APPENDIX B

Sample Pardon Application

Elias Ward's fictional application and supporting records

Read alongside Lesson 9

Start with Elias's reasons for seeking a pardon. Follow his answers into the supporting records and letters to see what each source can tell a reader about his life after conviction.

Find your place in the packet

Material	Workbook page
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Primary-reference pages in the DOJ form (Section M)	89–91
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Use the workbook page numbers in this guide. The reproduced DOJ form also shows its original page numbers.

Fictional course example. Use the current government form for an actual petition.

SAMPLE PARDON APPLICATION

FICTIONAL COURSE EXAMPLE • NOT FOR SUBMISSION

Elias Ward | An invented applicant and supporting packet
Prepared for the Prison Professors Executive Clemency course | November 2026

Every person, identifying detail, case fact, date, event, employer, institution, journal, statement and testimonial in this packet is fictional. Addresses use example.com or fictional locations; identifiers are deliberately invalid. No profile, certificate, official record, signature, oath, authorization or actual petition exists. This is a teaching example; readers must use their own truthful information.

PACKET GUIDE

1. Sample cover letter
2. Model application answers, sections A–J
3. Continuation A: offense, accountability and reasons for pardon
4. Continuation B: contribution, profile and dated journal excerpts
5. Continuation C: life after release and evidence register
6. Three fictional primary-reference testimonials, M1–M3
7. Certification, authorization and submission teaching notes

This companion follows the May 2024 DOJ Application for Pardon After Completion of Sentence. The application asks for detailed information, signed certification and authorization, and three signed non-relative letters, with exactly three selected as primary references. This teaching packet does not execute any of them. See the current form and instructions when preparing a real application.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

November 20, 2026

Elias Ward
100 Example Lane, Unit 2
Sample City, Ohio 00000
elias.ward@example.com | 202-555-0100

To the President of the United States
Through the Office of the Pardon Attorney

U.S. Department of Justice

Re: Request for pardon after completion of sentence | Fictional case 10-CR-SAMPLE-001

Dear Mr. President:

I respectfully request a pardon for my federal wire-fraud conviction. I seek your forgiveness for decisions that harmed people who trusted me and for the losses my conduct caused. A pardon would not erase what I did. I hope it would recognize the effort I have made to accept responsibility, meet my obligations, and contribute to others.

I submitted false invoices and misrepresented the work for which I requested payment. I knew the invoices contained false information. I continued because I wanted money and feared admitting that my business was failing. Those pressures did not cause me to commit the offense; I chose to deceive people. I accept responsibility for the loss and for the damage to the trust of the people and businesses affected.

During my sentence, I worked to reconcile with society through education, employment, reflection, and service. In 2021, I began using free Prison Professors resources and became an ambassador in this fictional example. I helped more than 50 people learn to use those resources to prepare for responsible lives. I recorded my goals, teaching sessions, mistakes, and lessons in a journal on my Prison Professors profile.

Since my release in September 2021, I have continued working, completed supervision in September 2024, and remained in touch with eight people I met through the educational work. Seven have told me that they are employed and have shared updates about their responsibilities. Three describe their own experiences in the accompanying fictional testimonials. They made their own choices and deserve credit for their progress. I am grateful that I could play a small part as a teacher.

I also seek a pardon because I hope that presidential forgiveness would help me explain my history when pursuing additional work opportunities. I understand that employers and licensing authorities make their own decisions and that no result is assured. I will continue to support my family, work, and serve others regardless of the outcome.

Respectfully,
Elias Ward
Fictional applicant • unsigned; no oath executed

OMB Number: 1123-0016 FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION Expiration Date: 5/31/2027

Application for Pardon After Completion of Sentence

What Is a Pardon and How Can It Help You?

Pardon is asking forgiveness from the President.

Pardon **CAN**:

- Restore civil liberties, like the right to vote, or sit on a jury
- Lift barriers to licensing, employment, housing, or education

Pardon **CANNOT:**

- Erase a conviction
- Expunge a conviction

To apply, you should:
• Have a conviction under federal law, D.C. Code, or Uniform Code of Military Justice
• Live in the U.S. or its territories

If you are still serving your sentence, use the commutation application form: justice.gov/pardon/apply-commutation

How to Begin:

Filling out and submitting the application is the first step in a lengthy process. You will be asked to share details about yourself, your reasons for seeking pardon, your current activities, challenges you may be facing because of your conviction, information about your conviction and other criminal history, if any, and letters of support.

