

# Certificates of Rehabilitation

Para ver este artículo en español por favor [visite aquí](#). (To view this article in Spanish, [visit here](#).)

## What are Certificates of Relief and Certificates of Good Conduct?

- If you have a criminal record, you may be able to get a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities or a Certificate of Good Conduct. Certificates are evidence of your rehabilitation.

## How Can Having a Certificate Help Me?

- Being granted a certificate may be able to restore certain rights that were lost when you were convicted, such as the right to vote or hold public office.
- A certificate can remove the automatic denial of employment that is required by law for certain jobs or licenses.
- A certificate can also reduce the negative impact of having a conviction when trying to obtain employment. An employer is required to take your certificate into account when deciding whether or not to hire you.

## What Don't Certificates Do?

- A certificate is not a pardon and it does not seal or expunge your conviction. You may still be required to disclose your convictions to employers.

## What is the Difference Between Certificates of Relief and Certificates of Good Conduct?

- The main differences between the two types of certificates are the eligibility requirements and the application process.

## **Certificates of Relief from Disabilities- Who is eligible?**

- You are eligible to apply for a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities (CRD) if you have no more than one felony conviction and any number of misdemeanor convictions.
- When determining how many felony convictions you have, you must include federal felony convictions and felony convictions from other states.
- If you have more than one felony conviction, you may still be eligible if all of your felony convictions were in the same court and from the same incident.

## **When to Apply**

- You may ask a Judge at the time of sentencing to grant a CRD. You may also apply any time after sentencing for a CRD, however you cannot apply while incarcerated in a state prison.

## **How to Apply**

- Each of your convictions will require a separate application to the judge you were sentenced by. Each court has its own procedure for applications. You should contact the court where you were convicted for their application process.
- If you were incarcerated in a state prison, or have an out-of-state or federal conviction you must apply to the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Service to get a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities.
- New York State Department of Corrections and Community Service's contact information is listed in this brochure.

## **Certificates of Good Conduct- Who is eligible?**

- You are eligible for this certificate if you have been convicted of two or more separate felonies or if you are seeking a job that is specifically considered a "public office".
- You must show that you have completed/achieved a certain period of good conduct in the community.
- You must wait 5 years if the most serious felony on your criminal record is an A or B felony, 3 years if the most serious felony on your criminal record is a C, D

or E felony, or 1 year if you only have misdemeanors on your criminal record.

- The waiting period starts when you were last released from incarceration (prison or jail) to community supervision, or were released from incarceration (prison or jail) by maximum expiration of your sentence, or at the time of your last criminal conviction (whichever of these events comes last).
- If you were convicted in another state or in federal court, the waiting period will be determined by what the level of the conviction would be considered in New York State.
- DOCCS will only consider applications for Certificates of Good Conduct for public office if the application lists a specific public office and includes information about laws that prevent the individual from holding the office they want the Certificate for.

### **When to Apply**

- There is a waiting period before you are eligible to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct. The length of the waiting period is determined by your most serious conviction.
- The waiting period starts when you were last released from incarceration to community supervision, or released from incarceration by maximum expiration of your sentence, or at the time of your last criminal conviction (whichever of these events comes last).
- If you were convicted in another state or in federal court, the waiting period will be determined by what the level of the conviction would be considered in New York State.

### **What if I have to wait to apply?**

- While in the waiting period you should maintain employment, regularly volunteer, or complete educational or vocational programs.

### **How to Apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct**

- You only need to submit one Certificate of Good Conduct application for all existing convictions.
- Applications for Certificates of Good Conduct are handled by the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Service. New York State

Department of Corrections and Community Services contact information is listed below.

**New York State Department of Corrections and Community Service (DOCCS) Contact Information:**

- Phone number: (518) 485-8953
- Website: [www.doccs.ny.gov/certrelief.html](http://www.doccs.ny.gov/certrelief.html)
- Mailing address:

STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

ATTN: CERTIFICATE REVIEW UNIT

The Harriman State Campus - Building 21220

Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12226-2050

**LawNY® Reentry Services**

LawNY® serves individuals reentering society from incarceration and those with criminal

records. Priority is given to those seeking to obtain or maintain employment, including but

not limited to, the following issues:

- Denial or Termination of Employment
- Due to Criminal Record
- Denial or Ineligibility for Licensure,
- Clearances, or Contracts Due to Criminal Record
- Disqualification from Higher Education Due to Criminal Record
- Rap Sheet Corrections
- Certificates of Rehabilitation

\*\*\*\*\*

(c) Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. ®

This article provides general information about this subject. Laws affecting this subject may have changed since this article was written. For specific legal advice about a problem you are having, get the advice of a lawyer. Receiving this information does not make you a client of our office.

Last Review Date: August 2025

Last updated on February 04, 2026.

## Topics

[Re-Entry](#)

## Tags

[Legal Information](#)

Print

Table of Contents

## NEWS

News & publications

[More News](#)

March 12, 2026

Managing Your Utility Costs

Para ver este artículo en español por favor visite aquí.If you're struggling to...

[Read More about Managing Your Utility Costs](#)

January 29, 2026

January 2026 Poverty Awareness Month

The end of January marks the end of Poverty Awareness Month. To recognize this...

[Read More about January 2026 Poverty Awareness Month](#)

October 31, 2025

SNAP Benefit Update as of October 31, 2025

SNAP benefits for November 2025 may be delayed. The New York State Office of...

[Read More about SNAP Benefit Update as of October 31, 2025](#)

## Our Partners

We proudly receive support from the following (to read a full list of our supporters, visit the "Who We Are" tab above):

