



## About the FRRC

The mission of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRC) is to get Florida to join the approximately 40 states in the nation that automatically restore the civil rights of all individuals with past felony convictions upon completion of the non-monetary terms of their sentences.

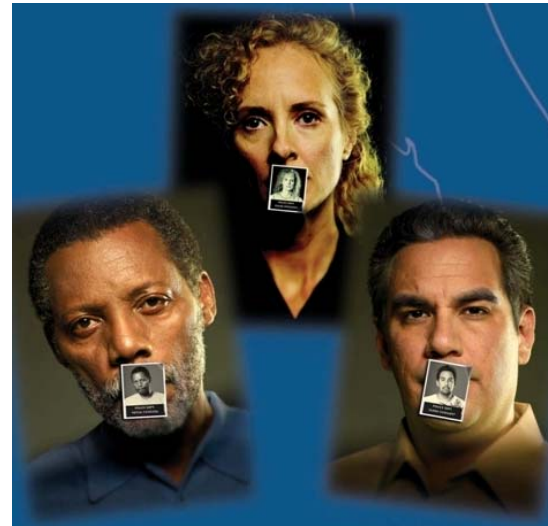


## About the ACLU

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is our nation's guardian of liberty, working daily in the courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

The ACLU of Florida, with headquarters in Miami, is the state affiliate of the national ACLU. The ACLU's Voting Rights Project focuses on ensuring that the political process is open and accessible to all. The ACLU safeguards the right to vote by defending the Voting Rights Act and the guarantees of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments at every step of the political process.

# RESTORING CIVIL RIGHTS IN FLORIDA



**YOUR VOICE SHOULDN'T BE SILENCED BY YOUR PAST**

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[www.RestoreRights.org](http://www.RestoreRights.org)



The Florida Bar Foundation provides partial funding for this project

## Background

Ending Florida's system of lifetime felon disenfranchisement is the unfinished business of the civil rights movement.

The system of lifetime disenfranchisement puts the Sunshine State out of step with the majority of states in the U.S. and with the world's democracies. America's disenfranchisement policies shut out more citizens from the voting process than any other democratic nation in the world. Felon disenfranchisement policies bar over 5.2 million U.S. citizens from the polls - many of whom have completed their sentences. Over 20% of these citizens reside in Florida.

Disfranchisement policies in the U.S. disproportionately affect African Americans and other people of color. Felon disenfranchisement laws are tied to the history of racial discrimination in the United States. During the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras, there was a proliferation of laws intended to prevent former slaves from exercising their voting rights.

Currently, disenfranchisement policies affect a growing segment of the population. The United States' criminal justice system convicts and imprisons more people than ever before and has the world's largest incarcerated population and the highest rate of incarceration.

## Felon Disfranchisement In Florida

Floridians with felony convictions face what could be a lifetime ban preventing them from exercising the right to vote and other civil rights. Civil rights that are lost upon conviction of a felony include the right to vote, to serve on a jury, and to hold public office. In some cases, prior convictions present a barrier to finding safe and affordable housing, securing college funding, or practicing one's profession.

Florida is only one of a handful of states that continue the archaic and discriminatory principals of the Jim Crow and Reconstruction eras. Currently, Florida's felony disenfranchisement policy is the most restrictive and confusing in the entire country. Florida is only one of three states whose Constitution mandates lifetime disenfranchisement following a felony conviction. Researchers have estimated that Florida bars over one million of its citizens from voting due to past felony convictions. Approximately 900,000 of these citizens have completed all terms of their sentence, including supervision.

Removing the barriers to full citizenship, including restoring the right to vote, allows individuals to re-integrate fully into civic life. Civil rights restoration is an important part of successful re-entry into our communities, reducing recidivism and making our society safer and stronger.

## The FRRRC & Our Strategy

**The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition** is a non-partisan statewide organization formed in 2003 to work alongside groups from across the state and the nation dedicated to achieving automatic civil rights restoration in Florida immediately upon completion of the non-monetary terms of a sentence. FRRRC is comprised of over 80 national, state and local member organizations, as well as individuals.