It is not required, but it may help to gather these documents, if available, before you start:

1. Presentence investigation report

   This report is prepared by the U.S. Probation Office to help the court with sentencing.
2. Judgment

   This document shows what sentence the court gave you.
3. Statement of reasons

   This document gives the court's reasons for the sentence (not applicable in D.C. Code or military cases).
4. Indictment or Information

   These documents list the charges against you.
5. Case docket report

   The docket lists all the events in the case.

WHERE CAN I FIND DOCUMENTS RELATED TO MY CONVICTION?

You may be able to get the judgment, indictment, information, and case docket report online:

Federal cases: PACER (has fees): uscourts.gov/court-records/find-case-pacer

D.C. cases: dccourts.gov/superior-court/cases-online

For documents that aren't available online, you can contact or go to the court clerk's office:

Federal court clerk's offices: uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/federal-courts-public/court-website-links

D.C. Superior Court: dccourts.gov/superior-court/criminal-division

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

When will the Office of the Pardon Attorney (PARDON) contact you?

The pardon application process can take months or years. We ask that you keep your contact information updated so that we can reach you when needed. Until the notification of the President's final decision, your application is "pending" or open. Messages from PARDON during the process DO NOT predict the final decision. No outcome is guaranteed. Common situations when we may contact you include:

Confirmation Letter	**Follow-Up Letters**	**Background Investigation**	**Notification of Final Decision**
We will send an email or letter confirming your application has been received	We may send emails or letters asking for more information or updates	We will let you know if a background investigation has been started	We will let you know if the President has granted or denied pardon

HELPFUL TIPS

- This application asks for information to help us get a better picture of you and your life. All questions are important. Answer all questions to the best of your knowledge and ability and give as much detail as you can.
- The application asks for a large amount of personal information that may require research and collecting documents from the past. You may need several sessions to complete the application.
- To help us process your application more quickly, if an answer does not apply to you, write "Not Applicable."
- Sending your application as a PDF by email will help us process your application more quickly.
- If you mail the application, stapling, gluing, or taping any part will slow down processing.
- If you need more space, you can add pages or documents.
- If there is information you feel would make your application stronger, include it in additional pages. You can tell us about achievements, like physical fitness training or accomplishments; participation in personal growth, like counseling, therapy, or meditation; or other ways you have spent your time that tell us about who you are today.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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We need to know who is applying for pardon, to confirm your identity, and to be sure any background investigation is accurate.

B. Reasons for Seeking Pardon……8

We need to understand how your conviction has affected your life and what you hope pardon will change or improve.

Additional Information About Your Life Since Your Conviction (Parts C-I):

We need the questions in sections C-I (pages 9-14) to help us get a better picture of your life since your conviction, including your successes and the challenges you may have faced.

C. Community Activities……9

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We need to make sure we have the correct case and understand your offense conduct. It also gives you a chance to explain any other criminal history that may appear in a background investigation.

K. Certification and Personal Oath……18

We need your signature to know that you are submitting the pardon application willingly and that you have answered the questions accurately, to the best of your ability.

L. Authorization for Release of Information……19

The authorization lets us and any investigators get information and documentation about your life. If we need information about medical or mental health history, we will ask you for a separate authorization.

M. Letters of Support……20

We need to know how you interact with your community, who you are now, and what your life looks like since your conviction. We need at least three letters. If you give us more than three letters, let us know which three will be your primary references. Primary references cannot be related to you by blood or marriage and must be willing to be interviewed during a background investigation.

N. Application Checklist……23

This checklist will help you review your application to make sure it is complete. It also tells you where to submit the application and how to keep your contact information updated.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

Know Your Rights and How Your Information Will be Used

Who is collecting this information and what are my rights?

The Office of the Pardon Attorney collects your information to review and make recommendations to the President on pardon applications. The Office is part of the Department of Justice, which is a federal government agency. You have the right not to give information to us. If you do not answer some of the questions, however, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to continue working on your application.

How will my information be used under the Privacy Act?

