

## BEFORE YOU RESTORE YOUR RIGHTS:



1. You have to complete your sentence, including probation and parole.



2. You must pay off your restitution and court costs, and be up to date on child support.

## HOW TO RESTORE YOUR RIGHTS:



- 1. Check if you can apply:** In Tennessee, if you've served your time, including probation and parole, and paid all fines, fees & restitution, you can apply.
- 2. File a Petition with the Circuit Court to restore your rights:** This can be filed in the jurisdiction where you live or where the felony conviction occurred.
- 3. Ask for a completed Certificate of Restoration form:** You can download this form from the State Department's website in Tennessee or ask for it by mail. You will need qualified agencies to confirm on the form that you have paid all court costs, completed your sentence, and paid child support. You should include a copy of the order from Circuit Court with this form.
- 4. Wait for an answer:** The Secretary of State in Tennessee will check your Certificate of Restoration form. If they say yes, you will get a letter stating that your voting rights are back.

## Who We Are

Legal Aid Society is Tennessee's largest non-profit law firm. Our mission is to enforce, advance, and defend the legal rights of low income and vulnerable people to obtain the basic necessities of life.

**IMPORTANT!** It is the current policy of the Tennessee State Election Coordinator, that a Court Order for a "full" restoration of citizenship rights is required for a person to register to vote. It is important that your Order is not written up as a partial restoration, or as carving out certain rights (for example firearm rights). If you need help creating the Order language you can request advice here:

<https://form.jotorm.com/241405833953155>



In partnership with



The information provided in this booklet does not and is not intended to constitute legal advice. If you have a legal problem, please call a private attorney or call your local Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland office at 1-800-238-1443.



Reentry

# VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION



LEGAL AID SOCIETY  
OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE AND THE CUMBERLANDS



# WHEN WAS YOUR FELONY CONVICTION?

<p>Before Jan. 15, 1973</p>	<p><b>You have the right to vote unless you were convicted of one of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abusing a female child</li> <li>• Arson and felonious burning</li> <li>• Bigamy</li> <li>• Bribery</li> <li>• Burglary</li> <li>• Counterfeiting</li> <li>• Felonious breaking and entering a dwellinghouse</li> <li>• Felonious breaking in a business house, outhouse other than a dwelling house</li> <li>• Forgery</li> <li>• Horse stealing</li> <li>• Larceny</li> <li>• Robbery</li> <li>• Receiving stolen property</li> <li>• Stealing bills of exchange or other valuable papers</li> </ul>	<p>July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2006</p>	<p>You have temporarily lost the right to vote. <b>You may seek restoration UNLESS you were convicted of one of the following crimes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any degree of murder</li> <li>• Any degree of rape</li> <li>• Treason</li> <li>• Voter fraud</li> </ul>
<p>Jan. 15, 1973 to May 17, 1981</p>	<p>You have the right to vote.</p>		
<p>May 18, 1981 to June 30, 1986</p>	<p>You have temporarily lost the right to vote but may be eligible to petition the court to restore your rights.</p>		
<p>July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1996</p>	<p>You have temporarily lost the right to vote. <b>You may seek restoration UNLESS you were convicted of one of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First-degree murder</li> <li>• Aggravated rape</li> <li>• Treason</li> <li>• Voter fraud</li> </ul>	<p>July 1, 2006 to present</p>	<p>You have temporarily lost the right to vote. You may seek restoration UNLESS you were convicted of one of the following crimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any degree of murder</li> <li>• Any degree of rape</li> <li>• Treason</li> <li>• Voter fraud</li> <li>• Bribery</li> <li>• Generally, misconduct involving a public official or employee</li> <li>• Generally, interference with government operations</li> <li>• Certain sexual offenses or offenses involving a minor</li> </ul>

According to current Tennessee Coordinator of Elections policy, people that are ineligible to restore their firearm rights are not eligible to restore their voting rights. You should speak with an attorney if this applies to you.



If you don't have a felony conviction, you are able to vote!!

\* Do not submit this instruction page to the court.

## **Packet for Restoration of Rights of Citizenship**

### **For People with a Tennessee felony conviction after July 1, 1996**

This packet will help you fill out the necessary paperwork to ask a Circuit Court to restore your full citizenship rights. The steps are:

#### **Step 1: Collect certified judgements for each of your felony convictions.**

Go to each Court where you were convicted of a felony. Ask the court clerk for a certified copy of your felony judgements. You must do this for each felony on your record. You **must** attach these certified copies to your citizenship restoration petition.

