

Under Florida’s constitution, the voting rights of people with felony convictions—except those convicted of murder or sexual offenses—are restored when they complete their sentences. But, on September 11, 2020, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals reached a [decision](#) that permits Florida officials to require returning citizens to pay legal financial obligations (LFOs) that arise from a felony convictions before they can register and vote. LFOs include court costs, fees, fines, and restitution. LFOs do not include financial obligations arising from misdemeanors.

- You can register to vote and vote if you have paid the total amount of all fines, fees, costs, and restitution ordered as part of your felony sentence.<sup>1</sup>
- You can register to vote and vote if you have a felony conviction from another state and your rights were restored by that state, or would be restored according to the restoration requirements of that other state.
- You can register to vote and vote if you have a federal felony conviction if your rights were restored by another state, or would be restored according to the restoration requirements of the state where the federal court of conviction is located.

According to the Eleventh Circuit, “At the time of trial [May 2020], Florida had received 85,000 registrations from felons who believe they were re-enfranchised by Amendment 4. State law requires that those registrations be screened for, among other things, the voters’ failure to complete the terms of their sentences including financial obligations. [Fla. Stat.] § 98.0751. Florida has yet to complete its screening of any of the registrations. Until it does, it will not have credible and reliable information supporting anyone’s removal from the voter rolls, and all 85,000 felons will be entitled to vote. *See id.* §§ 98.075(5) and (7).” It is not clear if this statement provides absolute immunity, but it appears to authorize voting.

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<sup>1</sup> Florida has publicized [a policy](#) that requires returning citizens to pay the amount he/she was initially assessed in their sentence, and not subsequent fees or surcharges. For example, if you were assessed \$100 for a non-disqualifying felony conviction, paid \$100 towards that amount, but you have a balance of \$40 because of surcharges or collection fees that have accrued, Florida considers you to have completed your financial obligations for purposes of voting.

If you believe you owe LFOs, and/or are unsure of your eligibility based on outstanding LFOs, here are some resources to help you make that determination:

- [County Clerks](#) can assist you in obtaining your sentencing documents in your county of conviction and/or determining the balance of your outstanding LFOs.
- The attorney who represented you at the time of conviction, including [public defenders](#), may be able to assist you in obtaining your sentencing documents.
- [Supervisors of Elections](#) can assist you with questions about your eligibility to register and vote.
- [FRRC](#) can assist you in determining the amount you must pay to vote, provide information on modifying your obligation, or offer resources for payment of outstanding LFOs.
- The [Florida NAACP](#) and the [League of Women Voters of Florida](#) (407-710-5496 or [info@lwvfl.org](mailto:info@lwvfl.org)) can assist you with information on restoration and voting.

You may also request an advisory opinion on your individual eligibility from the [Florida Divisions of Elections](#). If the Division finds no credible and reliable information to indicate you are ineligible to vote, it will issue you an opinion confirming your eligibility.