The principal purpose for collecting this information is to enable the Office of the Pardon Attorney to process and evaluate your request for pardon after completion of sentence. The routine uses which may be made of this information include provision of data to the President and his staff, other governmental entities, and the public. The full list of routine uses for this correspondence can be found in the System of Records Notice titled, "Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records," published in Federal Register, September 15, 2011, Vol. 76, No. 179, at pages 57078 through 57080; as amended by "Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records," published in the Federal Register, May 25, 2017, Vol. 82, No. 100, at page 24161, and at the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties' website.

The Office of the Pardon Attorney has authority to collect this information under the United States

Constitution, Article II, Section 2 (the pardon clause); Orders of the Attorney General Nos. 1798-93, 58 Fed. Reg. 53658 and 53659 (1993), 2317-2000, 65 Fed. Reg. 48381 (2000), and 2323-2000, 65 Fed. Reg. 58223 and 58224 (2000), codified in 28 C.F.R. §§ 1.1 et seq. (the rules governing petitions for pardon after completion of sentence); and Order of the Attorney General No. 1012-83, 48 Fed. Reg. 22290 (1983), as codified in 28 C.F.R. §§ 0.35 and 0.36 (the authority of the Office of the Pardon Attorney).

Can the government publish my information?

If you are granted or denied pardon by the President, your name will be released, including on our website or in response to public information requests, in accordance with our Freedom of Information Act obligations. Non-public documents, such as this petition and supporting documents, the presentence investigation report, the results of any federal background investigation, and the recommendation of the Department of Justice, are not generally available under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts. However, the Pardon Attorney may disclose the contents of pardon files in the possession of the Department of Justice when the disclosure is required by law or the ends of justice. Additionally, this office would confirm that a specific individual has applied for or was granted or denied pardon.

The President and his immediate staff are not subject to the constraints of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts. Accordingly, while pardon-related documents in the possession of the White House traditionally have not been made public, they may be legally disclosed at the discretion of the President. In addition, pardon-related documents retained by the White House at the end of a presidential administration will become part of the President's official library, where they become subject to the disclosure provisions of the Presidential Records Act.

Answer questions as accurately and as fully as you can, to the best of your knowledge.

Making any intentionally false statements of material facts may be a reason for denying your petition. In addition, the knowing and willful falsification of a document submitted to the government may subject you to criminal punishment, including up to five years' imprisonment and a $250,000 fine. *See* 18 U.S.C. §§ 1001 and 3571.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

Public Burden Statement

This collection meets the requirements of 44 U.S.C. § 3507, as amended by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. We estimate that it will take 180 minutes to read the instructions, gather the relevant materials, and answer questions on the form. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Attn: Office of the Pardon Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, Attn: OMB Number 1123-0016, RFK Building, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530. The OMB clearance number, 1123-0016, is currently valid. PARDON may not collect this information, and you are not required to respond, unless this number is displayed.

Note: Nothing in this application or instructions is legal advice.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

A. Background Information

a. Applicant information

Full name:

Elias	None	Ward
First name	Middle name (if you have one)	Last name

If different, full legal name at time of conviction:

Elias	None	Ward
First name	Middle Name (if you have one)	Last name

None	000-00-0000 (invalid)
Other names (married, maiden, aliases, etc.)	Social security number

04/12/1975	United States	Sample City, OH
Date of birth (Month, Day, Year)	Country where you were born	City and state where you were born

Martin Ward (fictional)

Parent #1's full name (maiden name in parentheses)

Helen Ward (fictional)

Parents #2's full name (maiden name in parentheses)

Citizenship:

- (●) U.S. citizen by birth
- ( ) U.S. naturalized citizen
- ( ) _____ Other nationality

b. Contact information

100 Example Lane	Unit 2	Sample City, OH	00000
Street address	Apartment/Unit	City, State	Zip code

Email is the best way to contact you. If you do not have email, you can give the email of a person you trust, or your phone number. If an attorney is helping you with this application, also give their information:

elias.ward@example.com	202-555-0100
Your email address or email of a trusted person	Phone number

None	Not applicable
Name of attorney helping with this application	Attorney's email address and phone number

c. Previous applications

Have you applied for federal commutation or pardon before?

