

# Organizations Providing Information and Conducting Research on Felons Seeking Restoration of Civil Rights.

The Advancement Project main Web site:

<http://www.advancementproject.org/>

## Virginia Clemency Project

<http://www.advancementproject.org/ourwork/power-and-democracy/felony-re-enfranchisement/about.php>

The most complete information on the process of restoration of rights is found in the Advancement Project's **Virginia: Guide to Restoration of Voting Rights:**

<http://www.advancementproject.org/pdfs/vp/062508/VAHandbook.pdf>

This document defines non-violent and violent felonies, specifies the civil rights lost, and outlines the process of applying for restoration. All forms are included with instructions for completion. The names and contact information for all Registrars and Clerks of Court in Virginia are provided, as is a list of crimes considered violent felonies.

## American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia: Project Restore our Vote

Adisa Muse, Director, Virginia Voter Restoration Project

**Mailing Address:** ACLU of Virginia; 530 East Main Street, Suite 310, Richmond VA 23219

**Phone:** (804) 644-8080 [vote@acluva.org](mailto:vote@acluva.org) <http://www.acluva.org/restoreourvote/>

More than 300,000 Virginians are unable to vote due to the state's felony disfranchisement law. Have you or someone you know lost the right to vote?

If you have been convicted of a felony in Virginia, you have lost the right to vote in the Commonwealth. If you were convicted of a felony in another state and lost your right to vote in that state, then you have lost the right to vote in Virginia as well. However, if you are among the more than 300,000 Virginians who have completed the terms of your sentence following a felony conviction, your rights may be restored by submitting an application to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Virginia is one of two states that permanently strip voting rights from those who have been convicted of a felony. Only the Governor, upon recommendation of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, can restore this right.

(According to Adisa Muse, the ACLU point person on restoration of rights, the ACLU has an active working group on restoration of rights that includes Virginia Poverty Law Center, VA/NAACP, VA Interfaith Center for Public Policy, and others. He says that they are trying to develop grassroots support for legislation -- Delegate Hall (HR 182) and Senator Yvonne Miller (SR 7) -- which will come up in the 2008 - 2009 session. They are looking for organizing assistance in Southwest Virginia)

### Get Involved

- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Be an advocate for reforming Virginia's disfranchisement law.
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Help others who wish to restore their right to vote by serving as an individual or group counselor.
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Reach out to civic and community groups to promote awareness of felon

disfranchisement.

### **The Brennan Center for Justice at the New York School of Law**

**Phone:** 212 998-6730 **Fax:** 212 995-4550

**Email:** [brennancenter@nyu.edu](mailto:brennancenter@nyu.edu) **Website:** [www.brennancenter.org](http://www.brennancenter.org)  
[http://www.brennancenter.org/page/-/d/download\\_file\\_48642.pdf](http://www.brennancenter.org/page/-/d/download_file_48642.pdf)

This website shows a map of the status of restitution of rights on a state-by-state basis.

### **The Sentencing Project**

**Mailing Address:** 514 Tenth Street, NW Suite 1000, Washington DC 20004

**Phone:** 202-628-0871 **Fax:** 202-628-1091

<http://www.sentencingproject.org/>

### **ADVOCACY**

The Sentencing Project firmly believes that citizen involvement in criminal justice reform is critical. We work closely with established community-based organizations to identify means by which local leaders can empower their neighbors in order to influence public policy. We also utilize our publications and expertise to educate policymakers and practitioners about sentencing issues and to recommend policy alternatives. This page provides advocates with tools and information to take action to improve our system of justice.

