



**Pardons Applications in Connecticut:**  
**An Unofficial Guide for Advocates**  
**January 2012**



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## **A. Introduction, Acknowledgements, Disclaimers**

The purpose of this Guide is to provide an informal explanation to help simplify the pardons process in Connecticut, particularly for people who want to help others apply for pardons.

In this guide, we offer anecdotal evidence of what some advocates have found to be helpful in assisting others with the pardons process in Connecticut. There is no guarantee that following the advice in this guide will enhance any individual applicant's chances of receiving a pardon.

This guide was drafted by Amy Meek of the City of New Haven's Prison Reentry Initiative, drawing heavily (sometimes verbatim) from information and materials generously provided by Claudia Magnan of Statewide Legal Services. While I have tried to make this Guide as accurate and up-to-date as possible, it is neither comprehensive nor infallible. If you find an error, please contact me at 203-946-7658 or [ameek@newhavenct.net](mailto:ameek@newhavenct.net).

For official answers about the Connecticut pardons process, please contact Connecticut's Board of Pardons and Paroles, the state agency with the authority to grant pardons for criminal convictions (203-805-6605 or 800-303-2884). This guide is neither affiliated with nor endorsed by the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles.

The information provided in this guide is also not intended as legal advice for an individual situation. If you need legal assistance, please call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320 or consult an attorney.

## **B. Who Should Apply for a Pardon, and Why? The Basics of the Pardons Process**

Why are pardons important? Even after someone has served their full sentence, he or she may face many barriers to reintegrating into society as a result of a criminal record. These barriers (also called "collateral consequences of conviction") may make it difficult for someone to find employment, housing, apply for benefits, or obtain a license or permit. Connecticut's pardons system provides the opportunity for individuals with criminal convictions to show that they have been rehabilitated, to fully discharge their debt to society, and to obtain some relief from legal barriers to productive citizenship.

In Connecticut, the Board of Pardons and Paroles (we'll also refer to it simply as "the Board") is the state agency with the discretionary authority to grant pardons for criminal convictions. The Board of Pardons and Paroles is an autonomous state agency, but receives administrative support from the Department of Correction. The Board is based at 55 West Main Street, Waterbury, CT 06702. The Board's Pardons Unit can be a great resource if you have questions about the pardons process; they can be contacted at 203-805-6605 or 800-303-2884.

Many people apply for pardons in Connecticut. In 2010, the Board received 925 applications for pardons and granted slightly more than one-third of them. This means that even though most people applying for pardons were rejected, hundreds of people do receive pardons each year; Connecticut is one of only a few states that make pardons regularly available to ordinary people.

Before someone starts filling out a pardon application, however, it's important to make sure that he or she understands the eligibility requirements, the cost and work involved, the processing time, and the informal factors that may affect chances of success. Completing a pardons application involves a significant investment of time and upwards of \$50 in fees, so it may not be the right decision for everyone.

Before you start working with someone on a pardons application, make sure to discuss the following issues:

1. *Eligibility & Types of Pardons*

The Board of Pardons and Paroles has the discretionary authority to grant pardons. Applicants should always keep in mind that pardons are given at the Board's discretion, and that no applicant has the right to a pardon.

There are two types of pardons, **expungement pardons** and **provisional pardons**. The application process is pretty much the same for both kinds of pardons. You can only apply for crimes where you were charged and convicted in Connecticut; if you were convicted of a crime in a different state, you cannot apply to the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles to expunge the record.

An **expungement pardon** completely erases your official criminal record. You can only apply for an expungement pardon, however, if it has been 3 years since the date of your most recent misdemeanor conviction AND 5 years since the date of your most recent felony conviction. You also must have completed any parole or probation.

- The Board will look at your *entire* record; for example, you can't apply for an expungement of a 10-year-old felony conviction if you also have a 1-year-old misdemeanor conviction on your record.
- In calculating when you become eligible to apply for an expungement, the clock starts on the date on which you were *convicted* of the crime, not the day you were arrested or the day you were charged.

A **provisional pardon** will not erase your official criminal record. Instead, the Board will send you a certificate of relief, which is a piece of paper stating that you are employable despite your record, and asking prospective employers to disregard your record in deciding whether to hire you.

- You can apply for a provisional pardon at any time, no matter how recent your convictions are.
- Many advocates discourage people from applying for provisional pardons, however, because they find that many employers do not understand what a provisional pardon means. A provisional pardon does not erase your record; in fact, the certificate may list all of the crimes for which you have been convicted, which may be difficult for a prospective employer to ignore in making a hiring decision.
  - NOTE: The Board of Pardons and Paroles is considering changes intended to make provisional pardons more effective. For the most up-to-date information on provisional pardons, contact the Board directly at 203-805-6605 or 800-303-2884.
- One case in which a provisional pardon may be useful is if you plan to apply to a state agency for a license relating to employment (such as a taxicab license or a nursing license). Connecticut state licensing boards may be more

likely to consider provisional pardons in making licensing decisions, but keep in mind that the provisional pardon still doesn't erase your record.

- Provisional pardons use the same application as expungements: to apply for a provisional pardon, you simply check a box on the first page of the application that says you would like to be considered for a provisional pardon if you don't receive an expungement. So if you're applying for an expungement, it never hurts to check the box also asking to be considered for a provisional pardon.

## 2. *Costs and Effort*

Applying for a pardon isn't free. Although there is no submission fee, many parts of the application require fees to complete. The most expensive part of completing a pardon application is usually the \$50 fee the state Department of Public Safety charges to obtain your official criminal record. (In some cases, you may be able to apply to have this fee waived; for more information, see Section E on Stage 2 of the Prep Packet, which deals with getting your official criminal record). There are also usually fees for other parts of the application: fingerprinting usually costs \$5 to \$20 depending on your town of residence, police reports may cost as much as \$1 per page, and notarizing the application may cost several dollars as well.

- In all, applicants may have to spend about \$75 to complete the application.

Applying for a pardon also requires an investment of time and energy. You will need to write an essay, get at least three letters of reference, and apply for documents and records that may take weeks to process. Many applicants find that it takes them several months to get everything together for their application.

- Some of the documents and records you need are only good for 1 year after you receive them, so you may want to wait to start the application until you're equipped to complete it within a year. For example, the official criminal record you include with your application must be dated within 1 year of the date you submit your application. If your official criminal record is older than 1 year, you will have to get a new one (and pay another \$50 fee!)

## 3. *Processing Time*

Once you've completed and submitted a pardons application, it can take the Board of Pardons and Paroles about one year to make a decision. First, the Board will check to make sure that the application documents are complete and in order. Second, the Board will start to fact-check the information submitted; they will contact references, any victims, volunteer organizations, employers, and so on.