☐ Yes Date applied (month/year): _____

☐ No Date of decision (month/year): _____

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

d. Sex and race. This information is for statistical data collection purposes:

Are you Hispanic or Latino?	**Race** (select all that apply):		**Sex**
☐ Yes	☐ Alaska Native or American Indian	☐ Asian	☒ Female
☐ No	☐ Black or African American	☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	☐ Male
	☐ White	☐ Other	

e. Family information. For this section, it would be helpful to have dates for:

- Your marriage (if applicable)
- Your divorce (if applicable)
- Your children's birth dates (if applicable)

Current marital status

☐ Civil union/domestic partnership

☐ Divorced ☐ Married

☒ Never Married ☐ Separated

☐ Widowed

Current spouse / partner information, if applicable:

Spouse / partner name

Date of marriage or civil union/domestic partnership

Place of marriage or civil union/domestic partnership

Child or dependent information, if applicable:

Full name of child or dependent	Date of birth	Name(s) of other parent(s)	Do you have custody? (Y/N)

Former spouse or partner information, if applicable:

Former spouse or partner name

Phone number

Date of marriage or civil union/domestic partnership

Date of divorce

Place of marriage or civil union/domestic partnership

Place of divorce

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

B. Reasons for Seeking Pardon

What are your reasons for seeking pardon?

The more specific you can be, the better. Use the space below and/or attach additional pages.

You may want to include:

- How your life would change if granted pardon
- Challenges that you have faced because of your conviction

If you have ever been denied a job, license, or other opportunity because of your conviction, attaching denial letters or related documents will help us review your application

I request forgiveness. See Continuation A for reasons and the employment example.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

C. Community Activities

How have you been involved in your community since your conviction?

"Community" can include family, neighborhood, city, prison community, or organizations and associations. If you have more than three activities, attach additional pages. Some examples are:

- Assisting in extracurricular and education-related activities of children and grandchildren
- Providing support to community members, such as neighbors and family members
- Providing care to an aging relative
- Service with a civic or religious organization or a professional association
- Involvement in the prison community, including as tutor, mentor, or suicide watch companion

If you have not been able to participate in these activities, explain below.

Description of activity	Approximate start and end dates (year to year)
Prison Professors resource ambassador; taught 56 people	2021
Continued contact with eight former participants	2021-2026
Volunteer, Sample Community Food Pantry	2022-2026

Who can tell us about your participation in the above activities?

Name(s)	Contact information
Nina Cross, fictional volunteer coordinator	nina.cross@example.com

Is there anything you would like us to know about your reasons for engaging in community activities? If you have not been able to participate in these activities, you can let us know why here.

I seek to rebuild trust through service. See Continuation B.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

D. Educational and Licensing Opportunities

What educational or licensing opportunities have you had?

These can be programs you have started or completed, including courses you completed and licenses you earned while incarcerated. Some examples are:

- College correspondence courses
- Associate, bachelor, master programs
- Department of Labor courses
- Certificate programs
- Vocational training
- Commercial driver's license (CDL) courses
- Licenses: cosmetology, real estate, nursing, teaching, welding, electrician, or other

If you need more space, attach additional pages.

School or program name	Subject studied and degree or certification received	Approximate dates attended (month/year to month/year)
Institution adult education	Bookkeeping; fictional certificate	2014–2015
Institution vocational program	Facilities maintenance; completion	2019–2020

License Type	Approximate date issued (year)
None	

We know that people with a criminal record may have trouble getting into educational programs or receiving licenses. If that applies to you, give details here. If you have them, you can attach any denial or decision letters from licensing officials or related documents.

School or program name or license type	Details	Approximate date of denial or when informed not eligible (year)
Maintenance credential inquiry	Information requested; no denial or approval	2025 inquiry

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

E. Places Lived

Where have you lived in the last three years?

We already have your current address from your background information.

- Do not use P.O. Boxes.
- Give apartment/unit numbers.
- Do not leave any gaps in dates.
- If you have lived in more than three places, attach additional pages.

If there were any periods where you did not have housing, you can note that below.

Street address	Apartment /Unit	City, state	Zip code	Approximate dates living there (month/ year to month/year)
100 Example Lane	Unit 2	Sample City, OH	00000	10/2021-present

If you are experiencing homelessness or have in the past, note the dates.

