



JUSTICE BEHIND BARS



Safe Way Home

Parole Application Handbook





What Is This Handbook About?

- This handbook can be used as a helpful tool in providing guidelines for prisoners drafting their Form 29 parole applications. If you require assistance with applying for an Exceptional Circumstances Parole (ECP) Order (Form 28), you may use the information in this handbook as a basis for your application, however, you should obtain further advice on the key areas to focus on.
- It contains information and examples necessary to present to the Queensland Parole Board, including the Regional Boards, with an account of the circumstances leading to your offence, the triggers of your behaviour, the strategies used to prevent a relapse and the major issues to be addressed on a release / reintegration plan.

What If I Need More Help?

If you experience a problem understanding this handbook or require further assistance, please contact Safe Way Home (SWH) and speak to a solicitor:

In Writing:

Prisoners Legal Service
GPO Box 257
Brisbane QLD 4001

By Phone:

Prisoner Advice Line
(ARUNTA)

**Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday - 9am to 1pm**

**To call: Enter telephone
account number (CIS
Number), then enter own
pin number, then press *
(star), then # (hash) then 0
then 5**

Other Contacts:

Admin Line: (07) 3846 5074

Facsimile: (07) 3229 9222

Email: pls@plsqld.com

Website: www.plsqld.com

The information contained in this kit is to be used for information purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice. The information is current as at **23 January 2017**.



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Who Should Use This Handbook?

All prisoners with an eligibility date for parole need to make an application to the relevant parole board to be considered for release to parole. If you have been sentenced with a court ordered parole date or have a suspended sentence you do not need to make an application for parole.

Only prisoners with a parole eligibility date should use this kit if requiring assistance to make an application for parole.

Note: If your court ordered parole has previously been cancelled, you will have an eligibility date for parole and will need to make an application.



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1. What Do I Need to Apply for Parole?

You will need to request a parole application form which is known as a Form 29. You may obtain this form from Sentence Management at your prison. The form is presented below:
Version 3

Form 29
QUEENSLAND
Corrective Services Act 2006 (s.180)

APPLICATION BY PRISONER FOR PAROLE ORDER

Prisoner: [name of prisoner]

Date of Birth: [insert DOB] **Identification Number:** [insert ID number]

Location: [insert facility that prisoner is currently accomodated in]

I, the above named prisoner, make application to—
[the Queensland Parole Board / a Regional Parole Board]
for a Parole order

Signature: _____

Date:

PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Corrective services facility: [name of facility prisoner accomodated in]

Date of Birth: [insert DOB] Marital Status: [insert marital status]

Address of prospective accommodation: [insert address]

Name of occupier or sponsor: [insert occupier or sponsor name]

Telephone: [insert home number] (Home) [insert work number] (Work)

Relationship of occupier to you: [eg. wife, husband, de-facto, friend]

*Name and address of prospective employer: [insert details]

*To be employed as: [insert details]

Note: An offer of employment and/or accommodation should be in writing and should be submitted with this application.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION
(Attach further sheets as necessary)



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Form 29 Information Privacy Notice

Sections 176, 187, 263 and 341 of the *Corrective Service Act 2006*

The Department of Community Safety is collecting the information on this form for the following purposes:

- the Queensland board may hear and decide an offender's application for a parole order.
- for the Department to discharge its legislative, accountability, administrative, reporting, management, personnel and financial functions.

Collection of this information is authorised/required by the *Corrective Service Act 2006*.

The Department of Community Safety usually gives some or all of this information to the Queensland Police Service or other State, interstate, Commonwealth and international government departments or other entities; to private organisations which provide services to offenders and, in some circumstances, to individuals.

In addition to the above uses and disclosures, your personal information may also be used and disclosed as per the Queensland Corrective Services *Offender Privacy Statement*. The statement has been provided to all offenders and is also available in accommodation units, offender libraries and movement control stations where applicable.

2. What Additional Information Do I Attach to the Form 29?

It is in your best interest to provide additional information in support of your parole application. The parole board's primary factor when considering whether you should be granted parole is to determine if you pose a risk to the community upon release. You may use the following information as a guide to structure the additional information to be attached to your Form 29.



3. Social Background

As an introduction, do the best to tell the Board about your past. Keep this section brief as you should be devoting your main efforts towards the other sections instead.

