prison time, and another 100,000 who remain incarcerated.
- 3 People with felony convictions may either register for **automatic restoration** ("non-violent convictions") or complete an application ("violent convictions"). The current approval rate is **80%** for five year applications.
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- 5 **Virginia is still among the most restrictive rights restoration states.** It no longer has lifetime disenfranchisement for everyone, as in Kentucky, Florida, and Iowa. However, dozens of other states have automatic restoration for all after the completion of incarceration, probation or parole.
- 6 **For people with "violent" convictions, an applicant must meet ten requirements** just to be *eligible* to apply for rights restoration.
- 7 Before a person with a violent conviction can apply, there is a **five-year waiting period after finishing her/his sentence** (including release from prison, discharge from probation and payment of all court-ordered costs).
- 8 It takes the current Governor between **two to three months** to review an application, depending on the speed of record transfer between government agencies.
- 9 The Governor may use her/his **executive powers** to change the rights restoration process or the General Assembly may **amend the constitution**. Virginia's disenfranchisement and rights restoration laws are in the state constitution, and have remained about the same since **1851**.
- 10 **The Virginia General Assembly has voted down a rights restoration constitutional amendment for the past 13 legislative sessions.** History was made in the 2012 when a constitutional amendment bill passed the Senate (only to fail in the House of Delegates).