Once the Board has checked through the application, they will decide whether to grant the application without a hearing, deny it without a hearing, or request a hearing. In 2010, over a third of applications were denied without the opportunity for a hearing, and about one-quarter of applicants were required to attend a hearing before the Board made a decision.

If you are asked to attend a hearing, your chances of getting a pardon are good: about 80 percent of individuals who attended their hearing in 2010 were granted a pardon. However, applicants should keep in mind that they will have to find the time to attend

the hearing and that it may take even longer for the Board to make a decision after the hearing.

#### 4. *Chances of Success*

It is impossible to predict in advance whether a given person will succeed in getting a pardon. Remember that pardons are given at the Board's discretion, and are not a right. But there are factors that may affect your chances of success, and these should be considered in deciding whether or not to apply for a pardon. If the Board of Pardons and Paroles denies your pardon application, it must give reasons, such as:

which may include:

- Being a registered sex offender: Registered sex offenders are very rarely granted pardons in Connecticut.
- Seriousness of the crime: The more serious the crimes on someone's record, the less likely he or she will be granted a pardon. Pardons are rarely if ever granted for murder or manslaughter. Convictions for violent felonies are taken very seriously by the Board. If someone was incarcerated for many years as a result of a conviction, the Board may see that as a sign that the offense was very serious.
- Length of criminal history: If you have many convictions on your record, particularly if they stretch out over a long period of time, you are less likely to be granted a pardon. Also, if you have many repetitive incidents of crimes against persons (such as repeated robbery convictions) the Board may be more likely to cite public safety as a reason to deny you.
- Injury and impact on the victim(s) or victim's family: If the victim of the crime opposes a pardon application, the Board will be much more likely to deny the application.
- Poor performance on community supervision: Repeat violations of probation or parole may make it more difficult to obtain a pardon.
- Failure to participate in enough treatment programs: You are more likely to be granted a pardon if you can show that you successfully completed relevant treatment and training programs.
  - If your record is drug- or alcohol-related, you should be able to show that you completed a rehabilitation program and that you have a good record of sobriety since then. In addition, if you have been convicted of a felony DUI charge, you should make sure to pay any fines or complete any other requirements imposed by the Department of Motor Vehicles before applying.
  - If your record involves violence, you should be able to show that you successfully completed relevant treatment such as domestic violence classes, anger management, and/or parenting classes. You should also be able to show that the treatment "worked" – in other words, that you have not been convicted of a crime since completing the program.

- You may also be able to increase your chances of receiving a pardon by participating in other kinds of programs, such as job training programs, education programs, and training seminars. Participating in these programs shows the Board that you will be employable if you do receive a pardon.
- Minimizing responsibility for your actions: If you do not show remorse and accept responsibility for your actions, the Board will rarely if ever grant you a pardon. Even if you feel that you are innocent of the crime for which you were convicted, you can improve your chances of getting a pardon by identifying and acknowledging ways in which you could have acted differently.
  - Volunteering for good causes is another good way to show that you take responsibility for your actions. Giving back to the community can help you show that you are serious about discharging the debt to society caused by the conviction.

### **C. Simplifying the Pardons Application Process: Using the 5-Stage Prep Packet**

Connecticut's pardons application is 17 pages long and can take several months to complete. It's also printed in very small type, so it can seem intimidating or complicated at first.

In order to simplify the process, we have divided the application into 5 stages, each of which has its own set of forms to fill out. The 5-stage Prep Packet is printed at the end of this guide. Once you complete one stage, you can move on to the next one. Make sure that the information is complete at each stage; the Board is very strict about wanting you to provide all of the information they ask for.

After all 5 packets are complete, you can type or neatly print the application (typing is usually best) on the forms provided by the Board of Pardons and Paroles. Then put the pages and documents in order, and check over the pardons package to make sure it's complete and all parts are up-to-date before submitting it.

### **D. Stage 1 of the Prep Packet: Filling Out Basic Information, Employment, Education**

The first stage of the Prep Packet starts with basic contact information as well as questions about who lives in the household and whether you are current on child support.

#### *1. Education*

The application also asks for details about your education, including schools you've attended and training courses you've taken. For each one, you should try to include a certificate, diploma, or other paperwork to show that you attended.

#### *2. Employment*

Employment is an important section. Often, people leave parts of the Employment section blank, but it's important to list all the information for each of your last three employers, including the last name of your manager, address and phone. The application also asks what kind of employment you are seeking if you get the pardon; it's helpful to be specific about the job or career you want to seek if possible.

### 3. *Substance Abuse and Treatment Programs*

Substance abuse and treatment programs are another important section of Stage 1. You need to list many important details of the programs you attended, including the dates of treatment or counseling, as well as the full name, address, and phone number of the treatment program you attended. Again, you should include copies of certificates or proof of participation if possible to show that you attended.

#### **E. Stage 2 of the Prep Packet: Getting the Official Criminal Record & Police Reports**

The next stage of the Prep Packet is to get your official record and any police reports for convictions where you were arrested within the last 10 years. This is the only part of the application that involves fees, as much as \$50 to \$100 total.

The official criminal record is an important part of the pardon application. The Board of Pardons requires that you submit an official record issued by the Connecticut State Police Bureau of Identification, which is part of the state's Department of Public Safety (DPS). The Board will not accept a printout from the courts, a police department or a private background-check company. You'll also need the information from your official record to complete the next stage of the Prep Packet (Stage 3), which requires you to write a detailed explanation of each conviction on your record (including details like docket numbers and disposition dates, which you can find in your official criminal record).

##### 1. *Fingerprints*

In order to apply for your official criminal record, you will have to get your fingerprints taken.

To get your fingerprints, you can go to the local police department for the city or town where you live. Fees and hours often change, so make sure to call ahead to find out when to go, how much it costs, and what you'll need to bring. Usually, the local police department will ask you to bring a photo ID to prove your identity and show that you are a local resident.

- If you are a New Haven resident, you can get fingerprints taken at the New Haven Police headquarters at 1 Union Ave. When last we checked, it cost \$20. Call ahead (203-946-6316) to confirm the hours and fees.

You should ask the police to use the green DPS 125c form when they take your fingerprints. Your local police department should have it on hand; if they don't, you can call the State Police Bureau of Identification at 860-685-8480 and ask them to send you the green DPS 125c form.

You can also get your fingerprints taken at the State Police Bureau of Identification (1111 Country Club Road in Middletown), which will charge you a \$15 fee. You should call ahead at 860-685-8480 to check on the hours, the fees, and what you'll need to bring. If you get your fingerprints taken at the State Police Bureau of Identification, you can drop off the form to obtain your official criminal record (see next section) in person; however, you'll still have to wait to receive your record by mail.

