

RULES GOVERNING 28 U. S. C. § 2254
CASES IN THE UNITED STATES
DISTRICT COURTS

Rule 1. Scope.

(a) *Cases involving a petition under 28 U. S. C. § 2254.*—These rules govern a petition for a writ of habeas corpus filed in a United States district court under 28 U. S. C. § 2254 by:

- (1) a person in custody under a state-court judgment who seeks a determination that the custody violates the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States; and
- (2) a person in custody under a state-court or federal-court judgment who seeks a determination that future custody under a state-court judgment would violate the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States.

(b) *Other cases.*—The district court may apply any or all of these rules to a habeas corpus petition not covered by Rule 1(a).

Rule 2. The petition.

(a) *Current custody; naming the respondent.*—If the petitioner is currently in custody under a state-court judgment, the petition must name as respondent the state officer who has custody.

(b) *Future custody; naming the respondents and specifying the judgment.*—If the petitioner is not yet in custody—but may be subject to future custody—under the state-court judgment being contested, the petition must name as respondents both the officer who has current custody and the attorney general of the state where the judgment was entered. The petition must ask for relief from the state-court judgment being contested.

(c) *Form.*—The petition must:

- (1) specify all the grounds for relief available to the petitioner;
- (2) state the facts supporting each ground;
- (3) state the relief requested;
- (4) be printed, typewritten, or legibly handwritten; and
- (5) be signed under penalty of perjury by the petitioner or by a person authorized to sign it for the petitioner under 28 U. S. C. § 2242.

(d) *Standard form.*—The petition must substantially follow either the form appended to these rules or a form prescribed by a local district-court rule. The clerk must make forms available to petitioners without charge.

(e) *Separate petitions for judgments of separate courts.*—A petitioner who seeks relief from judgments of more than one state court must file a separate petition covering the judgment or judgments of each court.

Rule 3. Filing the petition; inmate filing.

(a) *Where to file; copies; filing fee.*—An original and two copies of the petition must be filed with the clerk and must be accompanied by:

- (1) the applicable filing fee, or
- (2) a motion for leave to proceed in forma pauperis, the affidavit required by 28 U. S. C. § 1915, and a certificate from the warden or other appropriate officer of the place of confinement showing the amount of money or securities that the petitioner has in any account in the institution.

(b) *Filing.*—The clerk must file the petition and enter it on the docket.

(c) *Time to file.*—The time for filing a petition is governed by 28 U. S. C. § 2244(d).

(d) *Inmate filing.*—A paper filed by an inmate confined in an institution is timely if deposited in the institution's internal mailing system on or before the last day for filing. If an

institution has a system designed for legal mail, the inmate must use that system to receive the benefit of this rule. Timely filing may be shown by a declaration in compliance with 28 U. S. C. § 1746 or by a notarized statement, either of which must set forth the date of deposit and state that first-class postage has been prepaid.

Rule 4. Preliminary review; serving the petition and order.

The clerk must promptly forward the petition to a judge under the court's assignment procedure, and the judge must promptly examine it. If it plainly appears from the petition and any attached exhibits that the petitioner is not entitled to relief in the district court, the judge must dismiss the petition and direct the clerk to notify the petitioner. If the petition is not dismissed, the judge must order the respondent to file an answer, motion, or other response within a fixed time, or to take other action the judge may order. In every case, the clerk must serve a copy of the petition and any order on the respondent and on the attorney general or other appropriate officer of the state involved.

Rule 5. The answer and the reply.

(a) *When required.*—The respondent is not required to answer the petition unless a judge so orders.

(b) *Contents: Addressing the allegations; stating a bar.*—The answer must address the allegations in the petition. In addition, it must state whether any claim in the petition is barred by a failure to exhaust state remedies, a procedural bar, non-retroactivity, or a statute of limitations.

(c) *Contents: Transcripts.*—The answer must also indicate what transcripts (of pretrial, trial, sentencing, or post-conviction proceedings) are available, when they can be furnished, and what proceedings have been recorded but not transcribed. The respondent must attach to the answer parts of the transcript that the respondent considers relevant. The judge may order that the respondent furnish other parts of existing transcripts or that parts of untranscribed recordings be transcribed and furnished. If a transcript

cannot be obtained, the respondent may submit a narrative summary of the evidence.

(d) *Contents: Briefs on appeal and opinions.*—The respondent must also file with the answer a copy of:

(1) any brief that the petitioner submitted in an appellate court contesting the conviction or sentence, or contesting an adverse judgment or order in a post-conviction proceeding;

(2) any brief that the prosecution submitted in an appellate court relating to the conviction or sentence; and

(3) the opinions and dispositive orders of the appellate court relating to the conviction or the sentence.

(e) *Reply.*—The petitioner may submit a reply to the respondent's answer or other pleading within a time fixed by the judge.

Rule 6. Discovery.

(a) *Leave of court required.*—A judge may, for good cause, authorize a party to conduct discovery under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and may limit the extent of discovery. If necessary for effective discovery, the judge must appoint an attorney for a petitioner who qualifies to have counsel appointed under 18 U. S. C. § 3006A.

