
**PETITION FOR
EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY RELIEF: PARDON OF CONVICTION
IN THE MATTER OF [FIRST LAST]**

I, [First Last], submit this Petition for Executive Clemency to the Prisoner Review Board and the Illinois Governor's Office, seeking a pardon of my conviction for [Offense] because [short explanation of reason for seeking pardon]. In support of this petition, I request a public hearing. I respectfully ask that the Prisoner Review Board and Governor Pritzker expeditiously process this request and pardon my conviction.

1. Personal Information

Name:
IDOC #:
Address:
Telephone:
Date of Birth:
Place of Birth:
Social Security Number:
Aliases:
Prior Military Service:
Clemencies:
Marital Status:

2. Conviction at Issue

Offense:
Case Number:
Date of Arrest:
County of Conviction:
Conviction Type:
Sentencing Judge:
Sentence:
Time Served:

Account of the Offense

This section should provide a description of the offense. Unless you are maintaining innocence, it is important to take full responsibility for the conduct. Please use active language (“I murdered Ms. Decedent”) as opposed to passive language (“Ms. Decedent was killed.”). If you confessed, pleaded guilty, waived an appeal, or did anything consistent with remorse, please highlight that here.

3. Other Cases for Which Pardon is Not Sought

Case Number:

Offense of Convictions:

County:

Sentence:

4. Personal History

Childhood, Education, and Work History

Please provide a brief description of your life prior to the offense. The goal here is to give the reader a sense of the person that you are, with family and friends and life prior to this offense. For some people, this history will be a traumatic one; for others, their childhoods and lives generally were not traumatic prior to some triggering event. Either way, strive to show the reader who you were, the circumstances of your upbringing, and the obstacles or strengths that helped shape you. Pictures, certificates, and other visual materials might be useful here.

Also, please discuss any factors or history that may be considered explaining (but not excusing) your offense. For example, you may have suffered physical or emotional abuse, dealt with undiagnosed mental illness, or struggled with addiction prior to your offense. If this was the case for you, please explain that history here. This information is offered to help the reader understand your conduct, not to excuse it. For some people, military service will be a significant source of trauma, and will warrant a more robust explanation in the next section.

Military History

Please provide a description of your military history. Include service dates, ranks, and discharge dates. Please highlight any accomplishments or injuries suffered during service. If you suffered from PTSD or other emotional trauma as a result of service, please discuss that here. Please discuss any treatment you received from the VA, and please explicitly note if you received no treatment. Similarly, if you suffered a physical injury during your service, please discuss that injury in greater detail here.

Hardships

If you experienced any unusual or specific hardships, such as an abusive relationships, violence outside of the home (such as community violence or gang violence), violence against you because of who you are (for example, because of their sexual orientation), serious accidents that caused serious, permanent, or life-threatening injuries, or other hardships, please discuss that in detail here.

Rehabilitation: You Today

This is the meat of the petition. The idea is to give the Governor a robust view of what you have done during the time you were in prison to rehabilitate yourself. Rehabilitation looks different for everyone; some people become artists, some find religion, some become jailhouse attorneys, some work and work to send money home. Some have spent years taming mental illness or addiction, or battling physical ailments.

This section has the fewest rules, because the way this looks will really depend on your strengths, interests, and accomplishments. Do whatever you can to creatively convey the remarkable person you have become. If possible and appropriate, include a section about your remorse for your crime.

Physical Health and Care

If you are seeking a pardon for reasons that involve your physical health, you should describe those here. Please note each of your diagnoses and current medications. Please also describe your physical ailments, to help illustrate the way age and/or physical condition affects your life now. For example, you could say “I have so much pain in my hands, that I cannot reliably hold a pen,” if you have arthritis. The idea is to paint a vivid picture of your illnesses.

Mental Health Care

You may have suffered from mental illnesses, such as PTSD, bipolar disorder, or addiction, and any diagnosed mental illness may help explain (but not excuse) your conduct in the instant offense. Please discuss any steps that you have taken to address any underlying mental illness. Please include any treatment plan and prognosis.

If you were convicted of a sex offense, please describe every single treatment program in which you participated. Note that there are not enough sex offender treatment programs in IDOC, and that preference generally goes to people with shorter sentences, so it is entirely possible that you have not yet received adequate treatment. Nonetheless, please describe any efforts you have taken to pursue alternative therapies, group work, or efforts you have made to join treatment programs (even if unsuccessful).