<p>1. Family Background</p> <p>Include brief details on your childhood experiences, how you were raised, your relationships with family and friends and your ongoing family life, positives/negatives of your family life.</p>	<p>2. Other Relationships</p> <p>If you have a current spouse or partner please indicate how and when you first met, your partner’s occupation (or means of support) and age. Does your partner have any coping problems, such as with drug or alcohol dependency, which could be reduced with professional help;</p>
<p>3. Children</p> <p>Do you have any dependents / children? (if yes, names and ages) Who has custody and what are you plans regarding your children should you be released on parole?</p>	<p>4. Health</p> <p>Discuss your past and present state of health and recreational activities;</p>
<p>5. Education</p> <p>Level of education reached (School, tech colleges, university);</p>	<p>6. Employment History</p> <p>Previous (outside) employment history: job & titles held (Main ones only. Eg. Warehouse man, builders’ labourer, etc.)</p>
<p>7. Prison History</p> <p>Where are you currently accommodated in prison? Please provide details of your progression in prison (e.g. Have you progressed from secure to residential or are you waitlisted to go to the farm? Have you been returned to secure from residential or the farm and why?)</p> <p>Have you previously had a community- based order? (Probation, parole; if yes please provide details. If you have breached the order please provide reasons for the breach. Have you been convicted of any offences of breaches whilst in custody? If yes, please provide details; state, month, year and reasons for the breach.</p>	



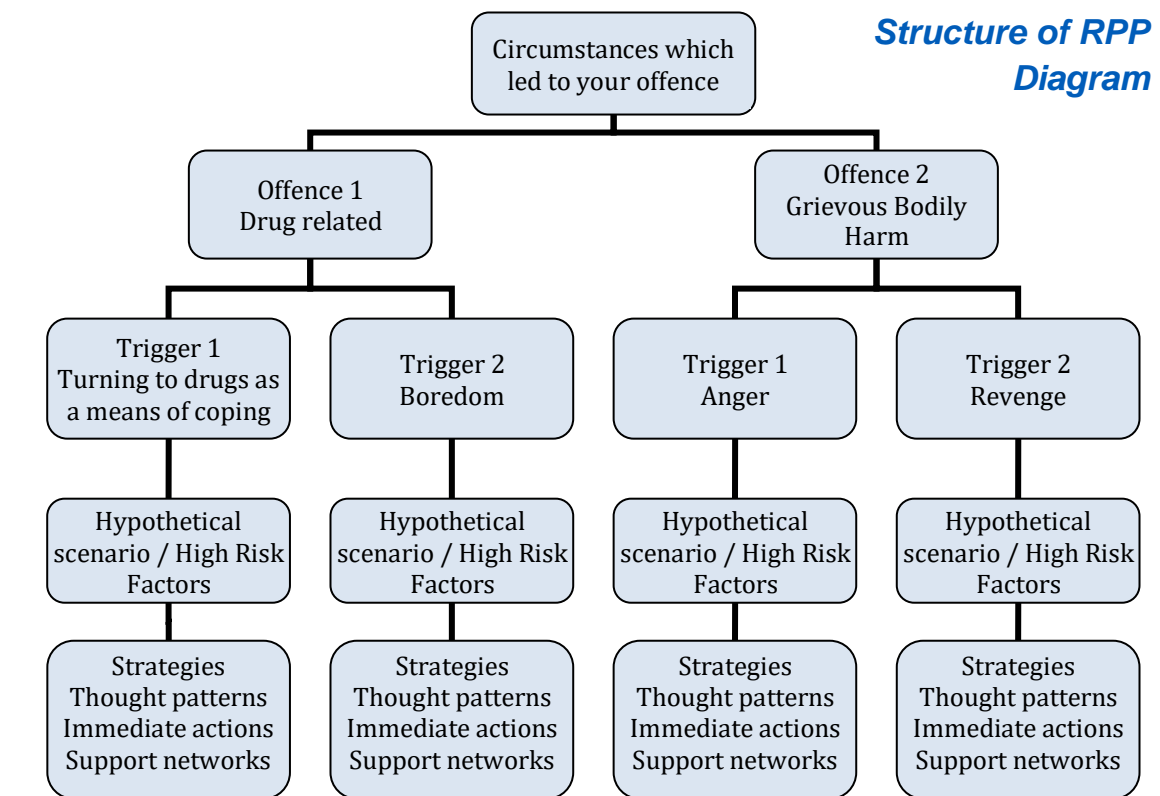
4. Criminal Background and Offences

1. Explain the offence you committed which resulted in the present incarceration.
2. You may also discuss your criminal background and other offences you have committed if applicable.
3. Outline your responsibilities of those offences.
4. If you had a community based order previously i.e. probation or parole then give details of those as well. If there were any breaches then give reasons for them including why you breached and how you will approach parole differently this time.