None

(month/year to month/year)

F. Military Service

Have you served in the military? ☒ Not applicable

Dates of service

Branch(es)

Serial number

Type of discharge

Tell us briefly about your military service. For example, any tours of duty, time overseas or in active combat, disciplinary sanctions or military criminal proceedings taken against you, commendations or medals awarded to you, or other notable achievements. If available, attach a copy of your DD-214.

Not applicable; no military service.

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

G. Job History

Where have you worked in the last <u>seven years</u>?

- Include full and part-time jobs
- If applicable, include jobs while incarcerated
- Use approximate dates
- Do not leave any gaps in dates
- If you have had more than three jobs, attach additional pages
- If you are retired, give the approximate date your retirement began in the "Current employer" section

Example Facilities Services	Facilities services	Facilities technician	10/2021
Current employer	Type of business	Position	Month/year started
200 Example Way	Sample City, OH	00000	Morgan Reed, 202-555-0105
Employer street address	City, state	Zip code	Supervisor name and phone number

Previous employer name	Type of business	Position	Employer address and phone number	Approximate dates worked (month/year to month/year)
Institution facilities department	Institutional work	Maintenance worker	Fictional institution; 00000	11/2019-09/2021

If you are currently unemployed or have been in the past, give the dates and share how you supported yourself during that time.

No gaps in the fictional seven-year work history.

If your criminal record has affected your ability to find work, give details here. If you received a rejection letter or termination notice because of your conviction, you can attach a copy.

An employer declined after a 2022 background review. See Section B.

Your work history will be reviewed as part of any background investigation. If you have been fired, accused of misconduct at a job, or given an unsatisfactory job performance rating, give details here.

No fictional firing, misconduct allegation or unsatisfactory rating.

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

H. Sobriety and Substance Use

Have you struggled with substance use? ☒ Not applicable

We know that many people have struggled with substance use and that this can be difficult to discuss. Your honest reflection is helpful to us.

Type of drug or alcohol	How often were you using?	Approximate dates used (month/year to month/year)

If you have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder, give details here.

Diagnosis

Date of diagnosis (month/year)

Give information on any counseling or treatment you received or rehabilitation program you attended for substance use.

Facility/counselor/doctor name

When did you attend? (month/year to month/year)

Street address

Suite no.

City, state

Zip code

Phone number

Email address

How long have you been sober?

Days, months, or years

Is there anything else you would like to share about your history with sobriety and substance use?

Not applicable in this fictional history.

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

I. Financial Information

Do you have any debts that are late or in default (including child support payments) or do you have any bankruptcy filings?

We know that criminal convictions may affect some people's ability to get a job and may carry heavy financial penalties, making it harder to keep up with necessary expenses. We know this can be a hard subject to discuss. Your honest reflection is helpful to us.

- Note: A credit report will be reviewed if a background investigation is started.

Description of debt that is late or in default	Approximately how much is the debt?
None	

Court where bankruptcy filed	Approximate year bankruptcy filed and outcome	Approximately how much debt did you want to discharge?
None		

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with finances since your conviction?

This may include information on why you are unable to pay the above debts or filed for bankruptcy and any plans to catch up on payments for any debts that are late or in default.

Fictional restitution and assessment paid in 12/2025. See Section I.

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

J. Case Background and Other Criminal History

a. Give basic information on the conviction for which you are seeking pardon.

If you are seeking pardon for more than one conviction, attach additional pages.

It is not required, but, if available, sending a copy of these documents with your application will help us review your case more quickly. See cover page for more information.

- Presentence report
- Judgment
- Statement of reasons
- Indictment or Information
- Case docket report

☐ Check here if you are attaching any of these documents.

Did you plead guilty? ☒ Yes ☐ No

01/2008-12/2009	01/2011
Approximate date(s) of offense (month/year to month/year)	Approximate date you were sentenced (month/year)

U.S. District Court, fictional district	10-CR-SAMPLE-001
Court where you were prosecuted (D.C. Superior Court, military court, or name of U.S. District Court)	Case number

Wire fraud, 18 U.S.C. section 1343 (fictional)

Of what were you convicted?

What sentence did you receive? (fill in where applicable)

Imprisonment:	144 months	09/2021
	Prison sentence (months or years)	Approximate date you were released from prison, community confinement, or home detention (month/year)
Probation or supervised release:	3 years supervised release	09/2024
	Sentence for probation or supervised release (months or years)	Approximate date you completed your term of probation or supervised release (month/year)

Financial penalties:	$100	None	$24,000
	Assessment amount	Fine amount	Restitution amount

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

b. Tell us about your conduct for which you were convicted.