##### 2. *Official Criminal Record*

Once you've gotten your fingerprints, you are ready to apply for your official criminal record. To request your official criminal record, you must fill out the "Criminal History Request for a Pardon" form (included in the Stage 2 Prep Packet), which asks you for your name, address, and phone number, as well as any maiden names, alias names, or alias dates of birth you used in the

past. The state charges a \$50 fee for the official criminal record, but in some cases you may be able to apply for a fee waiver.

#### Indigency Requests for Fee Waivers If You Can't Afford the Fee

If you are indigent (very poor) and can't afford the \$50 fee for the official criminal record, you may be able to ask the state to waive the fee. First, you must request the fee waiver application. Write to the Legal Affairs Unit at DPS and ask them to send you the fee waiver application forms for public records. Make sure to include your mailing address. A sample letter is included in the Stage 2 prep packet. Mail the letter to:

Legal Affairs Unit, DPS  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457

The Legal Affairs Unit will then send you a fee waiver request and affidavit form. The form will ask about your employment status, weekly income, and the balances for any checking or savings accounts you have, as well as your estimated monthly expenses. You must (1) complete the form, (2) have it notarized, and enclose (3) copies of all account statements from the last six months and (4) the completed "Criminal History Request for a Pardon" form and (5) your fingerprints. If you have questions, you can contact the Legal Affairs Unit at 1-860-685-8303.

#### Records Requests If You Can Afford the Fee

If you can afford the \$50 fee, you should send (1) the completed "Criminal History Request for a Pardon" form along with (2) your fingerprints and (3) a \$50 check or money order made out to "DPS" to:

Department of Public Safety  
Bureau of Identification  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457-2389

It usually takes 2 to 4 weeks for the State Police Bureau of Identification to mail you the record. They will not allow you to pick up the record in person. If you have questions, contact them by phone at (860) 685-8480.

### *3. Police Reports*

Once you receive your official criminal record, you should start applying to police departments for arrest reports for convictions within the last 10 years. You must submit copies of these police reports with your pardons application. They may also help you to recall details of convictions when you write your detailed explanations of each conviction in Stage 3 of the Prep Packet.

Start by looking through your official criminal record to find any criminal convictions for which you were arrested within the last 10 years (the date will be labeled "Arrest Date"). You must obtain the detailed arrest report from the local police department that arrested you. Make sure to ask for the detailed arrest report (usually several pages), not just the record of the arrest.

If you don't remember who arrested you for a particular conviction, that information is listed on the official criminal record under "Agency" for each conviction. The police case number is also listed on the official criminal record.

- Police departments usually charge a fee for arrest reports (often per page). Depending on the length and number of the arrest reports, you may have to spend \$25 to \$50 to get copies of every report you need.

### **F. Stage 3 of the Prep Packet: Writing an Explanation of Crimes**

Once you've gotten your official criminal record and arrest reports from the last 10 years, you can move to the third stage of the Prep Packet: writing a detailed explanation of each conviction on your record. Go through each conviction listed on your official criminal record, starting with the most recent, and provide an explanation for each one.

The Stage 3 Prep Packet contains separate pages for each conviction on your record. If you have more than 7 convictions on your record, you'll need to make extra copies of these pages.

For each conviction, you must remember what was going on in your life at the time, why the crime was committed, and details about what happened. If there were any victims of your crime, you should try to remember their names, approximate ages, and any contact information. But **DO NOT** attempt to contact any victim!

You may have trouble remembering exactly what happened, but you have to write down something reasonable for each conviction, no matter how long ago it happened. You can reread the police arrest reports you got for Stage 2 to jog your memory.

For each conviction, you should make sure to write something down that shows you take responsibility for your actions. Even if you were wrongly accused or took the blame for someone else, you should still try to identify what part you played in getting into that situation and how you could have acted differently. Think about what you have learned (or should have learned) from each incident, and write that down.

### **G. Stage 4 of the Prep Packet: Writing Essays & Showing Community Involvement**

Stage 4 of the Prep Packet involves writing essays and describing your community involvement. This is the part for you to tell the Board of Pardons why you want a pardon, and also how you have changed since your criminal activity. This is a very important part of your application; it will help your chances of getting a pardon if your essays show remorse and your involvements show that you are giving back to your community.

It can be hard to write these essays, but there are many organizations (see Section L) that may be able to help you polish your essay. The most important first step is to write down your thoughts in your own words. Then you can seek out others to help you clean up the wording and spelling if needed.

#### *1. Essay #1: Purpose of Application*

The first essay question asks you about your reasons for seeking a pardon. Please state why you want a pardon and what you hope it will change in your life. Do you want a better job? Do you want to participate in activities that you are barred from? Do you want to be a role model for your children?

Whatever your reasons for wanting a pardon, explain them in your own words. Don't worry about spelling or using the right words. Others can help clean up the wording for you if needed.

## 2. *Essay #2: How Have You Changed Since Your Criminal Activity?*

The second essay question asks how you've changed since your criminal activity. This is your chance to tell the Board every good thing that you have accomplished since your most recent conviction. This is a very important part of the application and you should spend some time making sure to tell the Board who you are now, and how you are not the same person who committed those crimes.

Again, don't worry about spelling or using the right words. Others can help clean up the wording for you if necessary. The most important thing is to explain in your own words the positive things you've done since your last conviction.

## 3. *Volunteering, Charitable Activities, and/or Community Involvement*

The last part of the Stage 4 Prep Packet asks you to describe your charitable, volunteer, church or civic activities or other contributions you have made to the community since your conviction. The Board likes to see people who have volunteered and given back to their communities. In this section, you can tell them about all of the good deeds you have done.

For each of your activities, you should give the name and contact information for the organization or person you volunteered with, an explanation of what you did, and the dates you participated in the activity. The Board will check up on what you say, so try to give up-to-date contact information to make it easy for them get in touch with people who can confirm your involvement.

## **H. Stage 5 of the Prep Packet: Getting References, Certificates, & Other Documents**

The fifth stage of the Pardons Prep Packet involves getting your letters of reference, certificates, and other documents you need to complete the application.

### 1. *Letters of Reference*

You must get at least 3 letters of reference. The forms that your references must fill out are included in the Stage 5 Prep Packet, along with a sample cover page that gives them advice on how to write a letter of reference. You can have your references write letters on separate pages, but the letter must be accompanied by the forms and the forms must be filled out and signed.

In thinking about who to ask for a reference letter, remember that the Pardon Board checks all references, so it's better to use someone who can easily be reached. Pick people who know you well and can speak about the good things you've done. Your references don't need to have impressive titles, they just need to know you well.

Having more than 3 letters can strengthen your application, but keep in mind that only one of your letters of reference can be from a family member.

