

Felons CAN Vote and Will in the 2008 Presidential Election

March 28, 2008 by [Tabitha Fleming](#)

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The Lies, the Laws, and the Resources for the Formerly Criminal

It's been the standard practice in [Colorado](#) for many years that inmates, and convicted felons be told by prison authorities that they have lost the right to vote. While many felons may accept that as just another loss of rights, (i.e. you also can't own [firearms](#) as a convicted felon) there are the few who realize that this is a lie and proceed to [vote](#) at every opportunity.

The reality is, however, that felons lose a lot of their rights, including the right to [vote](#) while they are incarcerated. In fact, [Felon Voting](#) identifies ten states where felons are barred from voting for an indefinite amount of time. There are various steps in each location for felons to attempt to restore their rights, but in some cases, there is no way for the offender to regain [citizenship](#) status.

Twenty states offer a less harsh form of the restriction barring only those in prison, on parole, or probation from voting. Five states, including [Colorado](#) prevent felons from voting while on parole or in prison. Currently, in [Colorado](#) alone almost 30,000 people are incarcerated. While another thirteen states allow felons to [vote](#) after their release from prison there are only two states in the nation, [Maine](#) and Vermont that do not revoke a felon's right to [vote](#) at any time.

It's a fact that committing a crime, or more so, being convicted of a [crime](#) results in a loss of priveledges. However, since the Reagan administration the number of people in the United States who are or have been incarcerated has skyrocketed and in states where private prisons are utilized, the rate of increase is astounding. According to the [U.S. Department of Justice](#), at the end of 2004, 1,496,629 people were incarcerated in this country. [The Straight Dope](#) notes that the rate of incarceration in the United States is 701 per 100,000.

In [Colorado](#) with a 2006 estimated population of 4,515,708, aged 18 or older, the prison votes wouldn't totally change [election](#) results but if you count in all the convicted felons who don't [vote](#) because they believe they can't, there could be a sizeable impact.

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Resources

Did You Know

- ▶ www.felonvotingprocon.org/pop/StateLaws.htm

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Written by [Tabitha Fleming](#)

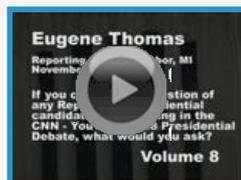
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Take a simple survey to find out who you should vote for in the 2008 Presidential Election.
By Carol Bengle Gilbert | Published 6/26/2007

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A lighthearted idea to see whether eBay, North Americas biggest online marketplace, can predict the outcome of the 2008 US Presidential Election.

By The Brit | Published 8/28/2007

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Hispanic Population Could Play Large Role in 2008 Presidential Election

The 2008 Presidential Election is less than a year away. Each year the news is filled with the results of different polls and studies. They quite often break down different demographics and their importance to the election. Hispanic voters in 2008 could be key.

By Newshound | Published 12/16/2007

Comments

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Your name

Jennifer Waite Good info here...in AZ I think you can have your rights restored....

Posted on 06/05/2009 at 2:06:10 PM

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Brooke (Guest) My husband is a felon. He committed a felony 11 years ago, when he was 17 years old. Because he screwed up as an adolescent, he must pay for the rest of his life. Every election, he has to wait for me as I go to the polls, knowing that he may never get that opportunity. People can change.

Posted on 03/02/2009 at 8:03:03 AM

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andre view (Guest) Felons should have the right to vote.[im not a felon im 12yrs old]because they are citizens in this country and they deserved a second chance. so what they mess up the first time. people make mistakes i know theirs are serious, but that doesn't mean the government can their pride dignity away from them

Posted on 02/15/2009 at 6:02:36 PM

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Robins View I think if one has been in trouble they should have their right to vote, maybe just those who kill, rape, murder, and those still incarcerated shouldn't be allowed. but what's the harm in letting someone vote even if they made it so u can only vote once your off parole, or probation. Heck there are young ones out there who were sent up the river for a small baggie of reifer. I don't really classify that as " a criminal". People are all criminals, some would say because, think about it, if you lifted your bosses pencil at work you just stole something. Take something with out asking in these days makes you a criminal. Give them the voting right my lord .

Posted on 01/26/2009 at 7:01:37 AM

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Chris
(Guest) exactly what nicole said. i cant find anything against it...

Posted on 11/02/2008 at 7:11:45 PM

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Ryan
(Guest) Unreal-wish I would have found this out before it was too late to register. Or about 10 years ago for that matter. Damn it.

Posted on 10/29/2008 at 4:10:28 PM

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me
(Guest) im doin a prject fer school and this has helped

Posted on 10/14/2008 at 4:10:43 PM

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Nicole
(Guest) Ebeth, it is. The new Lincoln Douglas debate topic is about this exactly. If you have a reason as to why felons shouldn't be able to vote in jail, I'd like to hear it, because I'm drawing a blank. I think that felons deserve the right to vote same as any other person in the US.

Posted on 10/13/2008 at 4:10:06 PM

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Nadirah
(Guest) I like that last statement about all the people who were incarcerated and are now out still don't understand that they are permitted to vote. It's also sad at the same time because no one takes the time to explain to these people that they are not always isolated from being a real citizen due to the fact that they were convicted of a crime. It's also because of things like this that the unemployment rate is so high.

Posted on 10/12/2008 at 3:10:16 PM

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Tabitha
Fleming Just like to thank everyone for their comments, and also note that my piece has "possibly" inspired an article at the Rocky Mountain News. <http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/oct/04/i-have-a-criminal-record-can-i-vote/> Then again, maybe that's just wishful thinking. If you need to check your states laws, I recommend that you first visit the link I listed in Resources. It details state by state information. And yes, in Colorado, even if you are convicted, as long as you have completed your sentence (and any PAROLE.....not probation) or are on a differed sentence, you can vote.

Posted on 10/04/2008 at 9:10:11 PM

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