

## Governor Phil Murphy

# In Sixth Round of Clemency Actions, Governor Murphy Announces Pardons and Commutations for 55 Individuals

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**ELIZABETH** – Governor Phil Murphy today announced his sixth round of clemency actions as part of his Administration's ongoing effort to expand meaningful second chances for individuals involved in the justice system. In this latest round, his third of the month, the Governor exercised his executive authority to grant 19 commutations and 36 pardons, bringing the cumulative total to 283 grants of clemency since the launch of this historic initiative, further cementing New Jersey's standing as The State for Second Chances.

"Each grant of clemency represents a renewed opportunity for someone who has demonstrated accountability, growth, and a sincere commitment to rebuilding their life," **said Governor Murphy**. "As we approach the holiday season, I am grateful to play a small part in reuniting families and providing a second chance to each of these individuals."

"Our Administration's clemency initiative remains a powerful testament to what it means to lead with empathy and courage," **said Lt. Governor Tahesha Way**. "More than 280 families have now experienced the impact of this work firsthand. I am incredibly proud of this initiative and the opportunities it brings to residents across our state who are ready to begin their next chapter."

New Jersey's Constitution gives the Governor broad discretion and the sole authority to issue pardons and commutations to individuals for State criminal convictions.

In June 2024 (<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20240619a.shtml>), Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order No. 362](https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-362.pdf) (<https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-362.pdf>), establishing the state's first-ever Clemency Advisory Board. The Board, chaired by Bishop Joshua Rodriguez, convenes regularly to conduct an extensive review of applications for pardons and commutations and provide recommendations to the Governor for executive clemency actions. Under Executive Order No. 362, certain categories of applications receive expedited consideration, including non-violent offenses with long post-conviction periods of good conduct, victims of domestic violence who committed crimes in their victimization, or sentences reflecting excessive trial penalties. The process also ensures voices of victims, their families, and the community are included and that applicants are evaluated on the full context of their lives and rehabilitation.

Since the Governor's Executive Order, more than 4,000 applications for clemency have been reviewed. The Governor plans to announce additional grants of clemency before the end of his term.

“As families across New Jersey prepare to gather in gratitude this Thanksgiving, Governor Murphy has offered many more individuals something truly life-changing to be thankful for: the chance to begin again. By granting over 50 additional pardons and commutations, the Governor reminds us that mercy is not seasonal — it is a year-round commitment to recognizing human dignity and the possibility of renewal,” **said Bishop Joshua Rodriguez, Chair of the New Jersey Clemency Advisory Board.** “This holiday invites us to reflect on grace, generosity, and the bonds that hold our communities together.

“Today’s clemency actions do exactly that. They allow individuals to return to their loved ones, neighbors to regain trust, and New Jerseyans to rebuild their futures with hope rather than despair,” **continued Bishop Rodriguez.** “In a season defined by gratitude, these restored lives reflect the values we cherish most: compassion, fairness, and the belief that no one is beyond redemption. I applaud Governor Murphy for continuing to lift up those who have worked hard to transform their lives. His leadership affirms that justice guided by mercy strengthens not only individuals, but the entire fabric of our state.”

The following individuals were granted a pardon today:

1. **Acevedo, Moises:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 2006
2. **Allen, Martel:** two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1992; two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1992; violation of probation, sentenced in 1995
3. **Amador, Lenny:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 2006; two counts of possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 2010
4. **Bolling, Shindon:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1994; wandering to obtain a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2003; loitering to solicit prostitution, sentenced in 2002; two counts of possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2003
5. **Covington, Jonathan:** possession of a controlled dangerous substance, distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, and possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 1991; possession of a controlled dangerous substance, two counts of possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, two counts of possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 1995
6. **Dent, Timothy:** possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1994 (amended 1995) (amended 1998); possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced 1998
7. **Evans, Ida:** possession with intent to distribute, endangering the welfare of a child, sentenced in 1999; possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1999
8. **Fortson, Jr., Walter:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone and committing a controlled dangerous substance offense while in possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2008
9. **Galvis, Alex:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance and firearms regulation violation, sentenced in 2012
10. **Geofroy, Amir:** theft and possession with intent to distribute within a school zone, sentenced in 2002
11. **Gora, Daniel:** receiving stolen property, resisting arrest, and exhibiting false identification, sentenced in 2002; two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2006
12. **Grout, Richard:** possession of a controlled dangerous substance and possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1977
13. **Hunter, Myron:** two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance in a school zone, sentenced in 1998; distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2005
14. **Johnson, Sabrina:** endangering the welfare of a child, sentenced in 2000