#### **Step 2: Complete the paperwork you need to restore your citizenship rights.**

- Complete the Pro Se Petition to Restore Full Rights of Citizenship in this packet to ask the court to restore your rights.
- Complete an Affidavit of Indigency in this packet to ask the court not to charge you the filing fee for submitting this petition. If you **CAN** afford to pay the filing fee you do not need to complete this affidavit.
- Fill in your name on a Proposed Order in this packet to submit to the court.

#### **Step 3: Put the above documents together and file them with the Circuit Court.**

Bring the Petition for Citizenship Rights, the Affidavit of Indigency, and Proposed Order to the Circuit Court where you live or where your felony conviction occurred. View a map of Tennessee Circuit Courts here:

<https://www.tncourts.gov/jdmap>

**TIP:** If you have felony convictions that can be expunged before filing your restoration petition, then expunge them first.

**Si necesita asistencia lingüística, por favor llame al 615-741-7579.**

**للحصول علي المساعدة اللغوية, من فضلك قم بالاتصال علي الرقم التالي : 615-741-7579**

\* Do not submit this instruction page to the court.

## How To Complete the Petition to Restore Full Citizenship Rights

You **must** attach a certified copy of the judgement of conviction for each felony to your petition. You can also attach any other letters, paperwork, or any information you want to show the court.

For a completed example Petition to Restore Full Citizenship Rights, scan this QR code or click the link:



[bit.ly/4b281vV](https://bit.ly/4b281vV)

Complete the following 4 steps to fill out the Petition that you will file in Circuit Court:

### Step 1: Fill out the caption of the Petition.

Fill in the judicial district, county, and city for the Circuit Court where you are filing the petition. See highlighted below. The court clerk can give you the court information, or you can view a map of the courts here:

<https://www.tncourts.gov/jdmap>

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE **17<sup>th</sup>** JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
**MARSHALL** COUNTY, AT **LEWISBURG**

IN RE JOHN Q. CITIZEN,  
Petitioner.

)  
)  
)  
)  
)

No. \_\_\_\_\_

---

PRO SE PETITION FOR RESTORATION OF FULL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS  
PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED SECTION 40-29-101-105(c)

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\* Do not submit this instruction page to the court.

Add your full name as the petitioner to the caption. See highlighted below.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 17<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
MARSHALL COUNTY, AT LEWISBURG

IN RE JOHN Q. CITIZEN,  
Petitioner.

)  
)  
)  
)  
)

No. \_\_\_\_\_

---

PRO SE PETITION FOR RESTORATION OF FULL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS  
PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED SECTION 40-29-101-105(c)

---

The Circuit Court Clerk will give you a new case number when you file the Petition in court. Please leave that blank. See highlighted below.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 17<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
MARSHALL COUNTY, AT LEWISBURG

IN RE JOHN Q. CITIZEN,  
Petitioner.

)  
)  
)  
)  
)

No. \_\_\_\_\_

---

PRO SE PETITION FOR RESTORATION OF FULL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS  
PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED SECTION 40-29-101-105(c)

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**Step 2: Fill out the information in the Petition to tell the Circuit Court that you are eligible to get your rights back.** Complete these numbered items:

1. Enter your county and address.
2. Check the box that applies to you. You can check more than one.
3. You **must** attach certified judgements of conviction to your petition.
4. Check the box that applies to you. You can check more than one.
5. Can you pay the petition filing fee? Check the box that applies to you.

\* Do not submit this instruction page to the court.

**Step 3: Fill out the information in the Petition to tell the Circuit Court why you should get your rights back.**

This part can explain who you are and why it is important to you to have your citizenship rights restored. Finish the sentence, “I meet the statutory requirements to merit a full restoration of my citizenship rights because.”

Tell your story, explain how your life has changed, describe your employment history, community involvement, or list any programs you have entered. See highlighted below.

**II. PETITIONER MERITS FULL RESTORATION OF CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS**

1. I meet the statutory requirements to merit a full restoration of my citizenship rights because I am a husband and father who is committed to my family and to my community. I just celebrated my 17<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and we have three teenage children aged 13, 14,

**Step 4: Sign and date the Petition.**

On the last page, fill in the date you file your petition at court. For example, “Respectfully Submitted this is 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024.” See highlighted below.

Respectfully Submitted this 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024.

