

HOUSE BILL 1258

By Dixie

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 40,
Chapter 29, relative to restoration of the right of
suffrage.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-29-203, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and substituting instead the following:

(a) A person eligible to apply for a voter registration card and have the right of suffrage restored, pursuant to § 40-29-202, may request, and then shall be issued a certificate of voting rights restoration, upon a form prescribed by the state coordinator of elections, by the division of elections in the secretary of state's office or by a division designated by the secretary of state specifically to serve as the issuing authority for completed certificates of voting rights restoration.

(b) Within thirty (30) days of receiving the request, the issuing authority shall consult with the department of correction and any other governmental agency necessary to verify that the requesting person is eligible for restoration under § 40-29-202. Upon confirming the requestor is eligible for restoration, the issuing authority shall complete the certificate of voting rights restoration.

(c) Once the certificate of voting rights restoration is complete, the issuing authority shall provide to the requesting person the completed certificate and a written statement explaining the purpose and effect of the certificate and the procedure by which the person may use the certificate to apply for and receive a voter registration card and become eligible to vote.

(d) A certificate of voting rights restoration issued pursuant to this section shall be sufficient proof that the person named on the certificate is no longer disqualified from voting by reason of having been convicted of an infamous crime.

(e) Any person issued a certificate of voting rights restoration pursuant to this section shall submit the certificate to the administrator of elections of the county in which the person is eligible to vote. After determining that the person is qualified to vote in that county by using the same verification procedure used for any applicant, the administrator shall grant the application for a voter registration card. The administrator shall issue a voter registration card, and the card must be mailed to the applicant in the same manner as provided for any newly issued card.

(f) A person who has requested and received a completed certificate of voting rights restoration shall not be required to obtain a new certificate to register to vote in a different county in which the person becomes eligible to vote because of a change of residence. In such a circumstance, the person shall notify the administrator of elections of the county in which the person is eligible to vote that the person has previously been issued the certificate and restored to voting rights. The county administrator of elections shall request verification of the certificate from the issuing authority.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-29-205, is amended by deleting the following language:

The coordinator shall be responsible for printing and distributing a sufficient number of the forms to the department of correction, the board of parole and any other authority that may discharge a person to whom this part applies.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.