### **FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT**

Nationally, an estimated 5.3 million Americans are denied the right to vote because of laws that prohibit voting by people with felony convictions. This fundamental obstacle to participation in democratic life is exacerbated by racial disparities in the criminal justice system, resulting in an estimated 13% of Black men unable to vote. The Sentencing Project has an **interactive map** giving statistics on a state by state basis: <http://www.sentencingproject.org/StatsByState.aspx>

Numbers given for Virginia:

Individuals incarcerated	57,444
	Rate per 100,000
White	396
African American	2,331
Hispanic	487
Total disenfranchised	377,847
Felons not incarcerated	297,901
African Americans	208,343

**The Right to Vote Campaign** is a national collaboration of the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), [Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law](#), and [The Sentencing Project](#) whose mission is to remove barriers to voting by people with felony convictions. Working with state and local partners, the Campaign is engaged in policy reform, litigation, public education, and voter registration both nationally and in targeted states. [Right to Vote](#): for more information:

**CONTACT** Rashad Robinson, **phone:** 917-553-1001

# Organizations Providing Assistance and Support to Felons Seeking Restoration of Civil Rights.

[Gleaned from LWV-VA interviews]

**Human Rights Watch** gives comprehensive resources for prisoners and their families:  
<http://www.hrw.org/prisons/states/va.htm>

## **NAACP Virginia State Conference**

Box 27212 Richmond VA 23261  
Phone: 804-321-5678 800-426-2227  
<http://www.virginianaacp.org/>

## **NAACP National Prison Project**

### **NAACP National Headquarters**

**Mailing Address:** 4805 Mt. Hope Drive, Baltimore MD 21215  
**Toll Free:** (877) NAACP-98      **Local:** (410) 580-577  
<http://www.naacp.org/programs/prison/>

### **The National Prison Project**

is a Division of the NAACP Branch and Field Services Department. The purpose of the NAACP Prison Project is to promote partnerships, legislation, and initiatives that positively impact inmate recidivism, ex-felon re-enfranchisement and racial disparities within the criminal justice system; as well provide the incarcerated with a vehicle of empowerment through the formation of Prison Branches.

The priorities for the Project are to assist in national, state, and local efforts to re-enfranchise former felons who have served their sentence, reactivate former prison branches and activate new prison branches, assist in providing voter registration and voter education, address disparate treatment of inmates, identify and provide referrals for inmates and their families through collaborative partnerships. Ensure that incarcerated and released felons have access to appropriate voting, education, job training and civic participation resources

Working with: Tides Foundation and African American Ministers Leadership Council

## **OAR: Offender Aid and Restoration**

While Restoration of Civil Rights is not one of their priority services, they have the potential for being very helpful. Founded in 1970, OAR at one time had 22 local agencies in 10 states. Today there are 8 affiliates, 4 in Virginia.

## **OAR of Arlington County, Inc.**

**Mailing Address:** 1400 North Uhle Street, Suite 704 Arlington, VA 22201  
**Phone:** 703.228.7030 **Fax:** 703.228.3981 **Email:** [Info@OARonline.org](mailto:Info@OARonline.org)  
Dr. Gail C. Arnall, Executive Director

The leading provider of offender services in Arlington, Alexandria and Falls Church, VA.

<http://www.oaronline.org/oar/index.asp>

- <sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Jail-based educational, therapeutic and career development programs
- <sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Supervised community service
- <sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Professional re-entry services
- <sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Employment counseling
- <sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> A talented corps of community volunteers

## **OAR of Richmond, Inc.**

**Address:** One North Third Street, Suite 200, Richmond, VA 23219 **phone:** (804) 643-2746  
**fax:** (804) 643-1187 **E-mail address:** [info@oarric.org](mailto:info@oarric.org) **Web Site address:** [www.oarric.org](http://www.oarric.org)

### **OAR of Richmond, Inc., Petersburg Office**

**Address:** Crater Regional Workforce Center, 114 North Union Street, Petersburg, VA 23803  
**phone:** (804) 862-6414

Programs support the restoration of offenders, families, and victims by encouraging volunteer participation, alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenders, and services for offenders/ex-offenders as part of its community justice efforts.

### **OAR Charlottesville**

**Address:** Jefferson Area Community Corrections, 750 Harris Street, Suite #207, Charlottesville, VA 22903  
**Phone:** (434) 296-2441 **Fax:** (434) 979-4038

**Web Site** <http://www.oar-jacc.org/>

Works to break the cycle of crime by helping defendants/offenders to be more accountable, lead more productive lives and develop more constructive lifestyles through low-cost alternatives to incarceration.