When you ask your references to write a letter for you, make sure to write out for them every one of your convictions, or give them a copy of your official criminal record. The Board wants to know that your references are aware of your full criminal history. Remind your references that any letter they write must list all of your convictions. The sample cover page in the Stage 5 Prep Packet provides space to list your convictions.

The sample cover page also gives some advice to your references about how to write an effective letter on your behalf. Your references should state how long they have known you and under what circumstances. They should also state why they think you should get a pardon, including

any good deeds they have seen you do. And again, they must list all of your convictions in the letter. References must sign and date the letter, and they should provide a reliable phone number so that the Board of Pardons can reach them easily.

### *2. Certificates, Diplomas, Etc.*

You should also collect any certificates from programs you have attended, diplomas, resumes, or anything else that you want the Board to know about you. If you completed any treatment programs, training seminars, classes, groups, and so on, look for the documents that show you attended or graduated.

Make copies of these documents. Don't send the originals.

### *3. Probation Letter*

If you have ever been on probation in Connecticut, you must get a letter from the Office of Adult Probation showing the date when your probation was completed or terminated.

To contact your local adult probation office, you can access a directory online at <http://www.jud.ct.gov/directory/directory/adultprob.htm> or call the Central Office of Adult Probation at 860-721-2100.

In New Haven, you can contact the local office by phone at 203-789-7876 or in person at their offices at 867 State Street.

### *4. Notarizing Page 7 of the Application*

You must get page 7 of the pardon application notarized, meaning you must take it to a notary public. Page 7 is reprinted at the end of the Stage 5 Prep Packet. A notary public is someone who is legally authorized to witness signatures and certify that a document is valid. You can find notaries at many places, including FedEx and UPS stores. Make sure to bring a photo ID and at least one other document with your name, such as a piece of mail, a Social Security card, a DSS card, or a letter from a caseworker.

## **I. Completing the Pardons Application: Typing, Assembling and Double-Checking**

Once you have assembled all of the pieces for the 5 stages of the Pardons Prep Packet, you're ready to put them together in a complete application package. First, you should type (or neatly write) all of your answers in the official pardons application form. Second, you should assemble all of the papers for your application package in the proper order and double-check that you've included the right pieces in the right order. Once you've done that, you are ready to submit your pardons application!

### *1. Typing the Application*

First, you should gather up all 5 parts of the Pardons Prep Packet and type them into the pardons application form using Microsoft Word or a compatible word-processing program. You can download the pardons application form in Word .doc format from the Board of Pardons website (at <http://www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/PDF/form/PardonFormerOffender.doc>). Just click on the gray area in each box and type in the answer, being careful to make sure that the text doesn't spill over to multiple lines in each box.

- To check or un-check boxes on the Word document, just right-click and select "Properties," and choose "Checked" or "Not checked" under the Default Value option.

If it's not possible for you to type up the application using your own computer or someone else's, you can also neatly hand-write the application.

- Make sure to fill in your last name and date of birth at the bottom of each page.

### 2. *Assembling & Double-Checking Your Pardons Application*

When you've finished typing up the application, it's time to print it out and start assembling all the pieces. DO NOT staple or bind your petition; use paperclips or binder clips if you need to keep sections together. Here's a checklist to make sure you don't miss anything:

- Make sure there is an answer to every question on the application
- Each page should have your last name and date of birth filled out at the bottom
- Photocopy your driver's license or state ID, with a note if your address or phone has changed
- Page 7 of the application must be notarized
- Check the date of your official criminal record to make sure it won't be older than 1 year by the time the Board of Pardons receives it
- Check the box to be considered for a provisional pardon if you are denied for an expungement pardon

Arrange the application package in the following order:

- The Pardon application, with page 7 notarized
- The official criminal history record from CT State Police Bureau of Identification
- The police report(s) for any arrest that resulted in a conviction in the last 10 years
- The letter from the Office of Adult Probation showing the date when your probation was completed or terminated
- 3 or more reference questionnaires (letters may be included, as long as they indicate that they understand that you are applying for a pardon and all of the crimes you have been convicted of are listed)
- A supervising officer questionnaire (completed by your current parole/probation officer ONLY if you are a current offender applying for a Provisional Pardon)
- A photocopy of your driver's license or State ID (with a note for address changes)
- Copies of other documents you wish the Board to consider (certificates, resumes, evaluations, etc.). Do not send original documents; make copies and send those!

### 3. *Submitting the Application*

After you've finished assembling the application, make a copy of the entire package for your personal records.

Take the package to the post office so you can make sure to get the postage rates right, and mail it to:

The Board of Pardons and Paroles  
55 West Main St, Suite 520  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
Attn: Pardons Unit.

You may want to use Certified mail/return receipt to verify the date the Board receives your package.

## **J. How to Prepare for a Pardons Hearing**

If you receive a letter from the Board of Pardons inviting you to a pardon hearing, that means you have a good chance of receiving your pardon. It's important to prepare for the hearing, because your performance at the hearing can make a big difference to your chances of getting a pardon.

The Connecticut Board of Pardons looks for individuals who can show that they have been rehabilitated, that they have good moral character, and that they are giving back to the community. Some signs of character that the Board may be looking for include:

- **Employment:** The Board likes to see people with steady jobs or a strong employment record, because it shows reliability and hard work. If you haven't been working, make sure to talk about any trainings or education you've gone through to make yourself more employable.
- **Public service:** The Board likes to see that you are giving back to your community. Any type of helpful volunteer work shows that you care about contributing to your community.
- **Compliance with treatment:** Many people who have been in legal trouble may have suffered from substance abuse disorders or other emotional difficulties. Not everyone needs treatment, but completing addiction recovery programs, anger management classes, parenting courses, or other kinds of treatment can help show the Board that you are rehabilitated.

Here are some tips for preparing for your pardon hearing:

- **Don't miss your hearing date!** This is NOT an appointment that can be missed or rescheduled. Missing your pardon hearing can seriously damage your chances of getting a pardon. If you have a serious reason why you cannot go to the hearing on the assigned day, call the Board of Pardons at 203-805-6643 and ask to be rescheduled.
- **Bring a picture ID.** The Board will ask you for a picture ID, so make sure to bring that with you on the day of the hearing.
- **Allow plenty of time to get to the hearing.** You should plan to arrive at the courtroom 30 minutes before your hearing time is scheduled. Think about traffic, weather, parking, frequency of the bus or other transportation, and give yourself plenty of extra time. You may need to wait in lines at the courthouse, and finding the right building and room can take time as well. If you're running late, you may feel

anxious and unable to do your best. Also, the hearing may last longer than you think, so avoid parking at a meter.

