



Voting Rights and Returning Citizens

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Racial History of Felony Disenfranchisement

- Increased significantly after the Civil War
- The policy expanded in conjunction with the Black Codes/Jim Crow which established severe penalties for petty crimes targeted towards Black Americans.
- Prison gerrymandering

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Racial Impact of Felony Disenfranchisement

- 2.2 million African Americans, or 7.7% of black adults, are disenfranchised, compared to 1.8% of the non-African American population.
- Given current rates of incarceration, three in ten of the next generation of black men can expect to be disenfranchised at some point in their lifetime.


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First District states where voting rights are restored automatically after release from prison

- New Jersey (13% Black population)
- Pennsylvania (11.13% Black population)
- Connecticut-12% Black population (and discharge from parole)
- New York (24.27% Black population)
- Massachusetts (13%)
- Rhode Island (5.83%)
- New Hampshire (1.1%)

First District states where people who are convicted of certain felonies are permanently disenfranchised. People convicted of election offenses are disenfranchised for 10 years following their sentences.

- Delaware (21.4% Black population)

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**First District states
where there has
never been
disenfranchisement
for people with
criminal convictions.**

- Vermont (1.4% Black population)
- Maine (1.3% Black population)

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In many states you will need to re- register!

- Check with your department of state website.
- Get state specific assistance from: Local NAACP, ACLU, & League of Women Voters.
- **MOST STATES PEOPLE IN JAIL CAN VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT!!**



Take Action!

- Get up to date on state specific information on felony disenfranchisement.
 - <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/criminal-disenfranchisement-laws-across-united-states>
 - <https://theappeal.org/political-report/disenfranchisement-states/>
- As a church consider technical assistance for people returning home getting registered.
- Start a policy campaign to restore voting rights to people in prison.
- Push for in jail voting mobilization and education efforts.