15. **Mazraani, Ralph:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance and distribution near public housing, sentenced in 2005
16. **McKnight, Jasmine:** possession with intent to distribute, sentenced in 2011; violation of probation, sentenced in 2013
17. **Morales, Carlos Hilario:** possession with intent to distribute, sentenced 1992
18. **Nelson, Antoine:** unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 1997; possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1998; violation of probation, sentenced in 2000; possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2000; possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, sentenced in 2001; ordinance violation, sentenced in 2004; ordinance violation, sentenced in 2006; tampering with records, sentenced in 2010; possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2010
19. **Nelson, Michael:** attempted distribution of a controlled dangerous substance and attempted distribution of a controlled dangerous substance within 500 feet of public housing, sentenced in 2008
20. **Newkirk, William:** two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance and conspiracy to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1989
21. **Nuradeen, Khayree:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1988; two counts of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1992
22. **Oaklander, Stephen:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2009
23. **Primo, Michael Sean:** arson, sentenced in 1997
24. **Ramos, Melissa:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance and conspiracy to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2001
25. **Raynes, Michael:** failure to turn over a controlled dangerous substance to law enforcement, 2004
26. **Redfern, Ularc:** possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1997; criminal mischief, sentenced in 1999
27. **Rollins, Tamika:** endangering the welfare of a child, sentenced in 2011
28. **Sanchez, Mario:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1991
29. **Simons, Suzanne:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 2004
30. **Simpson, Troy:** unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2015
31. **Smith, David:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1979
32. **Steagall, Kimberly:** simple assault, theft, and contempt of court, sentenced in 1985; prostitution, sentenced in 1985; failure to turn over a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1993; possession of a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1996; wandering to obtain a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1998; violation of probation, sentenced in 1998; prostitution, sentenced in 1998; possession of narcotics paraphernalia, sentenced in 1999; ordinance violations, sentenced in 1999
33. **Streeter, David:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced in 1995
34. **Totora-Cardinali, Lauren:** possession of a controlled dangerous substance, possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within a school zone, and conspiracy to commit health care fraud, sentenced in 2011
35. **Troia, Maria:** possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance, sentenced 2008
36. **Ward III, John:** distribution of a controlled dangerous substance and distribution of a controlled dangerous substance near public housing, sentenced in 2000

The following individuals were granted commutations of their prison sentences today:

1. **Alford, Lamar:** felony murder, murder, conspiracy, robbery, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession of a weapon, and certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2007
2. **Bacon-Vaughters, Kenneth:** felony murder, robbery, conspiracy to commit robbery, aggravated assault, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2011
3. **Dudley, Anthony Carnell:** conspiracy to commit robbery, robbery, possession of a weapon for unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon; conspiracy to commit robbery, robbery, burglary, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2002