Local Probation Services      Pretrial Services      Pre- and Post- Incarceration Services  
Drug Court      Restorative Justice      Reentry Program -- Criminal Justice Planning

### **OAR of Fairfax: Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources**

**Address:** 10640 Page Avenue, Suite 250 Fairfax, VA 22030 **Phone:** 703-246-3033

**Web Site:** <http://www.oarfairfax.org>

Helps those caught up in the criminal justice system become productive members of society. In 2006, 97 volunteers contributed 6,035 hours of service.

**STEP-UP, Inc.** is a non-profit corporation involved in training and job placement for Ex-Offenders re-entering society.

**Address:** 7510 Granby Street, Norfolk, VA 23505 **Phone:** 757-588-3151

**Email:** [brandts@verizon.net](mailto:brandts@verizon.net) <http://stepupincorporated.com/>

STEP-UP (Skill Training Employment Placement Upward Progress), Incorporated located in Norfolk, VA., provides assistance with Reentry Services to Ex-Offenders across the Commonwealth serving hundreds of clients - state and local prisoners being released into society.

STEP-UP Inc acts as liaison for programs that include both local and state-wide community-based organizations with solid linkages to employers, faith-based organizations, landlords, and social services agencies. Reentry Services programs form a strong reentry system for persons released from local and state correctional facilities.

#### **Services Provided Include (but not limited to)**

- Assistance with Obtaining Identification Documents
- Employability Skills Development
- Job Search/Job Placement Assistance
- Substance Abuse Education and Counseling/Treatment Referrals
- Emergency Services – housing, food, clothing

### **VIRGINIA COMMUNITY ACTION RE-ENTRY SYSTEM (Virginia C.A.R.E.S.) PRE-RELEASE AND POST RELEASE SERVICES**

**Phone:** (757) 858-1370.

<http://www.vacares.com/> <http://www.vacares.org/ServiceSites.htm>

A Post-release program designed to assist ex-offenders and their families with supportive services after their release from incarceration.

**Services include:**

- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> employment counseling
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> job search
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> limited transportation for employment interviews
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> assistance with the "restoration of rights" application.
- <sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> basic assistance with emergency food, clothing and housing needs.

Virginia CARES is a statewide Community Action Program located throughout the state of Virginia.

**Virginia C.U.R.E. Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants-Virginia, Inc.**

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 6010 Alexandria, VA. 22306-0010      **Phone and fax:** 703-272-3624  
**e-mail:** [info@vacure.org](mailto:info@vacure.org)      [http://www.vacure.org/agenda\\_list.php](http://www.vacure.org/agenda_list.php)

**2008 Legislative Agenda includes**

**SJ 7 Constitutional amendment; restoration of civil rights for certain felons (first reference).** Yvonne B. Miller

Constitutional amendment (first resolution); restoration of civil rights. Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by general law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentence including any period or condition of probation, parole, or suspension of sentence. The present Constitution provides for restoration of rights by the Governor. The amendment retains the right of the Governor to restore civil rights and adds the alternative for restoration of rights pursuant to general law.

01/15/08 Senate: Continued to 2009 in Privileges and Elections (15-Y 0-N)

**The Virginia Organizing Project: Real People, Dealing with Real Problems, Working for Real Solutions**

**Address:** 703 Concord Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22903-5208

**Phone:** (434) 984-4655      **Fax:** (434) 984-2803      <http://www.virginia-organizing.org/>

The Virginia Organizing Project (VOP) is a statewide grassroots organization dedicated to challenging injustice by empowering people in local communities to address issues that affect the quality of their lives. VOP especially encourages the participation of those who have traditionally had little or no voice in our society. By building relationships with individuals and groups throughout the state, VOP strives to get them to work together, democratically and non-violently, for change.

Also mentioned were the **Abundant Life Fellowship** (transitional housing), the **I Have a Dream Project**, and the **Reclamation Movement**.