



**LOUISIANA BOARD OF PARDONS  
AND COMMITTEE ON PAROLE**

**Number: 02-203-POL  
Date: February 24, 2025  
Page: 1 of 4**

**BOARD POLICY**

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**SUBJECT:**                    **ELIGIBILITY FOR CLEMENCY CONSIDERATION**  
**PURPOSE:**                To describe the eligibility for clemency consideration  
**AUTHORITY:**            LAC Title 22, Part V, Chapter 1; La R.S. 15:572  
**REFERENCE:**            ACA Standard 2-1011

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of the Louisiana Board of Pardons (Board) that it may consider individuals for a recommendation of clemency to the Governor based on the eligibility requirements outlined in this policy.

**DEFINITIONS:**

*Violent Offense* – A conviction for any offense as defined in La R.S. 14:2(B).  
*Sex Offense* – A conviction for any offense as defined in La R.S. 15:541.

**PROCEDURES:**

**A. Eligibility**

- 1) **Pardon** – A person may not apply for a pardon if the applicant has any outstanding detainers or any pecuniary penalties or liabilities that total more than \$1,000, resulting from any criminal conviction or traffic infraction. In addition, no person is eligible to apply for a pardon unless the applicant has paid all court costs that were imposed in connection with the conviction of the offense for which the pardon is requested.
- 2) **Commutation of Sentence** – A person may not be considered for a commutation of sentence unless he or she has been granted a hearing by the Pardon Board and has had his or her case placed upon a Pardon Board agenda. A person who is serving a life sentence resulting from a commutation of sentence of death shall not thereafter be eligible to apply for a commutation of sentence to a specific number of years.
- 3) **Remission of Fines and Forfeitures** – A person may not apply for a remission of fines and forfeitures unless he or she has completed all sentences imposed and all conditions of supervision have expired or been completed including but not limited to, parole and/or probation.

- 4) **Specific Authority to Own, Possess, or Use Firearms** – A person may not apply for the specific authority to own, possess, or use firearms unless he or she has completed all sentences imposed for the applicant’s most recent felony conviction and all conditions of supervision imposed for the applicant’s most recent felony conviction have expired or been completed, including, but not limited to, parole and/or probation, for a period of five years. The applicant may not have any outstanding detainers or any pecuniary penalties or liabilities that total more than \$1,000 and result from any criminal conviction or traffic infraction. In addition, the applicant may not have had any outstanding victim restitution, including, but not limited to, restitution pursuant to a court or civil judgment or by order of the committee on parole.
- 5) **Automatic First Offender Pardon** – On the day that an individual completes his or her sentence, the Division of Probation and Parole, after verifying that the individual is a first offender and has completed his or her sentence, shall issue a certificate recognizing and proclaiming that the petitioner granted. The individual shall not be entitled to receive another automatic pardon.

**B. Applications**

All applications must be submitted in accordance with Board Policy 02-205-POL, “Application Filing Procedures.”

**C. Incarcerated Applications or Applicants under the Supervision of Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections**

1. An executive pardon shall not be considered for an offender while in prison, except when exceptional circumstances exist:
  - a. Ensure the identification of the parolee;
  - b. Obtain an acknowledgment that the parolee understands his rights related to the hearing.
2. An incarcerated applicant who is not serving a life sentence for a non-violent offense may request a commutation of sentence:
  - a. At any time; and
  - b. Must have been disciplinary report-free for a period of at least 36 months prior to the date of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - c. Must not be classified to maximum custody status at the time of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - d. Must possess a marketable job skill, either through previous employment history or successful completion of vocational training while incarcerated.

3. An incarcerated applicant who is not serving a life sentence but who is serving a sentence for a violent offense or a sex offense may request a commutation of sentence:
  - a. After having served a minimum of 10 years; and
  - b. Must have been disciplinary report-free for a period of at least 36 months prior to the date of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - c. Must not be classified to maximum custody status at the time of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - d. Must possess a marketable job skill, either through previous employment history or successful completion of vocational training while incarcerated.
4. An incarcerated applicant who is serving a life sentence for a non-violent offense may request a commutation of sentence:
  - a. After having served a minimum of 15 years (The 15 years shall include periods of time prior to the imposition of the sentence in which the applicant was in actual custody for the offense for which he or she was sentenced to life imprisonment); and
  - b. Must have been disciplinary report-free for a period of at least 36 months prior to the date of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - c. Must not be classified to maximum custody status at the time of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - d. Must possess a marketable job skill, either through previous employment history or successful completion of vocational training while incarcerated, unless deemed unable to work due to medical or mental health conditions.
5. An applicant who is serving a life sentence for a violent offense or a sex offense may request a commutation of sentence:
  - a. After having served a minimum of 25 years (The 25 years shall include periods of time prior to the imposition of the sentence in which the applicant was in actual custody for the offense for which he or she was sentenced to life imprisonment); and
  - b. Must have been disciplinary report-free for a period of at least 36 months prior to the date of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - c. Must not be classified to maximum custody status at the time of the application or at the time of the hearing; and
  - d. Must possess a marketable job skill, either through previous employment history or successful completion of vocational training while incarcerated, unless deemed unable to work due to medical or mental health conditions.

**D. Capital Cases**

No application for commutation of a death sentence to life without parole should be filed before the applicant's direct appeal of the conviction and sentence has been denied, and the applicant has served 25 years from the date of sentence. The 25 years shall not include periods of time prior to the imposition of a sentence in which the applicant was in actual custody of the offense for which they were sentenced to death.

In addition to the application, the applicant must submit the following information:

- a. Certified copies of the indictment, judgment, verdict of the jury, and sentence in the case; and
- b. A brief statement of the offense for which the applicant has been sentenced to death; and
- c. A brief statement of the appellate history of the case, including its current status; and
- d. A brief statement of the legal issues that have been raised during the judicial progress of the case; and
- e. A brief statement of the effect of the applicant's crime upon the family of the victim.

**SHERYL M. RANATZA, CHAIRMAN**

*\*Signature on file*

*This policy replaces and supersedes Board Policy 02-203-POL, "Eligibility for Clemency Consideration," dated March 20, 2021.*