

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

Phone number: (518) 485-8953
Website: 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

ABOUT LawNY®

The Rochester Office of **LEGAL ASSISTANCE OF WESTERN NEW YORK, INC.®** (LawNY®) was created in 1968 to provide free legal advice and representation in non-criminal matters to low-income people. LawNY® is a not-for-profit law firm governed by a Board of Directors comprised of local attorneys and low-income people appointed by various community organizations.

We serve residents of 14 counties throughout western New York. What we can help with depends on the county you live in.

We receive government grants and private funds to pay for our work. **You will not be charged a fee for our services.**

GETTING HELP

Please contact our office by phone at (585) 325-2520 or apply online at lawny.org.

HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL

If you only speak Spanish or you are more at ease speaking Spanish, you may speak with our Spanish speaking staff.

Si usted solamente habla español, o se siente mas comodo hablando español, usted puede hablar con nuestros empleados quien hablan Español.

INTERPRETERS IN OTHER LANGUAGES
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.



**LEGAL ASSISTANCE OF
WESTERN NEW YORK, INC.®**
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This brochure is intended for information only, and not as legal advice. For more detailed assistance please contact an attorney.

Certificates of Rehabilitation



LEGAL ASSISTANCE OF WESTERN
NEW YORK, INC.®
ROCHESTER OFFICE

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. A 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 misdemeanors 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 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 you 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 were 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 to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct if you have more than one felony and any number of misdemeanors.

When determining how many felony convictions you have, you must include federal felony convictions and felony convictions from other states.

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.

Most Serious Conviction	Waiting Period
Class A or B Felony	5 years
Class C, D, or E Felony	3 years
Misdemeanor	1 year

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 Service's contact information is listed below.