

**US Constitution Article II, § 2. *The President shall*** be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several states, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, ***and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.***

## **28 CFR Part 1 - EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY**

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**28 CFR 1.1 - Submission of petition; form to be used; contents of petition.**

§ 1.1 Submission of petition; form to be used; contents of petition.- *A person seeking executive clemency by pardon, reprieve, commutation of sentence, or remission of fine shall execute a formal petition. The petition shall be addressed to the President of the United States and shall be submitted to the Pardon Attorney, Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530, except for petitions relating to military offenses. Petitions and other required forms may be obtained from the Pardon Attorney. Petition forms for commutation of sentence also may be obtained from the wardens of federal penal institutions. A petitioner applying for executive clemency with respect to military offenses should submit his or her petition directly to the Secretary of the military department that had original jurisdiction over the court-martial trial and conviction of the petitioner. In such a case, a form furnished by the Pardon Attorney may be used but should be modified to meet the needs of the particular case. Each petition for executive clemency should include the information required in the form prescribed by the Attorney General.*

**28 CFR 1.2 - Eligibility for filing petition for pardon.**

§ 1.2 Eligibility for filing petition for pardon.- *No petition for pardon should be filed until the expiration of a waiting period of at least five years after the date of the release of the petitioner from confinement or, in case no prison sentence was imposed, until the expiration of a period of at least five years after the date of the conviction of the petitioner. Generally, no petition should be submitted by a person who is on probation, parole, or supervised release.*

**28 CFR 1.3 - Eligibility for filing petition for commutation of sentence.**

§ 1.3 Eligibility for filing petition for commutation of sentence.- *No petition for commutation of sentence, including remission of fine, should be filed if other forms of judicial or administrative relief are available, except upon a showing of exceptional circumstances.*

**28 CFR 1.4 - Offenses against the laws of possessions or territories of the United States.**

§ 1.4 Offenses against the laws of possessions or territories of the United States.- *Petitions for executive clemency shall relate only to violations of laws of the United States. Petitions relating to violations of laws of the possessions of the United States or territories subject to the jurisdiction of the United States should be submitted to the appropriate official or agency of the possession or territory concerned.*

**28 CFR 1.5 - Disclosure of files.**

§ 1.5 Disclosure of files.- Petitions, reports, memoranda, and communications submitted or furnished in connection with the consideration of a petition for executive clemency generally shall be available only to the officials concerned with the consideration of the petition. However, they may be made available for inspection, in whole or in part, when in the judgment of the Attorney General their disclosure is required by law or the ends of justice.

**28 CFR 1.6 - Consideration of petitions; notification of victims; recommendations to the President.**

§ 1.6 Consideration of petitions; notification of victims; recommendations to the President.-

(a) Upon receipt of a petition for executive clemency, the Attorney General shall cause such investigation to be made of the matter as he or she may deem necessary and appropriate, using the services of, or obtaining reports from, appropriate officials and agencies of the Government, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(b)

(1) When a person requests clemency (in the form of either a commutation of a sentence or a pardon after serving a sentence) for a conviction of a felony offense for which there was a victim, and the Attorney General concludes from the information developed in the clemency case that investigation of the clemency case warrants contacting the victim, the Attorney General shall cause reasonable effort to be made to notify the victim or victims of the crime for which clemency is sought:

(i) That a clemency petition has been filed;

(ii) That the victim may submit comments regarding clemency; and

(iii) Whether the clemency request ultimately is granted or denied by the President.

(2) In determining whether contacting the victim is warranted, the Attorney General shall consider the seriousness and recency of the offense, the nature and extent of the harm to the victim, the defendant's overall criminal history and history of violent behavior, and the likelihood that clemency could be recommended in the case.

(3) For the purposes of this paragraph (b), "victim" means an individual who:

(i) Has suffered direct or threatened physical, emotional, or pecuniary harm as a result of the commission of the crime for which clemency is sought (or, in the case of an individual who died or was rendered incompetent as a direct and proximate result of the commission of the crime for which clemency is sought, one

of the following relatives of the victim (in order of preference): the spouse; an adult offspring; or a parent); and

(ii) Has on file with the Federal Bureau of Prisons a request to be notified pursuant to 28 CFR 551.152 of the offender's release from custody.