5. Relapse Prevention Plan

You may have already developed a relapse prevention plan from core programs you participated in. If this is the case, you should incorporate your relapse prevention plan into this section of your parole application.

This is one of the key sections of your parole application. A relapse prevention plan does not only apply to prisoners imprisoned for drug offences. No matter the nature of your crime, you should develop an appropriate relapse prevention plan which outlines what steps you will take to prevent a return to your criminal past.





1. Describe the circumstances which led you to commit the offence. For example, that you were strapped for cash, involved in a relationship break down, lost custody of your children, turned to drugs and/or alcohol to cope, you became increasingly angry and found it difficult to remain calm in most situations etc.
2. Describe the triggers that led you to commit the offence. Why did you commit the said offence? Based on the circumstances which led to you committing the offence, you should be able to identify the key triggers or red flags of your offending behavior.
3. What will you do if the same reasons arise in future? What are your high risk situations that might make you to fall into the wrong track again? For example, old friends and associations, parties which involve drugs, loneliness, boredom (situations / places / people / emotions) etc. Give an example of a hypothetical scenario where you may be inclined to commit a further offence. If you are serving a period of imprisonment for more than one offence, develop a scenario for each offence.
4. What can you do to avoid them? What are your strategies to manage these high-risk factors if they occur? What are the steps or strategies you will take in order to abstain from committing a similar offence again? i.e. how do you prevent relapses? What will you do if your triggers arise? Discuss your thought patterns, immediate actions and specific steps you will take for each trigger. For example, a sex offence will require a different set of strategies to a drug offence. How have you set your goals in order to prevent relapsing? Who will assist you (personal and professional support networks)?
5. Why do you want to change – what are the benefits of changing? The areas that you think you need to work on are? (Because you tried before but for some reason you failed. For example, you tried to abstain from alcohol but failed, hence explain why you failed. These reasons will be the areas you will have to work on further.)
6. Identify irrational beliefs and/or behaviours regarding the risk situation (e.g. I am only popular if I use with my friends)
7. How can you dispute these negative, irrational beliefs/behaviours?
8. Describe how you will feel once you dispute these negative, irrational beliefs/behaviours
9. What kind of support and assistance will you receive? (e.g your family, friends, community agencies, counsellors, various professionals)
10. List some things you plan to do to achieve a lifestyle balance: They need to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timed (SMART)
11. How will you be prepared to get back on track after a lapse/relapse?
12. You should relist all the courses you completed during your incarceration and how you will revisit the things you learnt.

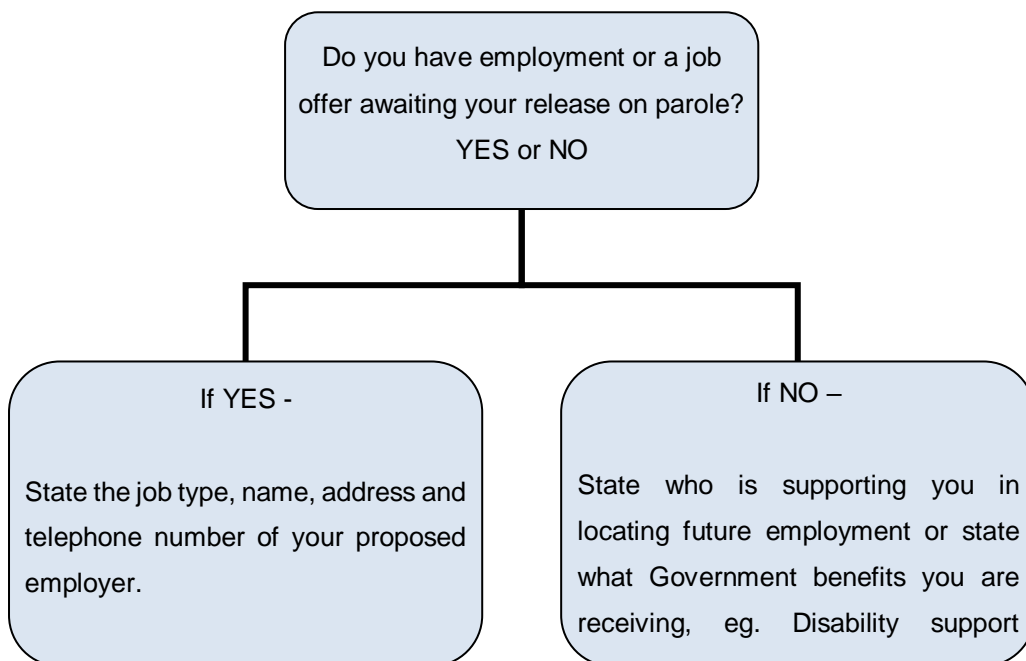


6. Release / Reintegration Plan

This next major section is required in order to show the board that you have a robust release plan when you are released on parole. A realistic release and reintegration plan will be another factor the board will consider in determining the level of risk you might pose if released on parole.