We want to hear from you, in your own words. The more specific and complete you are, the more helpful it is to us. We are specifically looking for information that is NOT in the public record of your case. You may wish to answer the following:

- What was your role in the offense?
- How, when, and why did you get involved?
- What actions did you take in connection with the offense? (Include all actions, even if you pleaded guilty to only specific conduct, counts, or portions of the full criminal activity.)

I knowingly sent false invoices. See Continuation A for full details.

Do you accept responsibility for your conduct? Explain why or why not.

I accept responsibility; financial pressure does not excuse my choices.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

c. Tell us about any other criminal history.

Your criminal history will be reviewed as part of any background investigation. List any other arrests or convictions that may appear on your criminal history record, if any, including juvenile and expunged records, and give any information you would like us to know about them. If you have your presentence report, you may attach it and give missing or additional information you would like us to know below.

None in this fictional history, including juvenile and expunged matters.

☐ Check here if you are attaching additional pages. Add the section name to the top of each page.

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

K. Certification and Personal Oath

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all information in my petition and any document submitted with it were given or authorized by me and that I reviewed and understand the information contained in, and submitted with, my petition. I further certify, under penalty of perjury, that all the information I gave in the application is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

In petitioning the President of the United States for pardon, I do solemnly swear that I will be law-abiding and will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that I take this obligation freely and without any mental reservation whatsoever.

Respectfully submitted this _____ day of _____ , _____ .
Day Month Year

_____
Your signature

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

L. Authorization for Release of Information

Carefully read this authorization, and if you agree, sign and date in ink.

I authorize any investigator, special agent, or other duly accredited representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense, and any other authorized Federal agency, to obtain any information relating to my activities from schools, residential management agents, employers, criminal justice agencies, retail business establishments, courts, or other sources of information. This information may include, but is not limited to, my academic, residential, achievement, performance, attendance, disciplinary, employment history, criminal history, arrest, conviction, including the presentence investigation report, if any, medical, psychiatric/psychological, health care, and financial and credit information.

I understand that, for financial or lending institutions and certain other sources of information, a separate specific release may be needed (pursuant to their request or as may be required by law), and I may be contacted for such a release at a later date.

I further authorize the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense, and any other authorized Federal agency, to request criminal record information about me from criminal justice agencies for the purpose of determining my suitability for a government benefit.

I authorize custodians of records and sources of information pertaining to me to release such information upon request of the investigator, special agent, or other duly accredited representative of any Federal agency authorized above regardless of any previous agreement to the contrary. I understand that the information released by records custodians and sources of information is for official use by the Federal Government only for the purposes of processing my application for a government benefit, and may be redisclosed by the Government only as authorized by law.

Copies of this authorization that show my signature are as valid as the original release signed by me. If not previously revoked in writing, this Authorization is valid and shall remain in effect so long as I am under consideration for a government benefit.

Signature (sign in ink)		
Full Name (type or print legibly) Elias Ward (fictional; unsigned)		*Date Signed*
Other Names Used None		
Street Address 100 Example Lane		
City Sample City	*State* OH	*ZIP Code* 00000
Home Telephone Number (include area code) 202-555-0100	*Social Security Number* 000-00-0000 (invalid)	

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

M. Letter of Support

☒ Primary reference (select exactly 3)

on behalf of Elias Ward
Name of petitioner

I certify that I have personally known the petitioner for 5 years and am not related to petitioner by blood or marriage.

In support of this pardon petition, I state the below:

NOTE: The information below should be based on your personal knowledge of the petitioner. Helpful information includes:

- How you know the individual,
- What you know of their reputation and conduct since their conviction, and
- Their personal and professional activities, including at work, at home, and in the community.

Please see fictional testimonial M1, attached.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages.

I affirm that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

	Marcus Vale (fictional)
Signature	Print Name
	100 Example Road, Sample City, OH 00000
Date	Address
	202-555-0101
	Phone number
	marcus.vale@example.com
	Email address

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

M. Letter of Support

☒ Primary reference (select exactly 3)

on behalf of Elias Ward

Name of petitioner

I certify that I have personally known the petitioner for 5 years and am not related to petitioner by blood or marriage.

