

CHAPTER 638

BOARD OF PARDONS

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638.01 BOARD OF PARDONS; HOW CONSTITUTED; POWERS.

The Board of Pardons shall consist of the governor, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and the attorney general. The board may grant pardons and reprieves and commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offense against the laws of the state, in the manner and under the conditions and rules hereinafter prescribed, but not otherwise.

History: (10779) *RL s 5424; 1985 c 248 s 70*

638.02 PARDONS.

Subdivision 1. **Absolute or conditional pardons; commutation of sentences.** The Board of Pardons may grant an absolute or a conditional pardon, but every conditional pardon shall state the terms and conditions on which it was granted. Every pardon or commutation of sentence shall be in writing and shall have no force or effect unless granted by a unanimous vote of the board duly convened.

Subd. 2. **Petition; pardon extraordinary.** Any person, convicted of a crime in any court of this state, who has served the sentence imposed by the court and has been discharged of the sentence either by order of court or by operation of law, may petition the Board of Pardons for the granting of a pardon extraordinary. Unless the Board of Pardons expressly provides otherwise in writing by unanimous vote, the application for a pardon extraordinary may not be filed until the applicable time period in clause (1) or (2) has elapsed:

(1) if the person was convicted of a crime of violence as defined in section 624.712, subdivision 5, ten years must have elapsed since the sentence was discharged and during that time the person must not have been convicted of any other crime; and

(2) if the person was convicted of any crime not included within the definition of crime of violence under section 624.712, subdivision 5, five years must have elapsed since the sentence was discharged and during that time the person must not have been convicted of any other crime.

If the Board of Pardons determines that the person is of good character and reputation, the board may, in its discretion, grant the person a pardon extraordinary. The pardon extraordinary, when granted, has the effect of setting aside and nullifying the conviction and of purging the person of it, and the person shall never after that be required to disclose the conviction at any time or place other than in a judicial proceeding or as part of the licensing process for peace officers.

The application for a pardon extraordinary, the proceedings to review an application, and the notice requirements are governed by the statutes and the rules of the board in respect to other proceedings before the board. The application shall contain any further information that the board may require.

Subd. 3. **Pardon extraordinary; filing; copies sent.** Upon granting a pardon extraordinary the Board of Pardons shall file a copy of it with the district court of the county in which the conviction occurred, and the court shall order the conviction set aside and include a copy of the pardon in the court file. The court shall send a copy of its order and the pardon to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Subd. 4. **Grandfather provision.** Any person granted a pardon extraordinary by the Board of Pardons prior to April 12, 1974 may apply to the district court of the county in which the conviction occurred for an order setting aside the conviction as set forth in subdivision 3.

Subd. 5. **Records.** The term "records" shall include but is not limited to all matters, files, documents and papers incident to the arrest, indictment, information, trial, appeal, dismissal and discharge, which relate to the conviction for which the pardon extraordinary has been granted.

History: (10780) *RL s 5425; 1941 c 377 s 1; 1955 c 448 s 1; 1963 c 819 s 1; 1974 c 582 s 1; 1987 c 276 s 4; 1991 c 319 s 26; 1992 c 569 s 30-32; 1993 c 159 s 2; 2003 c 28 art 3 s 11; 2005 c 83 s 1*

638.03 WARRANT; RETURN.

The Board of Pardons may issue its warrant, under its seal, to any proper officers to carry into effect any pardon, commutation, or reprieve. As soon as may be after the execution of the warrant, the officer to whom it is directed shall make return thereof, under hand, with the doings thereon, to the governor. Such officer shall also file with the court administrator in which the offender was convicted an attested copy of the warrant and return, a brief abstract of which such court administrator shall subjoin to the record of the conviction.

History: (10781) *RL s 5426; 1986 c 444; 1Sp1986 c 3 art 1 s 82*

638.04 MEETINGS.

The Board of Pardons shall hold meetings at least twice each year and shall hold a meeting whenever it takes formal action on an application for a pardon or commutation of sentence. All board meetings shall be open to the public as provided in chapter 13D.

The victim of an applicant's crime has a right to submit an oral or written statement at the meeting. The statement may summarize the harm suffered by the victim as a result of the crime and give the victim's recommendation on whether the application for a pardon or commutation should be granted or denied. In addition, any law enforcement agency may submit an oral or written statement at the meeting, giving its recommendation on whether the application should be granted or denied. The board must consider the victim's and the law enforcement agency's statement when making its decision on the application.

