

STATE OF NEW YORK

830

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sens. COMRIE, MYRIE, BAILEY, BENJAMIN, BIAGGI, BRESLIN, GIANARIS, HARCKHAM, HOYLMAN, JACKSON, KAVANAGH, KRUEGER, LIU, MAY, MAYER, PARKER, PERSAUD, RAMOS, RIVERA, SALAZAR, SANDERS, SEPULVEDA, SERRANO, STAVISKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections

AN ACT to amend the election law, the criminal procedure law, the executive law, and the correction law, in relation to voting by convicted felons

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 2 of section 5-106 of the election law, as
2 amended by chapter 373 of the laws of 1978, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 2. No person who has been convicted of a felony and sentenced to a
5 period of imprisonment for such felony pursuant to the laws of this
6 state, shall have the right to register for or vote at any election
7 [~~unless he shall have been pardoned or restored to the rights of citi-~~
8 ~~zenship by the governor, or his maximum sentence of imprisonment has~~
9 ~~expired, or he has been discharged from parole. The governor, however,~~
10 ~~may attach as a condition to any such pardon a provision that any such~~
11 ~~person shall not have the right of suffrage until it shall have been~~
12 ~~separately restored to him] while he or she is incarcerated for such
13 felony.~~

14 § 2. Subdivision 3 of section 5-106 of the election law is amended to
15 read as follows:

16 3. No person who has been convicted in a federal court, of a felony,
17 or a crime or offense which would constitute a felony under the laws of
18 this state, and sentenced to a period of imprisonment for such felony,
19 shall have the right to register for or vote at any election [~~unless he~~
20 ~~shall have been pardoned or restored to the rights of citizenship by the~~

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 ~~president of the United States, or his maximum sentence of imprisonment~~
2 ~~has expired, or he has been discharged from parole] while he or she is~~
3 incarcerated for such felony.

4 § 3. Subdivision 4 of section 5-106 of the election law is amended to
5 read as follows:

6 4. No person who has been convicted in another state for a crime or
7 offense which would constitute a felony under the laws of this state and
8 sentenced to a period of imprisonment for such felony, shall have the
9 right to register for or vote at any election in this state [~~unless he~~
10 ~~shall have been pardoned or restored to the rights of citizenship by the~~
11 ~~governor or other appropriate authority of such other state, or his~~
12 ~~maximum sentence has expired, or he has been discharged from parole]~~
13 while he or she is incarcerated for such felony.

14 § 4. Section 220.50 of the criminal procedure law is amended by adding
15 a new subdivision 8 to read as follows:

16 8. Prior to accepting a defendant's plea of guilty to a count or
17 counts of an indictment or a superior court information charging a felo-
18 ny offense, the court must advise the defendant on the record that
19 conviction will result in loss of the right to vote while the defendant
20 is serving a felony sentence in a correctional facility and that the
21 right to vote will be restored upon the defendant's release.

22 § 5. Section 380.50 of the criminal procedure law is amended by adding
23 a new subdivision 7 to read as follows:

24 7. Before imposing a sentence of incarceration for a felony
25 conviction, the court must advise the defendant on the record that
26 conviction will result in loss of the right to vote while the individual
27 is serving a felony sentence in a correctional facility and that the
28 right to vote will be restored upon the defendant's release.

29 § 6. Subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 2 of section
30 259-i of the executive law, as amended by section 38-f-1 of subpart A of
31 part C of chapter 62 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

32 (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, at
33 least one month prior to the date on which an inmate may be paroled
34 pursuant to subdivision one of section 70.40 of the penal law, a member
35 or members as determined by the rules of the board shall personally
36 interview such inmate and determine whether he or she should be paroled
37 in accordance with the guidelines adopted pursuant to subdivision four
38 of section two hundred fifty-nine-c of this article. If parole is not
39 granted upon such review, the inmate shall be informed in writing within
40 two weeks of such appearance of the factors and reasons for such denial
41 of parole. Such reasons shall be given in detail and not in conclusory
42 terms. The board shall specify a date not more than twenty-four months
43 from such determination for reconsideration, and the procedures to be
44 followed upon reconsideration shall be the same. If the inmate is
45 released, he or she shall be given a copy of the conditions of parole.
46 Such conditions shall where appropriate, include a requirement that the
47 parolee comply with any restitution order, mandatory surcharge, sex
48 offender registration fee and DNA databank fee previously imposed by a
49 court of competent jurisdiction that applies to the parolee. The condi-
50 tions shall indicate which restitution collection agency established
51 under subdivision eight of section 420.10 of the criminal procedure law,
52 shall be responsible for collection of restitution, mandatory surcharge,
53 sex offender registration fees and DNA databank fees as provided for in
54 section 60.35 of the penal law and section eighteen hundred nine of the
55 vehicle and traffic law. If the inmate is released, he or she shall

1 also be notified in writing that his or her voting rights will be
2 restored upon release.