(4) For the purposes of this paragraph (b), "reasonable effort" is satisfied by mailing to the last-known address reported by the victim to the Federal Bureau of Prisons under 28 CFR 551.152.

(5) The provisions of this paragraph (b) apply to clemency cases filed on or after September 28, 2000.

(c) The Attorney General shall review each petition and all pertinent information developed by the investigation and shall determine whether the request for clemency is of sufficient merit to warrant favorable action by the President. The Attorney General shall report in writing his or her recommendation to the President, stating whether in his or her judgment the President should grant or deny the petition.

[Order No. 2323-2000, 65 FR 58223, Sept. 28, 2000]

#### **28 CFR 1.7 - Notification of grant of clemency.**

§ 1.7 Notification of grant of clemency.- When a petition for pardon is granted, the petitioner or his or her attorney shall be notified of such action and the warrant of pardon shall be mailed to the petitioner. When commutation of sentence is granted, the petitioner shall be notified of such action and the warrant of a commutation shall be sent to the petitioner through the officer in charge of his or her place of confinement, or directly to the petitioner if he/she is on parole, probation, or supervised release.

#### **28 CFR 1.8 - Notification of denial of clemency.**

§ 1.8 Notification of denial of clemency.-

(a) Whenever the President notifies the Attorney General that he has denied a request for clemency, the Attorney General shall so advise the petitioner and close the case.

(b) Except in cases in which a sentence of death has been imposed, whenever the Attorney General recommends that the President deny a request for clemency and the President does not disapprove or take other action with respect to that adverse recommendation within 30 days after the date of its submission to him, it shall be presumed that the President concurs in that adverse recommendation of the Attorney General, and the Attorney General shall so advise the petitioner and close the case.

**28 CFR 1.9 - Delegation of authority.**

§ 1.9 Delegation of authority.- The Attorney General may delegate to any officer of the Department of Justice any of his or her duties or responsibilities under §§ 1.1 through 1.8.

**28 CFR 1.10 - Procedures applicable to prisoners under a sentence of death imposed by a United States District Court.**

§ 1.10 Procedures applicable to prisoners under a sentence of death imposed by a United States District Court.- The following procedures shall apply with respect to any request for clemency by a person under a sentence of death imposed by a United States District Court for an offense against the United States. Other provisions set forth in this part shall also apply to the extent they are not inconsistent with this section.

(a) Clemency in the form of reprieve or commutation of a death sentence imposed by a United States District Court shall be requested by the person under the sentence of death or by the person's attorney acting with the person's written and signed authorization.

(b) No petition for reprieve or commutation of a death sentence should be filed before proceedings on the petitioner's direct appeal of the judgment of conviction and first petition under 28 U.S.C. 2255 have terminated. A petition for commutation of sentence should be filed no later than 30 days after the petitioner has received notification from the Bureau of Prisons of the scheduled date of execution. All papers in support of a petition for commutation of sentence should be filed no later than 15 days after the filing of the petition itself. Papers filed by the petitioner more than 15 days after the commutation petition has been filed may be excluded from consideration.

(c) The petitioner's clemency counsel may request to make an oral presentation of reasonable duration to the Office of the Pardon Attorney in support of the clemency petition. The presentation should be requested at the time the clemency petition is filed. The family or families of any victim of an offense for which the petitioner was sentenced to death may, with the assistance of the prosecuting office, request to make an oral presentation of reasonable duration to the Office of the Pardon Attorney.

(d) Clemency proceedings may be suspended if a court orders a stay of execution for any reason other than to allow completion of the clemency proceeding.

(e) Only one request for commutation of a death sentence will be processed to completion, absent a clear showing of exceptional circumstances.

(f) The provisions of this § 1.10 apply to any person under a sentence of death imposed by a United States District Court for whom an execution date is set on or after August 1, 2000. [Order No. 2317-2000, 65 FR 48381, Aug. 8, 2000]

**28 CFR 1.11 - Advisory nature of regulations.**

§ 1.11 Advisory nature of regulations.- The regulations contained in this part are advisory only and for the internal guidance of Department of Justice personnel. They create no enforceable rights in persons applying for executive clemency, nor do they restrict the authority granted to the President under Article II, section 2 of the Constitution.

[Order No. 1798-93, 58 FR 53658, Oct. 18, 1993. Redesignated by Order No. 2317-2000, 65 FR 48381, Aug. 8, 2000]