In support of this pardon petition, I state the below:

NOTE: The information below should be based on your personal knowledge of the petitioner. Helpful information includes:

- How you know the individual,
- What you know of their reputation and conduct since their conviction, and
- Their personal and professional activities, including at work, at home, and in the community.

Please see fictional testimonial M2, attached.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages.

I affirm that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

	Andrew Pierce (fictional)
Signature	Print Name
	200 Example Road, Sample City, OH 00000
Date	Address
	202-555-0102
	Phone number
	andrew.pierce@example.com
	Email address

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

M. Letter of Support

☒ Primary reference (select exactly 3)

on behalf of Elias Ward
Name of petitioner

I certify that I have personally known the petitioner for 5 years and am not related to petitioner by blood or marriage.

In support of this pardon petition, I state the below:

NOTE: The information below should be based on your personal knowledge of the petitioner. Helpful information includes:

- How you know the individual,
- What you know of their reputation and conduct since their conviction, and
- Their personal and professional activities, including at work, at home, and in the community.

Please see fictional testimonial M3, attached.

☒ Check here if you are attaching additional pages.

I affirm that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

	James Bell (fictional)
Signature	Print Name
	300 Example Road, Sample City, OH 00000
Date	Address
	202-555-0103
	Phone number
	james.bell@example.com
	Email address

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

N. Application Checklist

1. Gather the following information.

Required

- ☐ Application form (pages 6-17)
- ☐ Signed certification and personal oath (page 18)
- ☐ Signed and completed Authorization for Release of Information form (page 19)
- ☐ 3 signed letters of support from non-relatives (pages 20-22)
  Note: You MUST select exactly 3 as your primary letters

Optional

- ☐ Official records: presentence report, judgment, statement of reasons, indictment or information, or court docket record
- ☐ Personal records supporting answers
- ☐ Additional pages to complete answers
- ☐ Additional pages with any information you feel would make your application stronger.

2. Submit your application.

NOTE: Keep a copy of everything you submit for your personal records

For general pardon applications

The fastest way to submit your application is by email. If you send it by mail, it may take longer to process.

By email

Email documents in PDF or Word format to USPardon.Attorney@usdoj.gov

By mail

U.S. Dep't of Justice, Office of the Pardon Attorney
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

For pardon of a general court-martial conviction only

Submit your application to the military department that had original jurisdiction in your case.
NOTE: Send a single PDF not exceeding 10 MB in size

U.S. Army:
Office of the Judge Advocate General
ATTN: Criminal Law Division, (DAJA-CL)
2200 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-200
usarmy.pentagon.hgda-otjag.list.cld-ops-army-executive-pardons@army.mil

U.S. Navy/U.S. Marine Corps:
Office of the Judge Advocate General
Criminal Law Division (Code 20)
1254 Charles Morris Street S.E., Suite B01
Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374

NavyPardonRequests@us.navy.mil

U.S. Air Force:
Office of the Judge Advocate General
Attention: AF/JAJI
1500 W. Perimeter Road, Suite 1300
Joint Base Andrews
Naval Air Facility, MD 20762
AF.JAJIWorkflow@us.af.mil

U.S. Coast Guard:
Commandant (CG-LMJ)
U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20032

HQS-DG-LST-CG-LMJ@uscg.mil

NOTE: Pardon of a military offense will not change the character of a military discharge

FICTIONAL COURSE SAMPLE - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

3. Keep your contact information updated.

We will need to reach you during the pardon process. If your contact information changes, email us at USPardon.Attorney@usdoj.gov or send a letter to our mailing address.

