



COVID-19 Executive Order Request

COVID-19 has impacted our nation greatly over the past few weeks creating numerous unexpected issues within the Commonwealth. Even with recent lockdowns and visitation suspensions, it will inevitably enter our prison system & spread like wildfire. Local Justice Advocates have teamed up to request Governor Northam take immediate action to expedite the process for qualifying individuals to be released.

In recent weeks, we have seen great efforts to reduce confinement behind bars proposed and/or enacted around the country in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security, Brian Moran, announced a statewide initiative to reduce unnecessary incarceration. Likewise, the federal government is currently considering immediate release of qualifying people behind bars. We were also proud to see some of Virginia's Commonwealth's Attorneys sign a letter from Fair and Just Prosecution supporting the rights and needs of people behind bars. All of these are useful ideas that we believe could be extended further to benefit our state tremendously during this current crisis.

We are requesting an Executive Order for the following:

- 1. Immediately release those who have been granted parole & have a reentry/home plan in place.*
- 2. Expedite the parole process for those who are parole eligible, have reentry/home plan in place -specifically those who have been deemed no threat to society with low recidivism rate as noted on VADOC annual reviews.*
- 3. Expedite the parole process for the Juveniles offenders that fall under Legislative Bill HB35 & release those who have reentry/home plan in place within the next 30 days- specifically those who have been deemed no threat to society with low recidivism rate as noted on VADOC annual reviews.*
- 4. Expedite the parole process for the Fishback offenders that fall under Legislative Bill HB33/SB793 & release those who have reentry/home plan in place within the next 30 days- specifically those who have been deemed no threat to society with low recidivism rate as noted on VADOC annual reviews.*
- 5. Immediately release those with less than a year left to serve who have reentry/home plan in place- specifically those who have been deemed no threat to society with low recidivism rate as noted on VADOC annual reviews.*
- 6. Immediately release those who are awaiting conditional pardon and have cleared parole board investigation.*
- 7. Release those who have completed enough of their sentence that they are past 50% of their state sentencing guidelines, free of institutional infractions for at least five consecutive years, possess a GED/high school diploma & have reentry/home plan in place within the next 30 days- specifically those who have been deemed no threat to society with low recidivism rate as noted on VADOC annual reviews.*

Our goal is to reduce the prison population in a way that puts our community's safety first. We believe these efforts would greatly reduce the potential spread of COVID-19, provide available space within the facilities should isolation be necessary, reunite families, and reduce taxpayers costs tremendously.

We believe in your capacity to lead and help ALL Virginia's citizens through this crisis—especially our most vulnerable including those of us behind bars. If there is anything that we can do to help facilitate this plan in any way, please let us know. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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