



Fact Sheet – Pardons

Basic Information.

- Pardons are issued by the National Parole Board
- 400,000 issued since inception (1970)
- 96% still in effect (approx. 16,000 revoked; for historical stats see [revocation section](#) for details)
- A pardon does not erase your record; it seals it and restricts access
- Federal organizations are required to seal the record, provincial and municipal agencies are not mandated to do this.
 - The **Edmonton Police Service** and the **Calgary Police Service** do not seal pardoned records, they are in the same database as all existing records
 - The **Medicine Hat Police Service** and the **Lethbridge Police Service** do seal pardoned records, the information is stored in a separate system
- A pardon does not remove prohibition orders (i.e. no possession of firearms)

What do Pardons do?

- Pardons provide the offender with the ability to:
 - reintegrate into the community
 - gain entrance to certain post-secondary programs
 - gain employment
 - get approved for a loan or mortgage (if crimes were money based i.e. fraud)
 - apply for work visas in other countries
 - receive custody of children

Who can, and when can a pardon be applied for?

- Any person with a criminal record:
 - 3 years after completion of sentence for summary convictions
 - 5 years after completion of sentence for indictable or hybrid convictions
- **Note:** *Completion of a sentence includes all probation and community supervision orders*

Historical Information on Pardons.

- 1970-1998
 - 234,779 pardons granted/issued
 - 2333 denied
 - 6046 revoked/ceased
 - average time between grant/issue and revocation is 4.2 years
 - 35.8% : liquor and traffic violations (i.e. impaired driving)
 - 20.4%: property offences
 - 18.9%: crimes against a person* (non-sexual)
 - 1.9%: sex offenders committing another sex offence
- Average age of applicant is 34

When can pardon applications be **denied**?

- sentence not completed
- continued association with criminals
- police incident resulting in a warning, charge, or arrest (no conviction)
- suspected of illegal activity
- substance abuse
- **Note:** *Able to reapply 1 year after denial*

When can pardon applications be **revoked**?

- convicted of a summary offence
- no longer in good conduct (i.e. involved in a police incident resulting in a warning, charge, or arrest, or are suspected to be involved in illegal activities)

- provided false or deceptive information on initial application
- **Note:** *Revocations are board reviewed and are not automatic, when a revocation occurs the original record will be made available again.*

When can pardon applications **cease** to be in effect?

- convicted of an indictable or hybrid offence
- **Note:** *Cessations occur automatically, there is no board review.*

Do you need a pardon to travel to the United States?

- No. To travel to the US you may require a US waiver** but you do not need a pardon to get the waiver.

Sex Offenders and Pardons.

- Sex offender's files are sealed but remain flagged in the system
- For example; when they apply for a position that requires them to work with vulnerable persons (i.e. children, persons with disabilities) the record check will show a flag and the police agency can request the pardoned record, with the persons consent, from the Solicitor General

** the definition changes across jurisdictions but usually is limited to minor violent and most non-violent crimes against a person*

*** to inquire about US Waivers contact the Department of US Immigration at your local international airport*