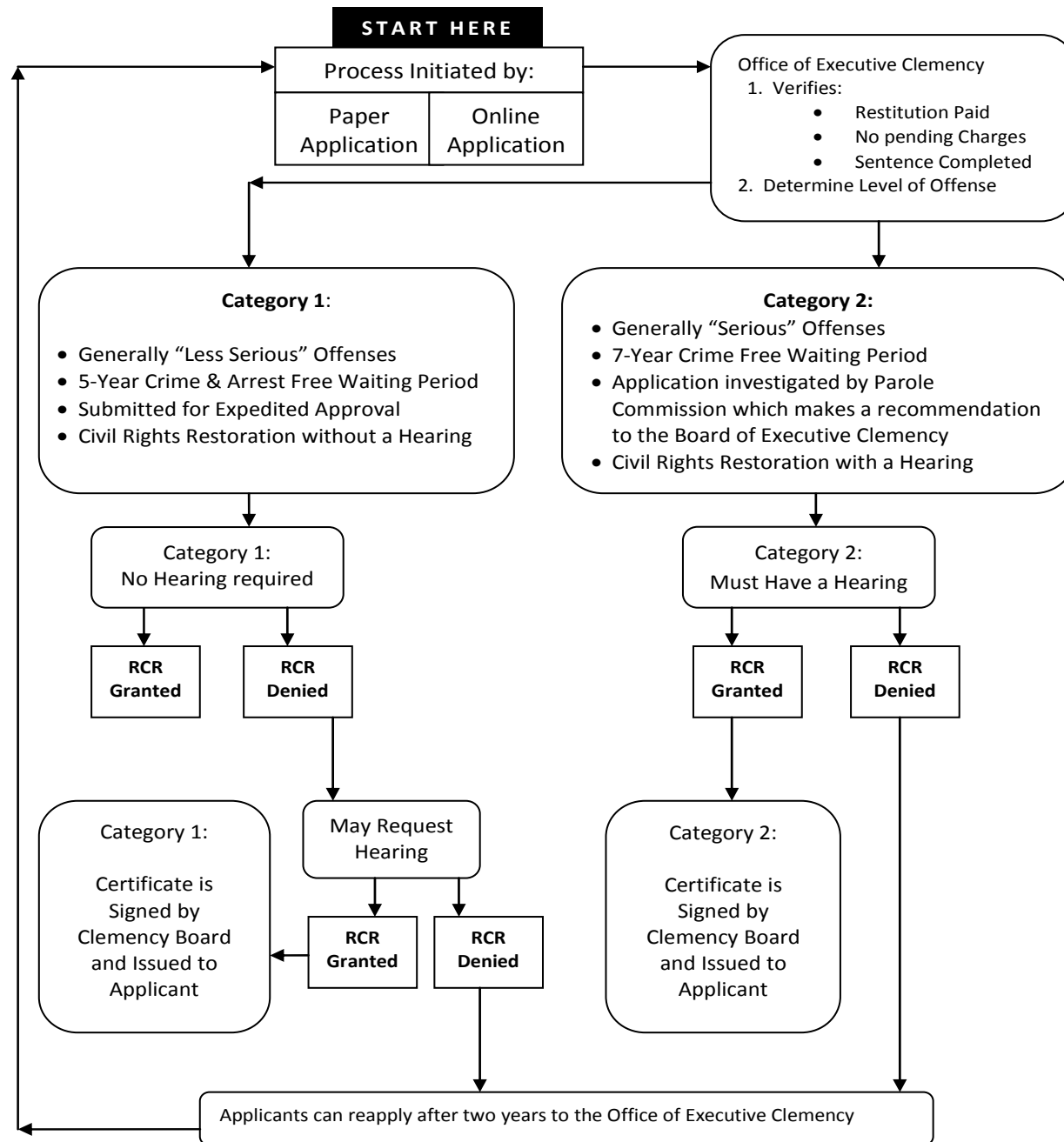
The FRRRC continues to lobby for reform of the restoration of civil rights (RCR) process. The FRRRC also advocates for changing the Florida constitution by removing the lifetime voting rights ban.

The FRRRC and its members:

- Advocate for the removal of the lifetime constitutional ban on civil rights for people with felony convictions
- Seek reforms of the RCR process
- Offer direct RCR assistance to those who seek to have their civil rights restored through the ACLU / FRRRC helpline, community workshops, and individual assistance
- Train organizations to provide public education and direct RCR assistance within their communities
- Organize opportunities for activism by people directly impacted by the civil rights ban, including family, friends and co-workers of former felons, to advocate for changes.

## Civil Rights Restoration in Florida

In March 2011, the Florida Board of Executive Clemency made the Rules of Executive Clemency more restrictive. The process, depicted below, is slow, bureaucratic and difficult to understand. As a result, individuals must wait years for their civil rights to be restored.



## Get Involved! Get Assistance!

The ACLU of Florida is working with the FRRRC to achieve a process of automatic civil rights restoration in Florida, with the ultimate goal of removing the civil rights ban from the Florida constitution.

If you would like to contribute your time, talent, or resources to our work please join the FRRRC or have your organization join us. Please contact us at (877) U-COUNT-2 (1-877-826-8682).

**Help us end Florida's Civil Rights Ban!**

**GET CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ASSISTANCE**

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