7. Future Employment, Training and Education

It is important to address your plans for prospective employment. While you may consider this a difficult task to accomplish on the inside, being pro-active in seeking employment may be viewed favourably by the parole board. Even if you receive a knock back from a prospective employer, you should attach this to your application to show the steps you have taken in this area.



- If you have employment to go to annex a letter from your prospective employer confirming this fact. Refer to “Letter of Support Templates” for a specific sample.
- Do you plan to undertake any further qualifications/education or licenses once you receive parole? If so, provide details of these options. For example, applying for a construction White Card from a particular organisation.



8. Financial Matters

It is suggested that you show the parole board that you have the ability to financially support yourself once released on parole. Therefore, the parole board will look at a number of factors including:-

- Do you have any outstanding debts?
- Have you ever had a gambling problem?
- If so, how are you going to approach these financial problems once released on parole?
- What community/personal support will or have you already contacted and asked for support?
- Will you have any Government assistance? For example, Disability Support?
- Do/will you be applying for the Centrelink Crisis Payment upon release?
- Are you expecting to receive money from Centrelink post release? For example, pension, allowances etc? Please specify.

9. Reconnecting Relationships / Parenting Matters

Are you intending to live with and/or re-establish relationships with family/partner/spouse/children on release? Please specify. What do you think the impact of you being released on parole will be on your relationship with your family/children/partner/spouse? Will you be responsible for caring for children who will be residing with you post release? How will you manage this change? Have you applied for parenting classes or family support programs upon release? State their details.

10. Housing / Accommodation

State where you intend to stay when you are released on parole.

- State the contact details and times available of the person who is sponsoring your accommodation in order that the parole officers can reach them.
- Annex a support letter from the person who offered you accommodation to your parole application. (Refer to “Letter of Support Templates” for a specific sample.)
- If possible state an alternative accommodation in case the first Home Assessment is unsuitable.

(A Home Assessment Team supervised by Probation & Parole and Sentence Management will assess the suitability of your proposed place of residence. Therefore, it should be a suitable place considering the offence you committed. For example, if you are convicted for a child sex offence then your prospective accommodation should be located away from schools, parks and where your victim resides.)



11. Support Programs / Recreation

1. Have you completed a program relating to these issues whilst in custody? Were drugs and alcohol contributing factors to your offence? Was gambling a contributing factor in your offending? What community based support programs will you use during parole? Have you contacted these? List their details. Will you be accessing a drug replacement program once on parole? For example, Pharmacotherapy, Subutex etc. What are the details of this program? Have you provided a relapse prevention plan for your substance abuse/gambling and/or other habits?
2. Do you have physical health issues needing post release management? How will you manage these issues post release? What community based programs have you contacted to provide assistance once given parole? Do you plan to access a bulk-billing counsellor/psychologist/doctor? List details. Are you currently on any medication for depression or other mental illness? Are you currently on any medication for a physical health condition?
3. What hobbies/sports/activities do you intend to do once released on parole? Please specify and provide details of the club or other centres available to you.

12. Transport

1. What transport will you use on your day of release? How will you get to your post-release accommodation? If someone is picking you up **attach** letter of support stating this and provide contact details of person. If an organisation is arranging transport, list details and **attach** letter of support.
2. Do you have a driver's licence/and or car? If not what will be your mode of transport in getting to and from employment and for other general duties? If someone will be driving you provide contact details and **attach** letter of support.

13. Future Plans / Timeline

Describe how you plan to live your life outside prison. You may list your plans under three sub headings:

Immediately After Release – what are your detailed plans on the day you are released on parole and in the short-term? Eg. obtain identification, report to your Probation & Parole office, go to Centrelink and Qld Transport, meet family.

- 6-12 Months After Release – what are your mid-term goals? Eg. Will you continue to work in the same area or do you intend to upgrade your skills to be gainfully employed in a different area?
- 5 Years After Release – what are your long-term goals? Eg. Do you intend to complete further studies, start your own business, establish a family?



