Colorado’s Two-Step Process to Expanding Felon Voting Rights

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2018 Legislation

• SB18-150: Voter Registration in the Criminal Justice System
  • Senate 24-11
  • House 37-26-2
  • Allows parolees who are released from incarceration to preregister to vote while on parole
  • The individual’s registration is activated upon successful completion of parole, as reported by Department of Corrections
  • Requires Division of Adult Parole to inform parolees of process for preregistration
  • SCORE (and CDOC) Development - $185,155
Pre-Registering to Vote

Individuals on parole can pre-register to vote. Below are some facts for you to keep in mind.

**Pre-Registering to Vote**

Because you are still serving your felony sentence on parole, you cannot currently vote. However, you are eligible to pre-register to vote so that you are automatically registered upon discharge and can vote once you are discharged from parole.

To pre-register to vote in Colorado, you must:

1. Be a U.S. citizen;
2. Be 18 years of age, but you must be 18 years of age or older on the date of the election at which you intend to vote;
3. Be a Colorado resident for at least 22 days immediately before the election at which you intend to vote, and
4. Not be currently incarcerated for a felony conviction.

You can pre-register to vote by returning a voter registration form to your local county clerk’s office. Or, you can visit www.govtcoolorado.com and pre-register online using your state ID. It’s quick and easy.

**“Even if you were registered to vote prior to your incarceration, you will need to pre-register again. Your voter registration was canceled once you began serving your prison sentence.”**

You can pre-register to vote online at www.govtcoolorado.com.

**Getting and Voting a Ballot**

Remember, if you pre-register you will not receive a mail ballot until you have finished your parole. Once you finish your parole, your clerk will automatically register you and you will begin receiving ballots.

Once you finish your parole, make sure your voter registration address and information is up-to-date by checking it at www.govtcoolorado.com.

**Questions?**

If you have questions about pre-registering to vote, getting or voting your ballot, or any other questions related to voting in Colorado, please contact your local county clerk and recorder.

You may also contact the Colorado Secretary of State’s Office, Election Division at:

Phone: 303-894-2200
Email: state.electiondivision@cos.state.co.us
Preregistration Usage

• It took six months for the Department of Corrections and Department of State to role out Parole Preregistration

• In that time, 518 paroles signed up for preregistration. Those forms were automatically loaded on December 10, 2018.

• The following week, the preregistration process became a weekly update.

• After that, the Department averaged about 15 new preregistrations per month until a new version of the law was rolled out in July, 2019.
• HB19-1266: Full Parole Voting Rights
  • Senate 23-12
  • House 45-19-1
  • Changed the definition of “term of imprisonment” to only include actual incarceration (eliminating Parole from the definition)
  • All parolees receive voting materials, including registration forms, ballot information booklet, and TABOR notices
• SCORE Development - $16,960
Registering to Vote

Individuals on parole can now register to vote and cast a ballot in Colorado elections. Below are some facts for you to keep in mind.

Parole Registration Process

In Colorado, individuals on parole may now register to vote and cast a ballot in any election.

To register to vote in Colorado, you must:

1. Be a U.S. citizen;
2. Be 18 years old by the date of the next general or coordinated election, or at least 17 years old and turning 18 on or before the date of the next general election to vote in a primary election;
3. Be a Colorado resident for at least 22 days immediately before the election at which you intend to vote; and
4. Not be currently incarcerated for a felony conviction.

Though you will not receive an official letter telling you when you are eligible to vote, at your initial meeting with the division of adult parole, the division must provide certain voter information to you. This information includes:

1. Your voting rights;
2. How you may register to vote or update or confirm your voter registration record;
3. How to obtain and cast a ballot; and
4. How to obtain voter information materials, including an application for a mail ballot, a ballot information booklet, and forms used to register an elector.

You can register to vote by returning a voter registration form to your local county clerk’s office. Or, you can visit www.govvote.colorado.com and register online using your state ID. It’s quick and easy.

**Even if you were registered to vote prior to your incarceration, you will need to register again. Your voter registration was canceled once you began serving your prison sentence.**

Questions?

If you have questions about registering to vote, getting or voting your ballot, or any other questions related to voting in Colorado, please contact your local county clerk and recorder.

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Parolees who became eligible

• At any given time, Colorado has about 4,000 people on parole.
• Assuming most are Colorado residents and U.S. citizens, this means that on July 8, 2019, all of those parolees became eligible to vote.
• Because the Department of Corrections does not send us Parolees anymore, we don’t know (nor will we know) the turnout among parolees.
Questions?

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