1. Sign the signature line, print your name, add your full address, and list your phone number. See highlighted below.

Petitioner Signature *John Q. Citizen*

Petitioner (printed name) John Q. Citizen

Petitioner Address 555 Street Lane, Lewisburg, TN 37091

Petitioner Phone (615) 555-5555

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, AT \_\_\_\_\_**

**IN RE \_\_\_\_\_,**  
**Petitioner.** )  
 )  
 ) **No. \_\_\_\_\_**  
 )

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**PRO SE PETITION TO RESTORE FULL RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP PURSUANT TO  
TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED SECTION 40-29-101-105(c)**

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Comes now Petitioner, pursuant to the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated §40-29-101-105(c), respectfully requesting that this Honorable Court grant me an order restoring my full rights of citizenship. This Court has jurisdiction to hear this petition under Tenn. Code Ann. §40-29-10(c)5 as a circuit court in the county in which I reside, or which has jurisdiction over the disqualifying felony offense(s).

To restore citizenship rights, a person with a disqualifying conviction after July 1, 1996, must: (1) submit their petition in the circuit court of the county where they reside or where they were convicted; (2) wait until the expiration of the maximum sentence imposed by the court; and (3) set forth the reasons petitioner is eligible for and merits having full rights of citizenship restored. Tenn. Code Ann. §40-29-105(c). As explained below, I am eligible to have my rights restored and I merit restoration.

Under Tenn. Code Ann. §40-29-105(c)(3), there is a presumption in my favor that this petition shall be granted and that full citizenship rights shall be restored. Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c)(5), “If, upon the face of the petition or after conducting a hearing, the court finds that the petitioner’s full citizenship rights should be restored, it shall so order and send a copy of the order to the state coordinator of elections.” I respectfully request that this Court grant

the petition on its face unless the Court finds it necessary to hold a hearing or request additional documentation.

In support of the petition, I state the following:

**I. PETITIONER IS ELIGIBLE TO HAVE FULL RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP RESTORED BECAUSE THE MAXIMUM SENTENCE IMPOSED FOR CONVICTION IS EXPIRED.**

1. I am a citizen of Tennessee and a resident of \_\_\_\_\_ County Tennessee, who lives at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. This Court is in the county (check all that apply):  
 where I live and/or  where the felony conviction occurred.
3. The certified judgement(s) of felony conviction(s) is/are attached, and the maximum sentence(s) imposed for my felony conviction(s) has/have expired.
4. The felony conviction(s) occurred in (check all that apply):  
 an in-state court  an out-of-state court  federal court.
5. Check the box that applies:  
 I can pay the costs of application.  I am filing this petition under a pauper's oath.
6. I am eligible to have my full rights of citizenship restored because the maximum sentence(s) for any felony conviction(s) listed above has/have expired as shown by my attached Judgement of Conviction(s).
7. Furthermore, I enjoy a presumption that this Court will grant this petition and issue an order restoring my full citizenship rights pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c)(3).





2. I merit having my full rights of citizenship restored because of all the reasons stated above.
3. I do swear and affirm that all the above representations are true on personal knowledge.

WHEREFORE, for the above stated reasons, and in light of the presumption that this petition be granted, I respectfully request that this Honorable Court grant me an order restoring my full rights of citizenship pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §40-29-105(c).

Respectfully Submitted this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_.

BY:

Petitioner Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner (printed name) \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner Address \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner Phone \_\_\_\_\_

_____ Court _____ County _____ Tennessee	<h1 style="margin: 0;">UNIFORM CIVIL</h1> <h1 style="margin: 0;">AFFIDAVIT OF INDIGENCY</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">page 1 of 2</p>	<b>Case Number</b>  _____
_____ vs. _____		

I, \_\_\_\_\_, having been duly sworn according to law, make oath that because of my poverty, I am unable to bear the expenses of this case and that I am justly entitled to the relief sought to the best of my belief. The following facts support my poverty.

1. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Names and Ages of All Dependents:
- |       |                     |
|-------|---------------------|
| _____ | Relationship: _____ |
| _____ | Relationship: _____ |
| _____ | Relationship: _____ |
| _____ | Relationship: _____ |

6. I am employed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 My employer's address is: \_\_\_\_\_  
 My employer's phone number is: \_\_\_\_\_

7. My Present income, after federal income and social security taxes, are deducted, is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

8. I receive or expect to receive money from the following sources:
- |                       |          |           |           |       |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| AFDC                  | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| SSI                   | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| Retirement            | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| Disability            | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| Unemployment          | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| Worker's Compensation | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |
| Other                 | \$ _____ | per month | beginning | _____ |

9. My expenses are:
- |                    |          |           |                             |          |           |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Rent/House Payment | \$ _____ | per month | Medical/Dental              | \$ _____ | per month |
| Groceries          | \$ _____ | per month | Telephone                   | \$ _____ | per month |
| Electricity        | \$ _____ | per month | School Supplies             | \$ _____ | per month |
| Water              | \$ _____ | per month | Clothing                    | \$ _____ | per month |
| Gas                | \$ _____ | per month | Child Care or               | \$ _____ | per month |
| Transportation     | \$ _____ | per month | Court Ordered Child Support |          |           |
|                    |          |           | Other                       | \$ _____ | per month |

10. Assets:
- |                          |          |       |       |
|--------------------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Automobile               | \$ _____ | (FMV) | _____ |
| Checking/Savings Account | \$ _____ |       | _____ |
| House                    | \$ _____ | (FMV) | _____ |
| Other                    | \$ _____ |       | _____ |

11. My debts are:
- |             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| Amount Owed | To Whom |
| _____       | _____   |
| _____       | _____   |
| _____       | _____   |

I hereby declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing answers are true, correct, and complete and that I am financially unable to pay the costs of this action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 PLAINTIFF

**ORDER ALLOWING FILING ON PAUPER'S OATH**

It appears based upon the Affidavit of Indigency filed in this cause and after due inquiry made that the Plaintiff is an indigent person and is qualified to file case upon a pauper's oath.

_____ Court _____ County _____ Tennessee	<h1 style="margin: 0;">UNIFORM CIVIL AFFIDAVIT OF INDIGENCY</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">page 2 of 2</p>	Case Number _____
_____ vs. _____		

It is so ordered this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
JUDGE

DETERMINATION OF NONINDIGENCY

It appearing based upon the Affidavit of Indigency filed in this cause and after due inquiry made that the Plaintiff is not an indigent person because \_\_\_\_\_.

IT IS ORDERED AND AJUDGED that the Plaintiff does not qualify for filing this case on a pauper's oath.

This the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_  
JUDGE

NOTICE: If the judge determines that based upon your affidavit you are not eligible to proceed under a pauper's oath, you have the right to a hearing before the judge or, in those cases that can be appealed to Circuit Court, a hearing before the Circuit Court judge.

\* Do not submit this instruction page to the court.

## The Order

If the Circuit Court approves the petition to restore your citizenship rights, they will issue an Order. This next page is a sample Order that the court can use. The court may also create their own order, or work with you and the district attorney to draft one.

**IMPORTANT!** It is the current policy of the Tennessee State Election Coordinator, that a Court Order for a “full” restoration of citizenship rights is required for a person to register to vote. It is important that your Order is not written up as a partial restoration, or as carving out certain rights (for example firearm rights). If you need help creating the Order language you can request advice here:

<https://form.jotform.com/241405833953155>

**DO NOT add dates to this document.** Leave those lines blank to be filled in by the court.

**DO NOT sign the judge’s signature line.** Leave that line blank to be filled in by the court.

**Only add:**

1. Your name.
2. The case number if you have it. If you are not given a case number when you file your petition, it is okay to leave this blank.
3. Your signature, printed name, address, and phone number as “approved for entry by.”

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, AT \_\_\_\_\_

IN RE \_\_\_\_\_, )  
Petitioner. ) No. \_\_\_\_\_ )  
 )

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**ORDER GRANTING RESTORATION OF FULL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS**

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This matter came before this Circuit Court on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, before the undersigned Honorable Circuit Court Judge. Upon review of the *Petition for Restoration of Full Citizenship Rights*, and the criteria of Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c) the petition is GRANTED. Petitioner is hereby restored to their full rights of citizenship as provided for in Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c), including but not limited to the right to vote, serve on a jury, and hold public office.

It is **ORDERED, ADJUDGED**, and **DECREED**, that Petitioner's full citizenship rights are hereby restored. These rights shall be restored effective immediately upon entry of this Order.

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c)(5), the Court shall forward a copy of this Order to the state coordinator of elections.

Under the discretion granted to this court by Tenn. Code Ann. § 40-29-105(c)(6):

- costs of this action are waived.
- costs of this action are taxed to the State of Tennessee.
- costs of this action are taxed to the Petitioner.

ENTERED this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Circuit Court Judge

**APPROVED FOR ENTRY BY:**

Petitioner Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner Address \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner Phone \_\_\_\_\_