14. Letter of Support Templates

If you are drafting a letter to a support agency or network you may use these following templates:

Template Letter 1 – Potential Accommodation and Support Services

Send a letter to suitable organisations requesting whether they can provide some or all of the suggested support services. Ideally these organisations will be recognised by the parole board (for house assessment purposes) and they will be located close or near to transport and other essential services. Some of the main points to be included;

- Personal details – name, dob, address,
- Incarceration for “x” years – been classified low for “x” years
- Currently serving at _____
- Benefits of location
- Security classification, Risk of escape
- Community work without incident (escorted and unescorted)
- Strong Work Ethic
- Currently working eg. 7 days per week – 10 hour day
- Strong morals and values
- Recognised by Correctional Services, Experience and skills, Certificates and Achievements (Awards)
- Reports/references from prison
- Services Required (Accommodation, Nourishment, Chaperone and Sponsorship)
- Structured Daily Schedule
- Support Services Required
- Counselling – alcohol, drugs and sex
- Courses – life and social skills
- Treatment – medication and psychiatric assistance
- Duration of Stay – minimum 12 months
- Rates charged – how you can afford to meet the expense via Centrelink Benefit
- Bonuses you can bring to the organisation
- Volunteer with Foodbank – able to bring food baskets
- Can work around the complex – lawn mowing, gardening, etc
- Counsel or assist youth about transition to prison life and what to expect and also about to educate on avoiding offending behaviour (life experience)



Template Letter 2 – Potential Employment (Volunteer or Paid)

Write a letter to suitable organisations requesting whether they can provide volunteer or paid work for you. Ideally these organisations will be community based, able to be accessed by public transport or provide transport and have recognised corporate sponsorship. Corporate sponsorship will enable you to establish and build networks for future long term paid employment (ie they will receive positive feedback from the organisation about your work ethic and or values). Main points to include:

- Personal details – name, dob, address,
- Incarceration years – been classified low for “x” years
- Currently serving at _____
- Security classification, risk of escape
- Community work without incident - escorted and unescorted
- Experience and skills (Certificates and Achievements (Awards))
- Strong Work Ethic - currently work 7 days per week – 10 hour day
- Strong morals and values
- Benefits to organisation
- Availability eg. 1-3 times per week

Template Letter 3 – Family, Friends & Associates (e.g. Church Groups)

Write a letter to family, friends and suitable organisations (associates such as church groups, prisoner and men support groups and sponsors) requesting whether they can offer letters of support and reconciliation. Some of the main points to be included;

- Why do you think you committed the said offence?
- Personal details – name, dob, address,
- Incarceration years ____
- Type of support required
- How they can assist
- What they are willing to offer or provide
- Why you think you deserve parole
- Future plans and goals and how they can assist
- Apology to (assist in the healing process and reintegration) – Family, Brother, Sisters, Father, Mother, Friends, Ex-partners, other
- Request Letter of Support – Family, Friends
- Associates (includes religious groups and sponsors)



Template Letter 4 – Centrelink: Disability Pension Eligibility, Rates & Benefits

If applicable, write a letter to Centrelink requesting your eligibility to be paid the Disability Pension and if they could supply any further assistance in this regard. Some of the main points to be included;

- Personal details – name, dob, address,
- Incarceration years
- Psychiatric diagnosis eg Dissociative Identity Disorder, Schizophrenia, Attention Deficit Disorder
- Eligibility criteria
- Proof required - Doctors certificate, Psychiatric evaluation
- Rates and when paid eg Paid fortnightly and how much
- Other Benefit entitlements - Medical and Health
- Concessions and other
- Pamphlets and/or application
- Registration
- On date of release or prior

Template Letter 5 – Psychiatric Treatment: Pre and Post Parole

Write a letter to suitable practitioners requesting whether they can provide treatment and support services whilst applying for and upon receiving parole. Some of the main points to be included;

- Personal details – name, dob, address,
- Incarceration years – been classified low for “x” years
- Currently serving at _____
- Security Classification – eg Low security, Low risk of escape
- Community work without incident (escorted and unescorted)
- Support Required and for what – eg. Violence and Anger Management – include conflict resolution, Stress Management – include relaxation mechanisms, Alcohol and Substance abuse, Sexual abuse and MISOP
- Pre-release vs Post-release (Pre – arrange for psychiatrist or one that is highly respected but sympathetic to you to undertake an evaluation / Post – arrange for psychiatrist or referral to conduct post psychiatric treatment on the outside)
- Request letter of support
- Parole eligibility date
- If they can assist and what they are prepared to offer



Information for Your Personal Support Networks

If your support networks require assistance in what to write on their letters of support, you may refer them to the following templates and guidelines.

