

LWV-VA Restoration of Civil Rights of Felons in Virginia Study 2007-9

Results of Felons' Questionnaires

Thirty-five felons working with OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration) of Fairfax filled out a Questionnaire for us. The questions, answers and the comments they made are listed below.

Questions:	yes	no	no answer
1. Did anyone or any organization give you support when you left jail or completed probation?	7	23	5
2. Does the state government give you any support?	4	30	1
3. Have you tried to get your civil rights restored? Do you know how to?	3	31	1
4. Has anyone encouraged or discouraged you from applying for civil rights restitution?	4	30	1
5. Is getting your civil rights restored important to you?	18	6	11
6. Please say why. See responses below			
7. Have you or anyone you know had their civil rights restored?	1	20	14
8. Can you share your story? none did.			
9. Do you think civil rights should be automatically restored?	32	1	2
10. Do you know of groups or individuals who help people with the restoration of their civil rights?	4	30	1
11. Do you know of persons who have had their civil rights restored who might be willing to talk to us?	2	21	12
12. What comments do you have about the present system and how could the present system be improved?			<i>comments not tabulated see responses below</i>

Comments from questions 5 & 6:

"I would like to feel like this is not being held against me for the rest of my life."

"Knowing have the right to vote is important because it helps having a chance in the community."

"I want to vote." " Yes, I have kids to take care of." "I would like to be able to vote to voice my opinion." I would like my vote to count." "I would love to vote." "Yes, my say has value."

"I feel people have an automatic prejudice against felons, when in fact plenty of people commit felonies everyday and might not even know it." I don't know what it means to have our civil rights restored."

"No, I have many more important issues."

Comments from question 12:

"The present system is strict and has no help for the mistake made once in a lifetime."

"I feel once a person finishes their sentence their civil rights should be restored or at least considered because that person would have paid their debt to society."