History: (10782) *RL s 5427; 1989 c 253 s 2; 1991 c 292 art 8 s 15; 1991 c 319 s 27*

638.05 APPLICATION FOR PARDON.

Every application for relief by the Pardon Board shall be in writing, addressed to the Board of Pardons, signed under oath by the convict or someone in the convict's behalf, shall state concisely the grounds upon which the relief is sought, and in addition shall contain the following facts:

- (1) the name under which the convict was indicted, and every alias by which the convict is or was known;
- (2) the date and terms of sentence, and the names of the offense for which it was imposed;

(3) the name of the trial judge and the county attorney who participated in the trial of the convict, together with that of the county of trial;

(4) a succinct statement of the evidence adduced at the trial, with the endorsement of the judge or county attorney who tried the case that the statement is substantially correct. If this statement and endorsement are not furnished, the reason for failing to furnish them shall be stated;

(5) the age, birthplace, and occupation and residence of the convict during five years immediately preceding conviction;

(6) a statement of other arrests, indictments, and convictions, if any, of the convict.

Every application for relief by the pardon board shall contain a statement by the applicant consenting to the disclosure to the board of any private data concerning the applicant contained in the application or in any other record relating to the grounds on which the relief is sought. In addition, if the applicant resided in another state after the sentence was discharged, the application for relief by the pardon board shall contain a statement by the applicant consenting to the disclosure to the board of any data concerning the applicant that was collected or maintained by the foreign state relating to the grounds on which the relief is sought, including disclosure of criminal arrest and conviction records.

History: (10783) *RL s 5428; 1986 c 444; 1991 c 292 art 8 s 16; 1991 c 319 s 28; 1992 c 569 s 33*

638.06 ACTION ON APPLICATION.

Every application for relief by the Pardon Board shall be filed with the secretary of the Board of Pardons not less than 60 days before the meeting of the board at which consideration of the application is desired. If an application for a pardon or commutation has been once heard and denied on the merits, no subsequent application shall be filed without the consent of two members of the board endorsed on the application. Immediately on receipt of any application, the secretary to the board shall mail notice of the application, and of the time and place of hearing on it, to the judge of the court where the applicant was tried and sentenced, and to the prosecuting attorney who prosecuted the applicant, or a successor in office. Additionally, the secretary shall publish notice of an application for a pardon extraordinary in the local newspaper of the county where the crime occurred. The secretary shall also make all reasonable efforts to locate any victim of the applicant's crime. The secretary shall mail notice of the application and the time and place of the hearing to any victim who is located. This notice shall specifically inform the victim of the victim's right to be present at the hearing and to submit an oral or written statement to the board as provided in section 638.04.

History: (10784) *RL s 5429; 1986 c 444; 1991 c 292 art 8 s 17; 1991 c 319 s 29; 1992 c 569 s 34*

638.07 RECORDS; SECRETARY.

The Board of Pardons shall keep a record of every petition received, and of every pardon, reprieve, or commutation of sentence granted or refused, and the reasons assigned therefor, and shall have a seal, with which every pardon, reprieve, or commutation of sentence shall be attested. It may adopt such additional necessary and proper rules as are not inconsistent herewith. The commissioner of corrections or a designee shall be the secretary of the board. The commissioner shall have charge of and keep its records and perform such other duties as the board may from time to time direct. The commissioner is hereby authorized and empowered to serve subpoenas and other writs or processes necessary to return parole violators to prison, and to bring before the board witnesses to be heard in matters pending before it. The records and all the files shall be kept and preserved by the secretary, and shall be open to public inspection at all reasonable times.

History: (10785) *RL s 5430; 1921 c 427 s 1; 1959 c 263 s 13; 1985 c 248 s 70; 1986 c 444*

638.075 ANNUAL REPORTS TO LEGISLATURE.

By February 15 of each year, the Board of Pardons shall file a written report with the legislature containing the following information:

(1) the number of applications received by the board during the preceding calendar year for pardons, pardons extraordinary, and commutations of sentence;

(2) the number of applications granted by the board for each category; and

(3) the crimes for which the applications were granted by the board, the year of each conviction, and the age of the offender at the time of the offense.

History: *1992 c 569 s 35*

638.08 ISSUANCE OF PROCESS; WITNESSES; STANDING APPROPRIATION.

The Board of Pardons may issue process requiring the presence of any person or officer before it, with or without books and papers, in any matter pending, and may take such reasonable steps in the matter as it may deem necessary to a proper determination thereof. When any person is summoned before the board by its authority, the person may be allowed such compensation for travel and attendance as it may deem reasonable.

History: *(10786) RL s 5431; 1981 c 356 s 369*