

**Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus  
By a Person in State Custody  
(Petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2254)**

**Instructions**

1. To use this form, you must be a person who is or will be serving a sentence under a judgment against you in a *state* court. You may use this form to ask for relief from the conviction or the sentence if you believe you can prove that you are in custody in violation of the Constitution or laws or treaties of the United States. 28 U.S.C. §2254(a). If you want to challenge a *federal* criminal judgment against you, you should file a motion to vacate, set aside or correct sentence, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2255, in the federal court that entered the judgment.
2. Please be advised that before this Court will address your § 2254 petition, you must first exhaust your available state court remedies. You can do this in one of two ways. First, if the time for appealing your conviction has not passed, you may directly appeal it to the Virginia Court of Appeals, with further review by the Virginia Supreme Court. In the alternative, you may file a petition for a writ of habeas corpus in the Circuit Court where you were convicted, with further review in the Virginia Supreme Court, or else you may file such a petition directly in the Virginia Supreme Court. Generally, you must receive a ruling on each of your claims from the Supreme Court of Virginia before this court can address your claim in a § 2254 petition.
3. You must pay a \$5.00 filing fee required by 28 U.S.C. §1914(a). If you cannot pay the fee, you may ask to proceed in forma pauperis (“as a poor person”). To do that, you must complete an in forma pauperis affidavit and a certificate, **signed by an officer** at the institution where you are confined, showing the amount of money in your institutional trust account. If an in forma pauperis affidavit form is not included with the § 2254 form, you may write to the Clerk’s Office to request a form.
4. To ensure that your claims are given full consideration, your responses on the § 2254 form must be typed or neatly written in the space provided, on one side of the paper only, with one-inch margins on all sides of the text. Carbon copies are not acceptable. **Never** use tape on pleadings submitted to the Court.
5. Answer all the questions. You do not need to cite any law. You may submit additional pages if you need more space for your answers. You may also submit a separate memorandum explaining your claims. Be sure these separate documents comply with the format explained in Paragraph 4.
6. You must tell the truth and sign and date the §2254 petition under penalty of perjury. If you make a false statement of a material fact, you may be prosecuted for perjury. Please note that photocopied or carbon copy signatures are not acceptable.
7. You need only send the original petition to the court. If you want a file-stamped copy of the petition, you must enclose an additional copy of the petition and ask the court to file-stamp it and return it to you.
8. When you have completed the § 2254 petition, send the original form and any attachments to the Clerk’s Office at the following address:

Clerk, United States District Court  
210 Franklin Road, SW, Suite 540  
Roanoke VA 24011-2208
9. **CAUTION: You must include in this petition all the grounds for relief from the conviction or sentence that you challenge. And you must state the facts that support each ground. If you fail to set forth all the grounds in this petition, you may be barred from presenting additional grounds at a later date.**
10. **CAPITAL CASES: If you are under a sentence of death, you are entitled to the assistance of counsel and should request appointment of counsel.**

**PETITION UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2254 FOR WRIT OF  
HABEAS CORPUS BY A PERSON IN STATE CUSTODY**

<b>United States District Court</b>		District:
Name (under which you were convicted):		Docket or Case No.:
Place of Confinement :	Prisoner No.:	
Petitioner (include the name under which you were convicted)		Respondent (authorized person having custody of petitioner)
v.		
The Attorney General of the State of:		

**PETITION**

1. (a) Name and location of court that entered the judgment of conviction you are challenging:

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(b) Criminal docket or case number (if you know):

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2. (a) Date of the judgment of conviction (if you know):

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(b) Date of sentencing:

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3. Length of sentence:

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4. In this case, were you convicted on more than one count or of more than one crime?  Yes  No

5. Identify all crimes of which you were convicted and sentenced in this case:

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6. (a) What was your plea? (Check one)

- (1) Not guilty                       (3) Nolo contendere (no contest)  
 (2) Guilty                               (4) Insanity plea

(b) If you entered a guilty plea to one count or charge and a not guilty plea to another count or charge, what did you plead guilty to and what did you plead not guilty to? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) If you went to trial, what kind of trial did you have? (Check one)

Jury     Judge only

7. Did you testify at a pretrial hearing, trial, or a post-trial hearing?

Yes     No

8. Did you appeal from the judgment of conviction?

Yes     No

9. If you did appeal, answer the following:

(a) Name of court: \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Result: \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Citation to the case (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(f) Grounds raised: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(g) Did you seek further review by a higher state court?     Yes     No

If yes, answer the following:

(1) Name of court: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Result: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(4) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(5) Citation to the case (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(6) Grounds raised: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(h) Did you file a petition for certiorari in the United States Supreme Court?  Yes  No

If yes, answer the following:

(1) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Result: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(4) Citation to the case (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Other than the direct appeals listed above, have you previously filed any other petitions, applications, or motions concerning this judgment of conviction in any state court?  Yes  No

11. If your answer to Question 10 was "Yes," give the following information:

(a) (1) Name of court: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Date of filing (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(4) Nature of the proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_

(5) Grounds raised: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

Yes  No

(7) Result: \_\_\_\_\_

(8) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(b) If you filed any second petition, application, or motion, give the same information:

- (1) Name of court: \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Date of filing (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Nature of the proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Grounds raised: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

- Yes     No

- (7) Result: \_\_\_\_\_
- (8) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(c) If you filed any third petition, application, or motion, give the same information:

- (1) Name of court: \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Date of filing (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Nature of the proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Grounds raised: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

Yes     No

(7) Result: \_\_\_\_\_

(8) Date of result (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Did you appeal to the highest state court having jurisdiction over the action taken on your petition, application, or motion?

(1) First petition:     Yes     No

(2) Second petition:     Yes     No

(3) Third petition:     Yes     No

(e) If you did not appeal to the highest state court having jurisdiction, explain why you did not:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. For this petition, state every ground on which you claim that you are being held in violation of the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States. Attach additional pages if you have more than four grounds. State the facts supporting each ground.

**CAUTION: To proceed in the federal court, you must ordinarily first exhaust (use up) your available state-court remedies on each ground on which you request action by the federal court. Also, if you fail to set forth all the grounds in this petition, you may be barred from presenting additional grounds at a later date.**

**GROUND ONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground One, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground One:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?  Yes  No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

Yes  No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?  Yes  No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground One: \_\_\_\_\_

**GROUND TWO:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Two, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground Two:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?  Yes  No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

Yes  No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_



Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?  Yes  No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Two : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**GROUND THREE:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Three, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground Three:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?  Yes  No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

Yes  No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?  Yes  No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:

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(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Three: \_\_\_\_\_

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**GROUND FOUR:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

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(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Four, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground Four:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?  Yes  No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

Yes  No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?  Yes  No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?  Yes  No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Four: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Please answer these additional questions about the petition you are filing:

(a) Have all grounds for relief that you have raised in this petition been presented to the highest state court having jurisdiction?  Yes  No

If your answer is "No," state which grounds have not been so presented and give your reason(s) for not presenting them:

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(b) Is there any ground in this petition that has not been presented in some state or federal court? If so, which ground or grounds have not been presented, and state your reasons for not presenting them:

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14. Have you previously filed any type of petition, application, or motion in a federal court regarding the conviction that you challenge in this petition?  Yes  No

If "Yes," state the name and location of the court, the docket or case number, the type of proceeding, the issues raised, the date of the court's decision, and the result for each petition, application, or motion filed. Attach a copy of any court opinion or order, if available.

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15. Do you have any petition or appeal now pending (filed and not decided yet) in any court, either state or federal, for the judgment you are challenging?  Yes  No

If "Yes," state the name and location of the court, the docket or case number, the type of proceeding, and the issues raised.

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16. Give the name and address, if you know, of each attorney who represented you in the following stages of the judgment you are challenging:

(a) At preliminary hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) At arraignment and plea: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) At trial: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(d) At sentencing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(e) On appeal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(f) In any post-conviction proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(g) On appeal from any ruling against you in a post-conviction proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you have any future sentence to serve after you complete the sentence for the judgment that you are challenging?       Yes     No

(a) If so, give name and location of court that imposed the other sentence you will serve in the future:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) Give the date the other sentence was imposed: \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Give the length of the other sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Have you filed, or do you plan to file, any petition that challenges the judgment or sentence to be served in the future?       Yes     No

18. TIMELINESS OF PETITION: If your judgment of conviction became final over one year ago, you must explain why the one-year statute of limitations as contained in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d) does not bar your petition.\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



- (2) The time during which a properly filed application for State post-conviction or other collateral review with respect to the pertinent judgment or claim is pending shall not be counted toward any period of limitation under this subsection.

Therefore, petitioner asks that the Court grant the following relief: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

or any other relief to which petitioner may be entitled.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Attorney (if any)

I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus was placed in the prison mailing system on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, date, year).

Executed (signed) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

If the person signing is not petitioner, state relationship to petitioner and explain why petitioner is not signing this petition.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_