4. **Fitch, Lashawn:** murder, conspiracy to commit robbery, robbery, and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, sentenced in 2014
5. **Fletcher, Tieheen:** murder, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 1998
6. **Florence, John:** felony murder, aggravated assault, reckless manslaughter, conspiracy, four counts of robbery, two counts of receiving stolen property, two counts of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and two counts of unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 1994
7. **Jackmon, Morris:** felony murder, murder, attempted murder, robbery, two counts of aggravated assault, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 1994
8. **Johnson, Derrick:** conspiracy to commit robbery, five counts of robbery, two counts of burglary, five counts of criminal restraint, five counts of aggravated assault, three counts of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, three counts of unlawful possession of a weapon, and certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2008
9. **Johnson, Shawn:** attempted murder and murder, sentenced in 2008
10. **Jones, Malika:** aggravated manslaughter and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, sentenced in 2024
11. **Miller, Adrian:** robbery, aggravated assault, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession of a weapon, and certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2008
12. **Murphy, Tysheim:** two counts of robbery, conspiracy, aggravated assault, terroristic threats, criminal restraint, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession of a weapon, and certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2010
13. **Prather, Franklin:** felony murder, robbery, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2009
14. **Saunders, Omar:** murder, terroristic threats, hindering, tampering, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession of a weapon, and certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2004
15. **Vaughn, Jibreel:** felony murder, robbery, and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, sentenced in 1999
16. **Williams, Jermaine:** felony murder, conspiracy, robbery, reckless manslaughter, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 2002
17. **Wise, Jeffrey:** three counts of robbery, two counts of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, two counts of unlawful possession of a weapon, and two counts of certain persons not to possess a weapon, sentenced in 2002

The following individuals were granted commutations of their parole sentences today:

1. **Morris, Julius:** murder and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, sentenced in 1977
2. **Owen, Russell:** murder, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, and unlawful possession of a weapon, sentenced in 1991

Today's announcement took place at the Santa Isabela Lutheran Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

"Thanks to Governor Murphy's historic clemency initiative, many families will be reunited with their loved ones this Thanksgiving," said **Elizabeth Mayor Chris Bollwage**. "I commend the Governor for his compassionate commitment to criminal justice reform and am grateful that Elizabeth could play a small role in today's important announcement. This moment underscores the power of second chances and the positive impact they have on our communities."

"I'm deeply grateful that our church was chosen to hold this moment of mercy and new beginnings," said **Reverend Ramón Collazo, Pastor, Santa Isabel Lutheran Church**. "Offering a home for a clemency announcement affirms our calling to embody the grace we preach. We need to use the opportunities God gives us to let people know the importance of loving one another and the pure and unconditional love of God for all of us."

Antoine Nelson, one of the 36 individuals who received a pardon today, spoke about his experiences post-incarceration, including the work he has done in violence prevention, youth development, and helping young people avoid the mistakes he once made.

Antoine Nelson was convicted of drug and weapon charges from 1997-2007 and has maintained a clean record since 2010. Nelson founded the nonprofit Sons of Someone in 2014, and has mentored hundreds of young men across New Jersey and Philadelphia – facilitating social-emotional learning programs, providing reentry guidance, and mentoring high-risk youth through weekly one-on-one sessions focused on accountability and personal growth. He also leads an annual HBCU college tour for 35-40 students, exposing them to higher education and new possibilities beyond their neighborhoods. Nelson received a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Rutgers University in 2011. He resides in Camden County and is the proud father of six, two of which are college graduates.

"I want to thank Governor Murphy and the Clemency Advisory Board for granting me a pardon today. During my time in prison as a young man, I realized that if I ever got a second chance, I would spend my life building what I once helped destroy. Since then, my journey has been centered on accountability, purpose, and community impact," **said Antoine Nelson.** "I stand here with humility, gratitude, and proof of transformation – in myself, and in the young men whose lives I'm helping redirect every single day. This pardon will not change who I am; rather, it will expand on and continue the work that I am doing in my community, providing me access to funding, partnerships, and opportunities that will allow me to employ returning citizens, reach more young people, and scale the programs that are already working."

For more information on Governor Murphy's Clemency Initiative or to apply for Executive Clemency, please visit [www.nj.gov/clemency/](https://www.nj.gov/clemency/) (<https://www.nj.gov/clemency/>).

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