- **Write down and practice what you want to say.** The first question you'll be asked is, "Tell the Board why you think you should get a pardon." This is your chance to explain to the Board why you are no longer a danger and why you won't commit more crimes. They want to see what kind of person you are now. Mention family, work, education, any treatment or programs you have taken, and what these things have meant to you. Practice with a friend. If your friend doesn't understand you or find your statements convincing, think about how you can improve your presentation.
- **Dress nicely.** Wear conservative clothing, preferably with a collared shirt. It's not appropriate to wear shorts, blue jeans, t-shirts, plunging necklines, or torn clothing to the hearing. Lawyers must wear suits. You don't need to buy new clothes for the hearing, but remember that the courthouse is a formal place and you should be conservative and respectful in your dress and behavior.
- **Don't bring children.** Unless the court has told you to bring your children to the hearing, make arrangements for someone else to take care of your children for the day.
- **Follow proper conduct in the courtroom.** Some behaviors aren't allowed because they are noisy, distracting or disrespectful. You cannot: chew gum, eat, read a newspaper, sleep, wear a hat, listen to earphones, carry a cell phone or pager unless it's turned off, have a camera or camera phone, or carry a weapon.

### **K. What to Do If Your Pardons Application is Denied**

If your pardon application gets denied by the Board of Pardons, the letter of denial will specify how long you have to wait before you can reapply. You can usually reapply after 1 year has passed since the denial.

The letter of denial you receive from the Board will specify the reason or reasons you were denied. Take a look at the reason(s) provided in deciding whether to reapply in a year. If the reasons are things that you can fix, then you may be able to address the issues and reapply once they are fixed. For example, you may be able to address reasons such as: failure to participate in treatment programs; failure to disclose your full criminal history; minimizing responsibility for your actions; not providing sufficient offense details; or insufficient time having passed.

On the other hand, some reasons given by the Board may be difficult or impossible for you to change in a year. In these cases, you may not improve your chances if you reapply in a year. For example, you might decide not to reapply if the Board gives a reason such as: being a registered sex offender; the length of your criminal history; the serious nature of your offense(s); injury and impact on the victim(s) or victim's family; or opposition from the Office of the State's Attorney.

If you want to reapply, use the 1-year waiting period to make yourself a better candidate for a pardon. Take classes to further your education and enroll in programs to improve your job skills. Enroll or continue in treatment programs for alcohol, drug, or anger management problems if needed. Volunteer in your community. And make sure to collect documents to show what activities you're involved in.

When you reapply for a pardon, you're allowed to reuse your old letters of reference. You may want to get additional new letters of reference as well. However, you'll need to get a new copy of your criminal record and you must complete a new application.

### **L. Other Pardons Resources in Connecticut**

For official answers about the pardons process in Connecticut, you must contact the Board of Pardons and Paroles directly. Generally, the staff answering the phone are very helpful in addressing any questions you may have about the pardons process.

#### **Board of Pardons and Paroles**

55 West Main St, Suite 520

Waterbury, CT 06702

**Phone:** (203) 805-6643

**Web:** <http://www.ct.gov/doc/bopp>

There are also a number of organizations in Connecticut that help people prepare and submit pardons applications. If you need additional help preparing an application, please contact any of the following agencies:

#### **Statewide Legal Services, Pardons Project**

**Contact:** Claudia Magnan

**Phone:** 860-852-1252 or 800-453-3320 x3009

**Email:** [cmagnan@slsct.org](mailto:cmagnan@slsct.org)

*Helps individuals prepare pardons applications in Connecticut. To be eligible for assistance, at least 7 years must have passed since any felonies and 5 years must have passed since any misdemeanors.*

#### **Connecticut Pardons Team, Inc.**

P.O. Box 807, 307 Main Street

Norwich, CT 06360

**Phone:** 866-251-3810 or 860-823-1571

*Provides information and education to help individuals with criminal conviction histories determine their eligibility to apply for a non-inmate pardon.*

#### **City of New Haven's Prison Reentry Initiative**

165 Church Street, Second Floor

New Haven, CT 06510

**Phone:** 203-946-7658 or 203-946-7665

**Website:** <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Mayor/PrisonReentry.asp>

*Works with community partners, state agencies and other reentry stakeholders to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated residents into the New Haven community. Offers referrals to reentry services (including housing and jobs) and help with identification, pardons, and other questions.*

### **M. Appendix: Pardons Prep Packet**

See the following pages for the 5 prep packets.

**Pardons Prep Packet – Stage 1**  
**Basic Information**

- This is the first part of the Pardon application. This stage asks you for information about:
  - Your basic contact information & your household
  - Your educational background
  - Your employment history
  - Any past treatment programs for substance abuse or other types of counseling
  
- The Pardon Board is very strict about the information that they ask for. They need everything to be complete. Often, people leave blanks in the Employment section. We really need all the information for each of your last three employers, including the last name of your manager, address and phone. If you don't know, please find out by calling them.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pardons Prep Packet, Stage 1

| <b>SECTION 1: Applicant Information:</b>  |                         |   |        |   |  |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------|---|--|
| Last Name   |                         | First Name                                |        | Middle Name   |  |
|   |                         |   |        |   |  |
| Date of Birth:  | Social Security Number: | Place of Birth:                           |        | Gender:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Male<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> Female |  |
| ADDRESS (Number and Street):  |                         |   |        | Apartment Number / Floor  |  |
| CITY:   |                         |   | STATE: | Zip Code:   |  |
| HOME PHONE NUMBER:<br>(    )    -   |                         | BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:<br>(    )    -     |        | EXTENSION:  |  |
| CELL PHONE NUMBER:<br>(    )    -   |                         | E-MAIL ADDRESS:                           |        |   |  |
| Do you have a Driver's License:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                         | If yes, issuing state:<br>License Number: |        |   |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2: Family Information**

**For your current residence, please list all members of your household below:**

| Name: | Age: | Relationship: |
|-------|------|---------------|
| 1.    |      |               |
| 2.    |      |               |
| 3.    |      |               |
| 4.    |      |               |
| 5.    |      |               |

How long have you lived at your current address?

|                         |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Current Marital Status: | <input type="checkbox"/> Single  | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced  | <input type="checkbox"/> Widow   | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Unionized |
|                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated | <input type="checkbox"/> Widower |  |

| Current Spouse / Partner's Name | Current Address (if different from your current address) | Current Phone Number |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------|
|                                 |  |                      |

How many children do you have?