(b) *Requesting discovery.*—A party requesting discovery must provide reasons for the request. The request must also include any proposed interrogatories and requests for admission, and must specify any requested documents.

(c) *Deposition expenses.*—If the respondent is granted leave to take a deposition, the judge may require the respondent to pay the travel expenses, subsistence expenses, and fees of the petitioner's attorney to attend the deposition.

Rule 7. Expanding the record.

(a) *In general.*—If the petition is not dismissed, the judge may direct the parties to expand the record by submitting additional materials relating to the petition. The judge may require that these materials be authenticated.

(b) *Types of materials.*—The materials that may be required include letters predating the filing of the petition, documents, exhibits, and answers under oath to written interrogatories propounded by the judge. Affidavits may also be submitted and considered as part of the record.

(c) *Review by the opposing party.*—The judge must give the party against whom the additional materials are offered an opportunity to admit or deny their correctness.

Rule 8. Evidentiary hearing.

(a) *Determining whether to hold a hearing.*—If the petition is not dismissed, the judge must review the answer, any transcripts and records of state-court proceedings, and any materials submitted under Rule 7 to determine whether an evidentiary hearing is warranted.

(b) *Reference to a magistrate judge.*—A judge may, under 28 U. S. C. § 636(b), refer the petition to a magistrate judge to conduct hearings and to file proposed findings of fact and recommendations for disposition. When they are filed, the clerk must promptly serve copies of the proposed findings and recommendations on all parties. Within 10 days after being served, a party may file objections as provided by local court rule. The judge must determine de novo any proposed finding or recommendation to which objection is made. The judge may accept, reject, or modify any proposed finding or recommendation.

(c) *Appointing counsel; time of hearing.*—If an evidentiary hearing is warranted, the judge must appoint an attorney to represent a petitioner who qualifies to have counsel appointed under 18 U. S. C. § 3006A. The judge must conduct the hearing as soon as practicable after giving the attorneys adequate time to investigate and prepare. These rules do not limit the appointment of counsel under § 3006A at any stage of the proceeding.

Rule 9. Second or successive petitions.

Before presenting a second or successive petition, the petitioner must obtain an order from the appropriate court of

appeals authorizing the district court to consider the petition as required by 28 U. S. C. §§ 2244(b)(3) and (4).

Rule 10. Powers of a magistrate judge.

A magistrate judge may perform the duties of a district judge under these rules, as authorized under 28 U. S. C. § 636.

Rule 11. Applicability of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, to the extent that they are not inconsistent with any statutory provisions or these rules, may be applied to a proceeding under these rules.

PETITION FOR RELIEF FROM A CONVICTION OR
SENTENCE BY A PERSON IN STATE CUSTODY
(Petition Under 28 U. S. C. § 2254 for a Writ of Habeas Corpus)

Instructions

1. To use this form, you must be a person who is currently serving a sentence under a judgment against you in a state court. You are asking for relief from the conviction or the sentence. This form is your petition for relief.
2. You may also use this form to challenge a state judgment that imposed a sentence to be served in the future, but you must fill in the name of the state where the judgment was entered. If you want to challenge a federal judgment that imposed a sentence to be served in the future, you should file a motion under 28 U. S. C. § 2255 in the federal court that entered the judgment.
3. Make sure the form is typed or neatly written.
4. You must tell the truth and sign the form. If you make a false statement of a material fact, you may be prosecuted for perjury.
5. Answer all the questions. You do not need to cite law. You may submit additional pages if necessary. If you do not fill out the form properly, you will be asked to submit additional or correct information. If you want to submit a brief or arguments, you must submit them in a separate memorandum.
6. You must pay a fee of \$5. If the fee is paid, your petition will be filed. If you cannot pay the fee, you may ask to proceed *in forma pauperis* (as a poor person). To do that, you must fill out the last page of this form. Also, you must submit a certificate signed by an officer at the institution where you are confined showing the amount of money that the institution is holding for you. If your account exceeds \$, you must pay the filing fee.
7. In this petition, you may challenge the judgment entered by only one court. If you want to challenge a judgment entered by a different court (either in the same state or in different states), you must file a separate petition.
8. When you have completed the form, send the original and two copies to the Clerk of the United States District Court at this address:
Clerk, United States District Court for _____
Address
City, State Zip Code
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 the appointment of counsel.

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

United States District Court	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: _____

- (b) Criminal docket or case number (if you know): _____
2. (a) Date of the judgment of conviction (if you know): _____
(b) Date of sentencing: _____
3. Length of sentence: _____
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: _____

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

(1) Not guilty ☐
 (2) Guilty ☐

(3) Nolo contendere (no contest) ☐
 (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: _____

- (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: _____
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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): _____
- (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): _____

- (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: _____

- (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: _____

GROUND FOUR: _____

- (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 Four, explain why: _____

(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: _____

(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 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: _____

- (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: _____

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.

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: _____

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 ☐

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.* _____

[illegible]

(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. _____

IN FORMA PAUPERIS DECLARATION

[Insert appropriate court]

* * * * *