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Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC) works to reverse the trend of mass incarceration in Colorado. Educating people with a criminal record about their right to vote is part of the work we do.

If you think you are eligible to vote and are told you may not by an election clerk, please contact the Secretary of State's office for help. Their telephone number is 303-894-2200. You may also contact CCJRC for assistance.

ccjrc.org

Deadlines

Be sure you register to vote at least 29 days before the election in which you want to vote! Here are the election calendar dates for 2008.

- **July 14, 2008:** last day to register to vote for the primary election
- **August 5, 2008:** last day to apply for a mail-in ballot for the primary election if the ballot is to be mailed
- **August 12, 2008:** Primary election (all mail-in ballots must be in the hands of the county clerk no later than 7:00 pm on election day)
- **October 6, 2008:** last day to register to vote for the general election
- **October 28, 2008:** last day to apply for a mail-in ballot for the general election if mailed
- **October 31, 2008:** last day to apply for a mail-in ballot for the general election if not mailed
- **November 4, 2008:** general election

Your vote is your voice on the issues

- Health care
- Economic justice
- Racial justice
- Criminal justice
- Environment
- Children
- Education
- Any other issue important to you

**USE YOUR
VOICE
REGISTER
TO VOTE
&
VOTE!**

Tell a friend! Even if you're not eligible to vote, encourage your friends and family members to vote.

Important definitions:

Parole is a period of supervision after release from prison. In Colorado, parole is considered a part of the sentence. People on parole are ineligible to register to vote and vote.

Probation is a sentence ordered by a judge and usually an alternative to prison. A sentence of probation allows a person to remain in the community under the supervision of a probation officer. It is legal to register to vote and cast a vote while under a sentence of probation.

Felony is a more serious crime than a misdemeanor and commonly punished in the U.S. by imprisonment in a prison for more than a year.

Misdemeanor is a criminal offense defined as less serious than a felony. The punishment includes a range of sanctions, including probation, fines, and time in jail.

Prisons are operated by the state and used to confine those convicted of one or more felony charges. People confined in prison are not eligible to vote.

Jails are operated by the county sheriff and used to confine those awaiting trial, as well as a place to confine those convicted of a misdemeanor. Some people confined in jail are eligible to vote.

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition

**CAN I
VOTE**



Many people in Colorado believe that once you have a criminal record you can never vote.

This is not true.

Who is eligible to vote in Colorado?

- People with a criminal conviction who have served their sentence, including parole if required
- Pretrial detainees in jail
- People currently on probation for either a misdemeanor or felony
- People currently in jail serving a misdemeanor sentence only

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I HAVE A CRIMINAL CONVICTION IN MY PAST. CAN I VOTE?

In Colorado, you have the right to vote after you have served your sentence. Remember, if you were incarcerated for a felony, any period of parole is considered to be part of your sentence. *The day you complete your sentence is the day you become eligible to register and vote.*

WILL I BE NOTIFIED WHEN I'M ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

No. The right to vote is automatically restored, but you will **not** be notified.

DO I HAVE TO PROVE I HAVE COMPLETED MY SENTENCE (INCLUDING PAROLE) IN ORDER TO REGISTER TO VOTE OR TO VOTE?

The voting official may ask you for proof that you have completed your sentence, including any parole. It's a good idea to bring your sentence or parole discharge document with you when you register to vote.

WHAT IF I WAS CONVICTED OF A CRIME IN ANOTHER STATE?

Election law varies from state to state, and your right to vote is determined by the state in which you live. *If you are a resident of Colorado and you have completed your sentence, including parole, you can vote.*

IF I WAS CONVICTED OF A FEDERAL CRIME, DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN A FEDERAL ELECTION?

It does not matter if you were convicted in a state or federal court. Once you are eligible to vote in Colorado, you are eligible to vote in both state and federal elections.

DO I HAVE TO PAY OFF ALL OF MY RESTITUTION BEFORE I CAN VOTE?

No. Payment of restitution is not a condition of voting eligibility.

DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE IF I AM CURRENTLY ON PROBATION?

Yes. If you are on probation for either a misdemeanor or felony, you may register to vote and cast your vote in any election.

DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE IF I AM ON BOND AND THE CRIMINAL CASE IS PENDING?

Yes. You are eligible to vote if you are on bond as long as you are not convicted and serving a sentence in jail or prison for a felony at the time of the election.

DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE IF I AM IN JAIL?

If you are serving a misdemeanor sentence in jail, you have the right to register to vote and vote in any election. The same is true if on the date of the election you are in jail as a pretrial detainee and have not yet been convicted. In order to vote, you will need to contact the clerk in the county of your legal residence and ask for a **Colorado—Combination Voter Registration and Mail-in Ballot Application**. You can do this on your own or you may be able to get the form through jail personnel. If you are not registered to vote, you will need to register before the deadline.

How to Register to Vote

You will need to submit a **Colorado—Combination Voter Registration and Mail-In Ballot Application** to your county's office of the Clerk and Recorder.

You can get this application from

- your county's office of the Clerk and Recorder
- Colorado Department of Motor Vehicle office
- state offices that provide public assistance
- a voter registration drive registered with the Secretary of State's office
- the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.co.us.

What is the law in Colorado?

No person while serving a sentence of detention or confinement in a correctional facility, jail, or other location for a felony conviction or while serving a sentence of parole shall be eligible to register to vote or to vote in any election; however, a confined prisoner who is awaiting trial but has not been tried shall be certified by the institutional administrator and shall be permitted to register to vote by mail registration pursuant to part 5 of this article.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 1-2-103(4)

Identification Requirements

You must provide your Colorado driver's license number or Dept. of Revenue identification number (state ID) when you register to vote. If you don't have either of these, then you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you don't have any of the above, the State will assign you a unique identifying number, and you must provide a copy of an acceptable form of identification.

If you are a first-time voter and you are registering to vote by mail, you must provide a copy (not the original) of an acceptable form of ID in addition to the identification requirements stated above. This list is available at the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.co.us. Click on "Election Center" and then click on "Election FAQs."

- You can also call your county's office of the Clerk and Recorder or the Secretary of State's office at 303.894.2200 for this information.
- Answers to many other questions about voting are also found at this link.

If you are registering to vote in person, you must provide your Colorado driver's license number or Dept. of Revenue number (state ID) when you register

to vote. It is not necessary to present the ID; it is sufficient to provide the number. If you do not have either a valid driver's license number or Dept. of Revenue number, you must provide at least the last four digits of your Social Security number. If your identification can not be established, you may also be required to provide a copy of an acceptable form of identification.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VOTING

In order to be eligible to vote, you must also

- be 18 years of age on or before the date of the election in which you want to vote AND
- be a citizen of the United States AND
- live in Colorado at your present address at least 30 days prior to the election

IMPORTANT!

Be sure you understand whether you are eligible to vote. It is a class five felony to vote in an election for which you are not legally eligible.