

Frequently Asked Questions – Commutation of a Life Sentence

(updated September 1, 2016)

Question: **Who may apply for a Commutation of a Life Sentence and how often may they apply?**

Answer: A person who has been sentenced to life imprisonment may, no more frequently than once every ten years, make an application to the Governor requesting that the person's sentence be commuted to a term of years. *See* Iowa Code § 902.2.

Question: **What affect does a Commutation of Sentence have?**

Answer: A commutation by the Governor commutes or reduces the sentence by any number of years, months, or days, or makes the individual eligible for parole.

Question: **If I obtain a commutation of sentence, can I be released from prison?**

Answer: In some circumstances, yes, an individual may be released from prison after being granted a commutation of sentence. Each situation depends on the commutation granted by the Governor.

Question: **What is the process after an individual submits an application?**

Answer: Upon receipt of a request for commutation, the Governor shall send a copy of the request to the Iowa Board of Parole for investigation and recommendations as to whether the person should be considered for commutation. The Board shall conduct an interview of the class "A" felon and shall make a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor. *See* Iowa Code § 902.2.