Are you current with all court ordered child support (if applicable)?  
 Yes     No     Not Applicable

If you answered no, what is the reason for your failure to pay and describe any agreement you have made to satisfy your payment obligation:

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

| <b>SECTION 3: Aliases and Other Names</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| State in full every other name by which you have been known, including the reason for your use of another name, and the dates during which you were so known (i.e., include your maiden name, name by a former marriage, aliases, and nicknames): |  |
| 1.  |  |
| 2.  |  |
| 3.  |  |

| <b>SECTION 4: Previous Application History</b>  |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Have you applied for pardon in the past? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                 |
| If yes, please state the month(s) and year(s) you applied:  |                                 |
| Was a pardon granted?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                 | If yes, type of Pardon granted: |
| The date the Board suggested you may reapply:   |                                 |

| <b>SECTION 5: Citizenship Information:</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| Are you a citizen of the United States of America? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| If you answered no, country of citizenship:   |  |

| <b>SECTION 6: Pistol Permit Restoration:</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| If a pardon is granted, are you requesting the restoration of your right to obtain a pistol permit? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| If yes, please explain why you are seeking a permit to carry a handgun:  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 7: Educational Background:**  
Please check the highest grade completed:

|                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1  | <input type="checkbox"/> 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> 4  | <input type="checkbox"/> 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6  | <input type="checkbox"/> 7  | <input type="checkbox"/> 8  | <input type="checkbox"/> 9  | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24+ |

Please list any education or other special training you have received or are currently attending. Include the school name, dates attended, degrees received, and any honors achieved. If you attended training, note the type of training and agency that provided the training. **You should attach a copy of any certificates, diplomas or transcripts received to this packet.**

| School Name | Dates Attended | Degrees Received | Honors Achieved |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
|             |                |                  |                 |
|             |                |                  |                 |
|             |                |                  |                 |
|             |                |                  |                 |
|             |                |                  |                 |

**SECTION 8: Military Record:**

|  |                                 |   |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Were you ever in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                 | If you answered yes, please answer the following: |
| Branch of service:   | Date of entry into active duty: | Date of Discharge:                                |
| Did you serve in the National Guard?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No               | Type of Discharge:              | Rank at Discharge:                                |

**Attach a copy of your separation papers (Form DD-214) or your military ID (DD Form 2) if you are currently active.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Employment History

List your past 3 employers, starting with your present employer and working back. For each period you were unemployed, give dates of that period and reason. **You should attach a current pay stub or W-2 form to verify your present employment.**

#### 1. Current or Most Recent Job:

|  |                    |                                  |                             |  |  |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Official Job title (Start with current or most recent job) |                    | Company Name                     |                             | Type of Business   |  |
| Title and name of Immediate Supervisor                     |                    | What department did you work in? |                             | Business' Phone Number<br>(     )     -  |  |
| Employed From<br>(Mo.) (Yr.)                               | To:<br>(Mo.) (Yr.) | Total<br>(Years. Mos.)           | Hours<br>Worked<br>Per Week | May we Contact<br>this employer?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| Business' full address                                     |                    |                                  | Reason for Leaving          |  |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What job did you have before your current/most recent job? And was there a gap in your employment before you got your most recent job?

▪ **Reason for gap in employment (if any):**

|  |                    |                                  |                             |  |  |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Official Job title (Start with current or most recent job) |                    | Company Name                     |                             | Type of Business   |  |
| Title and name of Immediate Supervisor                     |                    | What department did you work in? |                             | Business' Phone Number<br>(     )     -  |  |
| Employed From<br>(Mo.) (Yr.)                               | To:<br>(Mo.) (Yr.) | Total<br>(Years. Mos.)           | Hours<br>Worked<br>Per Week | May we Contact<br>this employer?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| Business' full address                                     |                    |                                  | Reason for Leaving          |  |  |

3. What job did you have before that? And was there a gap in your employment?

▪ **Reason for gap in employment (if any):**

|  |                    |                                  |                             |  |  |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Official Job title (Start with current or most recent job) |                    | Company Name                     |                             | Type of Business   |  |
| Title and name of Immediate Supervisor                     |                    | What department did you work in? |                             | Business' Phone Number<br>(     )     -  |  |
| Employed From<br>(Mo.) (Yr.)                               | To:<br>(Mo.) (Yr.) | Total<br>(Years. Mos.)           | Hours<br>Worked<br>Per Week | May we Contact<br>this employer?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| Business' full address                                     |                    |                                  | Reason for Leaving          |  |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment Desired**

|  |
|--|
| If you are applying for a provisional pardon or requesting an expungement pardon for employment purposes, what type of employment are you seeking? |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

**Substance Abuse and Treatment Information:**

**Have you ever been addicted to or abused alcohol or drugs of any type?**

**Yes**    **No**

*If yes, describe the type and dates of the addiction or abuse:*

| What were you addicted to? | What date did you start abusing this substance? | When did you stop using? |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
|                            |   |                          |
|                            |   |                          |
|                            |   |                          |
|                            |   |                          |
|                            |   |                          |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever sought or participated in counseling, treatment, or a rehabilitation program for drug use or alcohol abuse (i.e. AA, NA, 12 Step Programs etc.)?**       Yes     No

*If yes, please specify below. (Use more pages if necessary).*

*Attach any certificates or proof of participation you have.*

| <b>Drug/Alcohol Abuse Treatment Program 1</b>   |                        |   |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |   |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |   |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |   |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |   |

| <b>Drug/Alcohol Abuse Treatment Program 2</b>   |                        |   |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |   |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |   |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |   |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |   |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pardons Prep Packet, Stage 1

### **Drug/Alcohol Abuse Treatment Programs Continued:**

| <b>Drug/Alcohol Abuse Treatment Program 3</b>   |                        |   |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |   |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |   |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |   |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |   |

| <b>Drug/Alcohol Abuse Treatment Program 4</b>   |                        |   |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |   |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |   |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |   |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |   |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is there any other type of treatment you have participated in that you would like the Board of Pardons to know about?**  Yes  No  
*If yes, please specify below. (Use more pages if necessary).  
Attach any certificates or proof of participation you have.*

| <b>Other Treatment Program 1</b>  |                        |  |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(     )     - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |  |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |  |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |  |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |  |

| <b>Other Treatment Program 2</b>  |                        |  |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Program Name:   | Program Address:       | Program Phone Number:<br>(     )     - |
| Who did you see there? (List names of doctor, counselor, clinician, case manager, etc.)             |                        |  |
| Describe the help you received:   |                        |  |
| Date you started program:   | Date you left program: |  |
| Did you successfully complete the program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                        |  |

## **Pardons Prep Packet – Stage 2** **Official Criminal Record**

- This is the second part of the Pardon application, in which you will need to get your official criminal record and any police reports from the last 10 years.
- This stage of the application costs up to \$100 to complete; this is the only stage involving fees. An official criminal record is only good for 1 year after it's issued, so don't apply for it until you can complete the application in a year.
- If you are indigent and can't afford the \$50 fee for the official criminal record, you can request fee waiver forms from the state by writing to:

**Legal Affairs Unit, DPS  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457**

Make sure to include your mailing address. A sample letter is on the next page.