3 § 7. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 2 of section 259-i of the executive
4 law, as amended by section 38-f-2 of subpart A of part C of chapter 62
5 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

6 (a) At least one month prior to the expiration of the minimum period
7 or periods of imprisonment fixed by the court or board, a member or
8 members as determined by the rules of the board shall personally inter-
9 view an inmate serving an indeterminate sentence and determine whether
10 he or she should be paroled at the expiration of the minimum period or
11 periods in accordance with the procedures adopted pursuant to subdivi-
12 sion four of section two hundred fifty-nine-c. If parole is not granted
13 upon such review, the inmate shall be informed in writing within two
14 weeks of such appearance of the factors and reasons for such denial of
15 parole. Such reasons shall be given in detail and not in conclusory
16 terms. The board shall specify a date not more than twenty-four months
17 from such determination for reconsideration, and the procedures to be
18 followed upon reconsideration shall be the same. If the inmate is
19 released, he or she shall be given a copy of the conditions of parole.
20 Such conditions shall where appropriate, include a requirement that the
21 parolee comply with any restitution order and mandatory surcharge previ-
22 ously imposed by a court of competent jurisdiction that applies to the
23 parolee. The conditions shall indicate which restitution collection
24 agency established under subdivision eight of section 420.10 of the
25 criminal procedure law, shall be responsible for collection of restitu-
26 tion and mandatory surcharge as provided for in section 60.35 of the
27 penal law and section eighteen hundred nine of the vehicle and traffic
28 law. If the inmate is released, he or she shall also be notified in
29 writing that his or her voting rights will be restored upon release.

30 § 8. Subparagraph (xi) of paragraph (f) of subdivision 3 of section
31 259-i of the executive law, as amended by section 11 of part E of chap-
32 ter 62 of the laws of 2003, is amended to read as follows:

33 (xi) If the presiding officer sustains any violations, he or she must
34 prepare a written statement, to be made available to the alleged viola-
35 tor and his or her counsel, indicating the evidence relied upon and the
36 reasons for revoking presumptive release, parole, conditional release or
37 post-release supervision, and for the disposition made. The presiding
38 officer shall also advise the alleged violator in a written statement
39 that revocation will result in loss of the right to vote while he or she
40 is serving the remainder of his or her felony sentence in a correctional
41 facility and that the right to vote will be restored upon his or her
42 release.

43 § 9. Section 75 of the correction law, as amended by section 18 of
44 subpart A of part C of chapter 62 of the laws of 2011, is amended to
45 read as follows:

46 § 75. Notice of voting rights. [~~Upon~~] Prior to the [discharge] release
47 from a correctional facility of any person [whose maximum sentence of
48 imprisonment has expired or upon a person's discharge from community
49 supervision,] the department shall notify such person [~~of his or her~~
50 ~~right to vote~~] verbally and in writing, that his or her voting rights
51 will be restored upon release and provide such person with a form of
52 application for voter registration [~~together with~~] and a declination
53 form, offer such person assistance in filling out the appropriate form,
54 and provide such person written information distributed by the board of
55 elections on the importance and the mechanics of voting. Upon release,
56 such person may choose to either submit his or her completed application

1 to the state board or county board where such person resides or have the
2 department transmit it on his or her behalf. Where such person chooses
3 to have the department transmit the application, the department shall
4 transmit the completed application upon such person's release to the
5 state board or county board where such person resides.

6 § 10. The correction law is amended by adding a new section 510 to
7 read as follows:

8 § 510. Voting upon release. Prior to the release from a local correc-
9 tional facility of any person convicted of a felony the chief adminis-
10 trative officer shall notify such person verbally and in writing that
11 his or her voting rights will be restored upon release and provide such
12 person with a form of application for voter registration and a declina-
13 tion form, offer such person assistance in filling out the appropriate
14 form, and provide such person written information distributed by the
15 board of elections on the importance and the mechanics of voting. Upon
16 release, such person may choose to either submit his or her completed
17 application to the state board or county board where such person resides
18 or have the department transmit it on his or her behalf. Where such
19 person chooses to have the department transmit the application, the
20 chief administrative officer shall transmit the completed application
21 upon such person's release to the state board or county board where such
22 person resides.

23 § 11. The correction law is amended by adding a new section 209 to
24 read as follows:

25 § 209. Notice of voting rights. The department shall notify each
26 person serving a period of community supervision of his or her right to
27 vote and provide such person with a form of application for voter regis-
28 tration and a declination form, offer such person assistance in filling
29 out the appropriate form, and provide such person written information
30 distributed by the board of elections on the importance and the mechan-
31 ics of voting. Upon release, such person may choose to either submit his
32 or her completed application to the state board or county board where
33 such person resides or have the department transmit it on his or her
34 behalf. Where such person chooses to have the department transmit the
35 application, the department shall transmit the completed application to
36 the state board or county board where such person resides.

37 § 12. Section 3-102 of the election law is amended by adding a new
38 subdivision 16-b to read as follows:

39 16-b. Develop and implement a program to educate attorneys, judges,
40 election officials, corrections officials, including parole and
41 probation officers, and members of the public regarding the requirements
42 of the chapter of the laws of two thousand twenty-one which added this
43 subdivision.

44 § 13. This act shall take effect immediately, provided, however, that
45 sections four, five, six, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve of this
46 act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after it shall
47 have become a law; provided further, however, that the amendments to
48 paragraph (a) of subdivision 2 of section 259-i of the executive law
49 made by section six of this act shall be subject to the expiration and
50 reversion of such paragraph pursuant to subdivision d of section 74 of
51 chapter 3 of the laws of 1995, as amended, when upon such date the
52 provisions of section seven of this act shall take effect.