

KNOW THE FACTS: FELON DISENFRANCHISEMENT IS NOT THE LAW IN PENNSYLVANIA

Ever since the 2000 presidential election, there have been lots of news stories about felons not being allowed to vote even after being released from prison. And while it is true that millions of former felons, who live in other states, are deprived of their fundamental right to vote, that is not the case in Pennsylvania.

Under Pennsylvania law, felons who have completed their prison sentences are eligible to vote. This is true even if they are on parole or probation. Only those felons who are incarcerated are not allowed to vote. And, voting rights are automatically restored upon release from prison.

Who is eligible to register and vote?

- Incarcerated individuals convicted of misdemeanors
- Individuals who are under house arrest
- Individuals who are on probation or released on parole
- Pretrial detainees awaiting trial

Who is not eligible to register and vote?

- Individuals who are incarcerated (in a penal institution or halfway house) on felony charges and who won't be released before the election
- Individuals who have been convicted of violating the PA Election Code within the past four years

Unfortunately there is a lot of bad information out there. Too many felons think that they can never vote again or that they must wait five years. It is important that those who care about this issue do our part in letting people know that Pennsylvania is not one of the states that takes voting rights away.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania is committed to making sure that everyone's right to vote is protected. We have heard that in many counties, both election and prison officials are confused about the voting rights of felons and may even be giving out bad information. We need to correct that situation.

If you know of an eligible voter who has been in prison and is having trouble registering to vote or being allowed to vote, please have him or her contact the **ACLU of Pennsylvania** at one of our three offices:

Philadelphia Office
P.O. Box 1161
Philadelphia, PA 19105
215-592-1513

Harrisburg Office
P.O. Box 11761
Harrisburg, PA 17108
717-238-2258

Pittsburgh Office
313 Atwood Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-681-7736

For information on how to register, see the PA Department of State website:
<http://www.dos.state.pa.us/voting/site/>