### **Complete and check off the following 3 steps:**

- **STEP 1 (FINGERPRINTS, \$5 to \$20):** Get your fingerprints taken at your local Police Department. Call ahead and make sure to bring a photo ID.
  - Usually, you have to go to the police department for your city or town of residence. Call ahead to find out the hours, fees, and what you need to bring. Ask the police to use the green DPS 125c form.
  - If you are a New Haven resident, you can get fingerprints taken at the NHPD headquarters at 1 Union Ave. When last we checked, it cost \$20. Call ahead (203-946-6316) to confirm the hours and fees.
- **STEP 2 (OFFICIAL CRIMINAL RECORD, \$50):** Use the form on pg. 3.
  - Send (1) your fingerprints, (2) the completed form on the next page, and (3) a \$50 check or money order, made out to DPS, to:  
**Department of Public Safety  
Bureau of Identification  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457-2389**
  - It usually takes about 2 to 4 weeks to get your record from DPS.
- **STEP 3 (POLICE REPORTS):** For convictions from the last 10 years, you must get arrest reports from the arresting police department.
  - Look at your criminal record (from step 2) to find out the arrest dates of each conviction. (It's labeled as "Arrest Date").
  - For any arrest date in the last 10 years, call the local police department that arrested you and ask for the detailed arrest report.

## SAMPLE LETTER TO REQUEST FEE WAIVER FORMS

- If you are indigent and can't afford the \$50 fee for the official criminal record, you may be able to ask the state to waive the fee.
  - Write to the Department of Public Safety's Legal Affairs Unit and ask them to send you the fee waiver application forms. Make sure to include your mailing address. A sample letter is below – you can fill in your information, cut at the dotted line, and mail it to:
 

**Legal Affairs Unit, DPS**  
**1111 Country Club Road**  
**Middletown, CT 06457**
  - The Legal Affairs Unit will then send you a fee waiver application (including an affidavit), which you must complete and send back to them. If you have questions, you can contact the Legal Affairs Unit at 1-860-685-8303.

-----

Legal Affairs Unit  
 Department of Public Safety  
 1111 Country Club Road  
 Middletown, CT 06457

To Whom It May Concern:

I am indigent and unable to afford the \$50 fee to obtain my official criminal history record. I understand that an application for fee waiver is available.

Please send the Public Records Fee Waiver Request and Affidavit form to me at:

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR CITY STATE ZIP

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR NAME / SIGN HERE



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE  
BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION



**CRIMINAL HISTORY REQUEST for a PARDON**

(Please type or print clearly)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of  
Requester: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Fill in form completely
- 2) Enclose a **\$50.00** dollar check or money order payable to: **DPS**
- 3) Enclose a **complete set of fingerprints** for Positive Identification

Mail request with check or money order to:

**Department of Public Safety  
Bureau of Identification  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457-2389**

| Subjects First Name | MI | Last Name | Date of Birth |
|---------------------|----|-----------|---------------|
|---------------------|----|-----------|---------------|

Please list any maiden names, alias names, or alias dates of birth used:

---

---

DPS-0846-C-2

Phone: (860) 685-8480 Fax: (860) 685-8361  
1111 Country Club Road  
Middletown, CT 06457-2389  
***An Equal Opportunity Employer***

### **Pardons Prep Packet – Stage 3**

#### **Explanation of Crimes**

- This is the third part of the Pardon application. This stage is to give an explanation for the crimes you were convicted of. You should go through each conviction listed on your official criminal record, starting with the most recent, and provide an explanation for each one.
- Depending on how many convictions are on your official criminal record, you may have to make extra copies of the following pages.
- You must remember what was going on in your life at the time, why the crime was committed, and details about what happened.
- We have to put down something reasonable. If you can't remember, go to the local police department that arrested you for that crime, and ask for a copy of the arrest report. That may help jog your memory.
- Make sure you take responsibility for your actions. Even if you were wrongly accused or took the blame for someone else, you should still try to identify what part you played in getting into that situation and how you could have acted differently.
- You must give an explanation that looks like you have thought about it. Don't put down the exact same explanation for each conviction!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 9: CRIMINAL HISTORY**

Have you ever been incarcerated in Connecticut?  Yes  No

Inmate Number (if known):

**Do you presently have any pending criminal charges, either federal or state?**  Yes  No *If yes, state the pending criminal charges, the arresting agency, and the court in which the case is pending. If you need more space, use the optional continuation page.*

**Have you ever been convicted of any crimes in any other State besides Connecticut?**  Yes  No

*If yes, list the State where convicted, the approximate date of conviction, what crime you were convicted of and describe the incident.*















## **Pardons Prep Packet – Stage 4**

### **Essays & Community Involvement**

- This is the fourth part of the Pardon application. This is the part for you to tell the Board of Pardons why you want a pardon, and also how you have changed since your criminal activity.
  
- **Purpose of Application:** Please state why you want a pardon and what you hope it will change in your life. Do you want a better job? Do you want to participate in activities that you are barred from? Do you want to be a role model for your children? Whatever it is, explain it in your own words. Don't worry about spelling or using the right words. We can help clean up the wording for you if necessary.
  
- **How have you changed since your criminal activity?** This is your chance to tell the Board every good thing that you have accomplished since your most recent conviction. This is a very important part of the application and you should spend some time making sure to tell the Board who you are now, and how you are not the same person who committed those crimes. Again, don't worry about spelling or using the right words. We can help clean up the wording for you if necessary.
  
- **Volunteering, charitable activities, and/or community involvement.** The Board likes to see people who have volunteered and given back to their communities. In this section, you can tell them about all of the good deeds you have done. The Board will check up on what you say, so try to give up-to-date contact information to make it easy for them get in touch with people who can confirm your involvement.







Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Volunteer, Charitable and Community Activities**

**Describe your charitable, volunteer, church or civic activities or other contributions you have made to the community since your conviction. List the details of these activities below. Use additional pages if necessary.**

| <b>Activity 1</b>  |                       |                                  |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Organization Name:   | Organization Address: | Org Phone Number:<br>(    )    - |
| What did you do?   |                       |                                  |
| Name and contact information for any person(s) familiar with your involvement: |                       |                                  |
| Dates of your participation:   |                       |                                  |

| <b>Activity 2</b>  |                       |                                  |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Organization Name:   | Organization Address: | Org Phone Number:<br>(    )    - |
| What did you do?   |                       |                                  |
| Name and contact information for any person(s) familiar with your involvement: |                       |                                  |
| Dates of your participation:   |                       |                                  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer, Charitable and Community Activities Continued:**

| <b>Activity 3</b>  |                       |                                     |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Organization Name:   | Organization Address: | Org Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| What did you do?   |                       |                                     |
| Name and contact information for any person(s) familiar with your involvement: |                       |                                     |
| Dates of your participation:   |                       |                                     |

| <b>Activity 4</b>  |                       |                                     |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Organization Name:   | Organization Address: | Org Phone Number:<br>(    )       - |
| What did you do?   |                       |                                     |
| Name and contact information for any person(s) familiar with your involvement: |                       |                                     |
| Dates of your participation:   |                       |                                     |

## **Pardons Prep Packet – Stage 5**

### **Letters of Reference, Certificates, and Other Documents**

- This is the fifth part of the Pardon application. This part requires you to collect the remaining letters and other documents you need to complete the application.
- When you get these documents, make copies of them. Once you have made copies, put the originals away in a safe place. The one exception is the notarized copy of page 7, which must be sent with your application.