In addition to the following support letter samples, you should outline the specifics of your support with the prisoner. Try to be detailed in your support letter and where possible, draw reference to examples where you have assisted the prisoner in the past. Here are a number of points to consider:

As a support person are you:

- Available and willing to help me
- Supportive of my relapse prevention plan and release plans
- Someone who recognizes I have a problem and knows that I am serious about changing it.

Your role is:

- Not to be responsible for me – I am responsible for myself
- To care about me
- To be tough but supportive – challenge me because you care if I'm off track
- To help me work with other support people
- To support me to get therapy or psychological help, if I need it – be honest with me
- To assist me to maintain honest contact with my parole officer – I want this for my future
- To encourage me to reach my goals – be on my side with the good things I want to do
- To encourage me in pro-active activities – help me get out of ruts and get on with living



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Accommodation Offer & Support Letter – [SAMPLE]

Please note - To be sent to parole applicant – keep the original and attach a copy to your parole application (Form 29)

(date)

(name of person)

(home address)

(phone number / other contact of person)

To the Queensland Parole Board / Southern Queensland Regional Parole Board /
Central & Northern Queensland Regional Parole Board [Address to the right board]

I have known (your name) for X years. The nature of our relationship is as follows _____. During this time I have formed the following opinion of (your name) _____. Whilst incarcerated I have maintained contact with (your name) by (eg. Visits, phone calls, letters).

I have offered (your name) accommodation at my home located at (state the full address) if she is granted parole. I understand that (your name) is in prison for the following offences (list offences). (Your name) has disclosed the nature of her offences to me and (list anyone else residing in the same home eg. my children). While I do not condone the offences she has committed, I am pleased to offer her a new start towards piecing her life back together.

Further to accommodation, I am willing to provide additional support in the form of _____ (list support eg. driving her to her job in the mornings, emotional support etc) in order that she can successfully reintegrate back into the community.

If she is granted parole, I will ensure that I am aware of her parole conditions and do everything in my power to assist her in maintaining the board's conditions.

Yours sincerely,

(signature of person offering accommodation)

(name of person offering accommodation)



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Employer's Letter – [SAMPLE]

(date)

(name of employer)

(address of employer)

(phone number of employer)

To the Queensland Parole Board / Southern Queensland Regional Parole Board /
Central & Northern Queensland Regional Parole Board [Address to the right board]

I have offered (your name) a full time position as a (job, eg, motor mechanic) if she is granted parole. I understand that (your name) is in prison for the following offences (list offences).

Her duties will include (describe, eg. servicing engines).

(Your name) was previously employed by me from (date) to (date).

Yours sincerely

(signature of employer)

(name of employer)



15. Checklist

Initial Checklist

- When is my parole eligibility date and when can I apply for parole?
- Have I filled out a Form 29?

Additional Information Checklist

- Have I tried my best to cover the following:
 - Social Background
 - Criminal Background & Offences
 - Relevant Attitudes
 - Prison Activities
 - Relapse Prevention Plan
 - Release / Reintegration Plan
 - Support Networks
 - Future Plans
 - Accommodation
 - Future Employment
 - Attitude to Parole
- Is the above a realistic reflection of where I am at?
- Did I provide an accurate account of the programs I completed and what I've learnt?

Support Checklist

- Have I made arrangements to obtain help from a Transitions Coordinator so I can be referred to ORSS?
- Did I attach the support letters from my support networks to your parole application (both personal and professional)?
- Did I attach the support letter from the person who offered you accommodation?
- Did I attach the job offer letter from my prospective employer?
- Did I attach any education certificates or course completion certificates?

Submission Checklist

- Before I submit my parole application, should I get someone to proof-read it?
- Did I lodge my parole application with Sentence Management at my prison?
- Do I have a receipt notice citing the date, time, signature and name of Sentence Management officer?
- Do I completely understand what is in my application and have I revised this prior to my Parole Assessment Panel interview (occurs approximately 4-6 weeks after lodging the Form 29)?
- Am I aware of the time limits for the Parole Board to give me an answer? If not, I will request for a PLS – SAFE WAY HOME Parole Assistance Kit.



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Your Notes:



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Prisoners' Legal Service

GPO Box 257, Brisbane QLD 4001

Ph: (07) 3846 5074

Fax: (07) 3229 9222

Prisoner Advice Line:
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9am – 1pm