

WHAT TO EXPECT AS A PARDON COACH

STAGE ONE

- **Welcome Email** - You will receive an email that will have password-protected documents which include the pre-filled application and court documents.
 - The password will be emailed to you separately.
- **Arrange Meeting**- Speak slowly, introduce yourself, gain trust, get clients' acknowledgment of understanding.



STAGE TWO: CLIENT MEET UP

- **Provide** contact information and give an overview of the process
- **Be Positive** and explain if you get to a hearing, they have an **80% chance of a pardon.**
- **Get to know each other** and make client feel comfortable. Discuss steps for application to "merit review". If you don't know the answer to a particular question, try calling BCPS at 484-260-3860 ext. 3043
- Reassure client **you are there to help them** tell their story in their own words
- **Discuss** importance of telling the Board of Pardons their story and how they have changed, lessons they have learned, why a pardon would benefit them or their family, community involvement, recommendations, education, and voter registration.
- **Client must TELL THE TRUTH** (can't be stressed enough) and take ownership of the offense
- **Share first draft** with client for accuracy (this is their story not yours)
- **Ask client to tell their story** of the conviction. Ask questions, and take notes so you can ask the same questions later. **BE PREPARED** for client to discuss their innocence or injustice of the system. Have client explain how they came to be at the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people."
- If there are indications of drug, alcohol, anger management, or other behavioral issues. **Must show Board of Pardons they have been clean for 5 years.**
- **Discuss what client must do before the next meeting.** A written statement for each conviction, a personal statement regarding lessons learned, remorsefulness, how they have changed and what they are contributing to society. Client to provide list of references.
- **Schedule timely follow-up meetings.** Send meeting reminders prior to meeting. Remind client if you would like to hear updates and answer any questions they have.
- **Ask if the client has any questions**, and advise them they can contact you with pardon questions

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NEXT MEETING(S)

- **Be complimentary and understanding** when reviewing client's documents. Discuss the importance of missing documents.
- **Review application** together and show any changes you have made. **Review and discuss answers** the client wrote for section 3. You can write this section, **but it must be in the client's voice**, not yours.
- Discuss if any drugs/alcohol were involved, and address "how I've changed".
- **Review client's personal** statement or begin an outline.
- The client will need your help in this section. Ask "what else can we say about you?" to enhance the statement. The personal statement should be homework for the next meeting.
- **Remind your client** about how important it is that the client let you know ASAP if there are any changes in phone number or address, or if they receive something from the police, Board of Pardons, or Board of Probation and Parole
- **Schedule next meeting** to review revisions to the client statements, client's portfolio and draft application.

Homework from this meeting:

A thorough review of section 3.
There should be no discrepancies here from the client's memory of the event(s).
The personal statement should continue to be tweaked. Obtain missing letters and information.

NOTE: Repeat Next Meeting(s) until you have prepared what you and the client think is a good application.

FINAL MEETING

- Go through the application one last time
- Make any final edits
- Have the client sign it
- Add any supporting attachments for their portfolio Send to BCPS Note:
BCPS will review the application one final time. Email:
PardonProject@ConnectionsWork.org
with PARDON APPLICATION -
[APPLICANT'S LAST NAME] in the subject line

QUESTIONS: PardonProject@ConnectionsWork.org
484-260-3860

AFTER THE APPLICATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED

- The Board will send a letter acknowledging receipt and giving it an "Application Number." Once Board staff determine that all parts have been properly filled out and all required
- documents attached, they will send out a letter confirming that it has been accepted and filed, and give it a "Board of Pardons No." As of June 2020, going from "received" to "filed" is taking six months!
- The client can continue to submit letters of reference to BCPS to forward to the Board of Pardons, up until the Merit Review and Hearing.