#### **Complete and check off the following 4 steps:**

- **STEP 1 (LETTERS OF REFERENCE):** You must get at least 3 letters of reference. The forms that your references must fill out are attached in this packet. Please make sure to remember the following:
  - You can have your references write letters on separate pages, but the letter must be accompanied by the forms and the forms must be filled out and signed.
  - Remember, the Pardon Board checks all references, so please use someone who can easily be reached.
  - Letters must list all of your convictions. The Board wants to know that your references are aware of your full criminal history. The next page has space to list your convictions for your references.
  - Pick people who know you well and can speak about the good things you've done. Your references don't need to have impressive titles, they just need to know you well.
  - Having more than 3 letters can strengthen your application. But only one of your letters of reference can be from a family member.
- **STEP 2 (CERTIFICATES, DIPLOMAS, ETC):** Collect any certificates from programs you have attended, diplomas, resumes, or anything else that you want the Board to know about you. Make copies of these documents. Don't send the originals.
- **STEP 3 (PROBATION LETTER):** If you have ever been on probation in Connecticut, you must get a letter from the Office of Adult Probation showing the date when your probation was completed or terminated.
- **STEP 4 (NOTARIZING):** You must get page 7 of the pardon application notarized, meaning you must take it to a notary public. We've recopied page 7 at the end of this packet. You can find notaries at many places, including FedEx and UPS stores. Make sure to bring a photo ID.

**COVER PAGE**

**Writing a Letter of Reference for a Pardon**

You've been asked to write a letter of reference for \_\_\_\_\_.  
He/she has been convicted of (LIST CONVICTIONS HERE):

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

Here are some helpful tips:

1. Make sure that each crime is listed in the letter! THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. It shows that you're aware of all the crimes for which the person was convicted.
2. State how long you have known the person and under what circumstances.
3. Then state why you think the person should get a pardon.

Here is an example:

*I have known (Jim, Mary, Tom) for over 12 years as a friend and coworker. I understand that (he/she) has had problems in the past including being convicted of Larceny 2 and 3, weapons in a motor vehicle, interference and resisting arrest, breach of peace . . .*

*Although I know of the criminal past that (Jim...) has had, I have seen (him/her) excel at work as a \_\_\_\_\_. He/she is trustworthy, reliable, and (other good qualities). I also know that (he/she) is a good father/mother to his two children, has always helped his elderly parents, and (other positive achievements). He has been a good friend by (give example). He also volunteers at \_\_\_\_\_. He has gotten his \_\_\_\_\_ diploma and sought treatment for \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I do feel that (Jim, Mary, Tom) has turned his/her life around and deserves to get a pardon because \_\_\_\_\_ / or so that he/she can \_\_\_\_\_.*

4. Then you must sign and date the letter. You must also provide a reliable phone number, because someone from the staff of the Board of Pardons will call you to verify that you wrote this letter.







**Background Investigation Authorization:**

This is to certify that I have applied for Clemency with the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles, and have completed this application fully, truthfully, and accurately. I acknowledge that an investigation will be conducted prior to my case appearing before the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles.

In consideration for the processing of my application, I, \_\_\_\_\_, formerly known as \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby agree to the following:

**WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED:**

Having made application to the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles for clemency, and desiring it to be informed as to my record and character, I authorize and desire the release of any information, verbal and/or written, which includes but is not limited to information related to current or previous employment, personnel records, criminal records, educational records, any investigative records, credit records, tax or bank records, correctional records, sealed records, confidential records or information previously agreed to be withheld, opinions of my character or conduct, and any and all information that a person or entity may have concerning me, and I agree to hold all entities and persons whomsoever from any liability because of furnishing said information. I understand that I may be required to complete an additional authorization form allowing the Board to obtain any relevant medical records or mental health records.

**INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED FROM:**

Any person or entity who may have knowledge of the above named individual including but not limited to friends, family members, neighbors, acquaintances, co-workers, businesses, previous or current employers, any law enforcement or corrections agency, any credit reporting bureau, any educational facility or institution, any financial institution, or any other person or entity deemed relevant by the agency or person conducting the background investigation incident to my application for a pardon, may furnish said information.

**INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED TO:**

The Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles or its designated agent.

**PURPOSE OF RELEASE:**

I, the above named applicant, have requested a pardon from the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles. The members of the Pardons Panel may consider a wide range of factors including my character, conduct, criminal record, mental or medical health status and any other significant history about me incident to such application for clemency. I understand that my authorization under this Waiver and Liability Release is voluntary and that I may refuse to sign this document. I understand that I am not entitled to receive or examine, review or otherwise discover the contents of the information gathered or disclosed in the course of the investigation incident to my application for pardon. I understand that if I refuse to sign this authorization document, my application for pardon will not be considered. I understand that information gathered may become public record if the subject application is brought for consideration at a meeting before the Pardons Board. I understand that I may revoke this authorization under this Waiver and Liability Release at any time by notifying the Pardons Board in writing at 55 West Main St, Waterbury, CT 06702, except to the extent that action has taken place in reliance on this authorization document. I understand that any such revocation of authorization will result in the termination of any pardons investigation or termination of further consideration for clemency.

**NEW INFORMATION:**

I understand, under the penalties of perjury, that I have not been convicted of any other crimes in the State of Connecticut or in any other state or federal jurisdiction in addition to those offenses listed on the attached petition for a Pardon. I affirm that I do not have any pending criminal actions in the State of Connecticut or in any other state or federal jurisdiction. I affirm that any police reports or official information that I have forwarded to the Board have not been altered or have any pages omitted. I will notify in writing the existence of any additional criminal matters that are pending against me or new arrests from the time this affidavit was executed to the date that a pardon certificate is issued by the Board.

This waiver shall apply to any right of action of any nature whatsoever, that may accrue to myself, my heirs, or my personal representative(s). Copies of this authorization that show my signature are valid as the original release signed by me. This authorization is valid for 3 years from the date signed.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Petitioner's Signature**

Subscribed and Sworn before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Notary or Commissioner of Superior Court**

My Commission Expires on: \_\_\_\_\_

(Notary Seal)