Employment

Please describe any employment history you have had since your conviction. Please include details including how long you held each job, your responsibilities, what you enjoyed about your jobs (if applicable), and how your employment bettered the lives of you or your family. If you are seeking a pardon to advance your employment, you might use this section to demonstrate how your employment history is building on itself, and describe it as a career (rather than a series of jobs).

Substance Abuse Treatment

If substance abuse contributed to your underlying conviction or your life around the time of your conviction, you might describe the steps you have taken to address any addiction you had or have. Why did you pursue substance abuse treatment? What was your experience in treatment like? How have you worked to maintain your sobriety?

Education

If you have pursued educational opportunities since your conviction, provide details about them here, including the institution, courses you took, grades, and degrees or certificates you achieved or hope to achieve. What were your favorite classes or courses, and why? Why did you pursue your education? What impact did obtaining an education have on your professional life, personal life, or sense of self-worth? What strategies did you take to succeed in school?

Religion

If you have participated in any type of religious events, assisted with the prison ministry, and/or developed a spiritual connection during or after your conviction, please describe the role that religion has played in your life. How has religion or your faith changed the way you see or interact with the world? Has religion or your faith changed the way that you see yourself? Has it changed or shaped your community, your daily life, or your relationships with the people you care about?

Art

If you are an artist of any sort (music, spoken word, visual, writer, poet, etc.), please describe what you create, and why. What does your art mean to you? How did you begin creating, and why? Does painting, drawing or studying artwork give you peace, joy or helps you reflect? Do you share your work or love of art with others?

Volunteerism

If you have been involved in volunteer activities since your conviction, please describe those volunteer activities in detail here. How has volunteering helped you to make changes in your personal or emotional life, improved the lives of others, and impacted your community? What plans do you have to volunteer in the future?

If you have a mentorship relationship, please describe any mentorship relationships you have. Who do you mentor, and why? What has mentoring meant to you?

Current relationships with family members

Please describe your relationship with your romantic partner, if you have one, the ages and names of any children you have, and the nature of your relationship with your children (do they live with you or with someone else). Describe other family members or loved ones that play a current role in your life today.

Many people are caregivers to children, disabled adults, or other loved ones. If you play a caregiving role to a family member or other person, please describe that role here, including the tasks you perform and your emotional relationship with the person you care for.

5. Reasons for Pardon

Why You Need a Pardon

*Here, please spell out plainly and clearly **why you need a pardon**. The more details you can provide about your reason, the better. Some examples of why one might request a pardon include:*

- **Work.** *You can argue that your conviction is preventing you from finding employment, or precluding you from a specific job.*
- **School.** *You can argue that your conviction is preventing you from enrolling in school. For example, Illinois nursing schools will not admit someone who has an unsealed conviction on his or her record. If your conviction is not eligible to seal, your only remedy is to petition for a pardon and permission to expunge your criminal record.*
- **Licensure.** *You can argue that your conviction may make it difficult for you to obtain licensure for a specific skilled trade or profession. Or, that your conviction has created a life-time bar to your obtaining a particular license.*
- **Public Office.** *Having a felony conviction typically bars someone from holding public office. If you plan to run for public office but your conviction is a bar to entry, please describe here why you want to give back to your community by holding public office.*

- **Firearm Ownership.** *Any felony conviction (as well as certain misdemeanor convictions) will lead to the loss of your firearm/gun rights. A Governor's pardon and reinstatement of your guns are necessary to overcome the loss of one's gun rights due to a felony conviction in Illinois.*

Why You Deserve a Pardon

Rehabilitation.

You can argue that commutation is appropriate because of your history of rehabilitation while in custody. To support this argument, you should include information that demonstrates your rehabilitation, including: certificates of accomplishments, job history, transcripts, diplomas, letters of support or recommendation from staff or inmates.

Family Connections

It is important to emphasize community support for two reasons: first, it assures the PRB and Governor that you have the emotional resources he or she will need to succeed in the community. Second, providing proof of community support and family connections helps the PRB and Governor's Office see you as a person, not a piece of paper. You can argue that your loved ones depend on you. Perhaps your children are missing their parent, or your elderly family members may need your help. You can also argue that the family is ready and able to support you when you return from prison.

6. Type of Relief Requested: Pardon

7. Supporting materials:

List attachments here, including letters of support, certificates of accomplishments, medical records, and other documents.

I declare under penalty of perjury that all of the assertions made in this petition are complete, truthful and accurate.

Signed

Date