

Recommended Language for Automated Telephone Messages and Websites on the Voting Rights of People with Criminal Convictions in New York

I. Automated Telephone Messages

Automated telephone answering systems can be vehicles for informing potential voters about their rights. We hope you will consider a prompt for information on the voting rights of people with criminal convictions. If you add or already have such a prompt, we hope you will adopt the following message:

If you have been convicted of a felony, you *can* register and vote, *unless* you are currently incarcerated or on parole. If you are on probation, you *can* register and vote. If you have been convicted only of a misdemeanor, you *can* register and vote. You do *not* need any special documentation to show that you are eligible to vote. Just use the same registration form that everyone else uses.

II. Websites

Websites are another important source of information about the right to vote. We hope you will review any discussion of the voting rights of people with criminal convictions on your current websites. We recommend the following text:

You may *not* register or vote if you have been convicted of a felony and:

- You are *currently incarcerated*; or
- You are *under parole supervision*.

You *may* register and vote if you were convicted of a felony and:

- You were sentenced to *probation*;
- You were *not sentenced to incarceration* or your prison *sentence was suspended*;
- You have *served your maximum prison sentence*;
- You have been *discharged from parole*; or
- You have received a *pardon*.

You *may* register and vote, even from jail, if you have been convicted only of a *misdemeanor*.

The same rules apply whether you were convicted in a New York court, another state's court, or a federal court.

You do *not* need to provide any documentation about your criminal record in order to register and vote.

Where your websites require a shorter statement, we recommend:

If you have been convicted of a felony, you *can* register and vote, *unless* you are currently incarcerated or on parole.

or

To Register You Must not be incarcerated or under parole supervision for a felony conviction.