The application process:

1. **Confirmation letter** – We will send an email or letter letting you know we received your application and if it is missing any parts. If you have not received a confirmation after **three months**, email USPardon.Attorney@usdoj.gov (preferred) or send a letter to our mailing address. You can check the status of your case on the Pardon Attorney's website: justice.gov/pardon/search-clemency-case-status.
2. **Follow-up letters** – It may take some time for review of your application to start. During the review, we may need more information or updates to your application. If we do, we will contact you by email (preferred) or mail.
3. **Background investigation** – During the review of your application, a background investigation may be necessary. The investigation is conducted by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). We will let you know by email (preferred) or mail if we have asked for a background investigation. It may include interviews of you, the people who wrote your letters of support, neighbors, former and present employers, acquaintances, and other individuals who may be able to give relevant information about you. The agent will be discreet and make reasonable efforts not to disclose the reason for the investigation, but we cannot guarantee that those interviewed will not learn that you are seeking pardon for a past criminal conviction.
4. **Notification of final decision** – You will be notified when a final decision is made by the President. This may take years. No hearing will be held and there is no appeal from the President's decision to deny a request for pardon.

MODEL ANSWERS TO THE APPLICATION

The entries below show how fictional answers correspond to the government form. They are not official records. A real applicant should use the current form and provide complete, accurate information.

A. Background information
Name: Elias Ward. Name at conviction: Elias Ward. Other names: none in this fictional history. Date of birth: April 12, 1975. Birthplace: Sample City, Ohio, United States. Citizenship: U.S. Social Security number: 000-00-0000, intentionally invalid. Current address: 100 Example Lane, Unit 2, Sample City, OH 00000. Email: elias.ward@example.com. Phone: 202-555-0100. All identifying and contact details are invented.
Parents: fictional names Martin Ward and Helen Ward. Marital status: never married. No children or dependents in the fictional history. No former spouse or domestic partner. No attorney assisted. No prior federal clemency application.

B. Reasons for seeking pardon
I ask for presidential forgiveness for my wire-fraud conviction and hope to show the person I have worked to become through decisions over time. My conviction has required me to explain my record during employment applications. A fictional employer declined to proceed after a background review in 2022; I do not represent that a pardon would have changed that employer's decision. I hope a pardon may help me present my history when seeking additional work. I do not claim that it would erase my conviction or guarantee employment or a license. See Continuation A.

C. Community activities
June–September 2021: Prison Professors ambassador in a fictional institution. I introduced 56 people to free lessons and profile-building resources through small groups and individual conversations. I documented the work in my fictional profile journal.
October 2021–November 2026: Continued correspondence or contact with eight former participants. Seven report that they are employed; I do not attribute their employment solely to my teaching. Three non-relatives provide fictional first-person accounts. The eighth participant's employment status is not represented.
2022–2026: Volunteer at the fictional Sample Community Food Pantry, assisting with inventory and distribution twice monthly. Fictional contact: volunteer coordinator Nina Cross, nina.cross@example.com, 202-555-0104.
Reason for involvement: I wanted to rebuild trust through reliable service and make the resources I found useful available to others. See Continuation B.

D. Education and licensing
2014–2015: Fictional institutional adult education course, bookkeeping fundamentals; certificate assumed only for teaching. 2019–2020: fictional vocational coursework in facilities maintenance; completion record assumed. No professional license claimed. A 2025 inquiry about a fictional building-maintenance credential produced a request for additional information, not a denial or

promise of approval. A real applicant would identify the authority and provide actual correspondence.

E. Places lived
October 2021–present: 100 Example Lane, Unit 2, Sample City, OH 00000, a fictional residence. No other residences or periods of homelessness in the preceding three years in this example.

F. Military service
Not applicable. The fictional applicant did not serve in the military.

G. Employment history
October 2021–present: Example Facilities Services, Sample City, OH 00000; maintenance assistant and later facilities technician. Fictional supervisor Morgan Reed, 202-555-0105. Duties: preventive maintenance, work orders, safety checks and reporting.
November 2019–September 2021: institutional facilities work while incarcerated. There are no fictional gaps in this seven-year work history. The 2022 background-review rejection described in section B did not interrupt the existing fictional job. No firing, misconduct allegation or unsatisfactory rating is asserted in this example.

H. Sobriety and substance use
Not applicable in the fictional history: the applicant reports no history of substance-use disorder or treatment. Do not copy this answer; a real applicant should respond based on personal facts.

I. Financial information
The fictional $100 special assessment and $24,000 restitution were paid in full by December 2025; no fine was imposed. No late or defaulted debt, unpaid child support, or bankruptcy is reported in this invented history. No financial records are fabricated or attached. In an actual petition, obtain the payment history and disclose all applicable debts or filings.

J. Case background and criminal history
Guilty plea: yes. Offense period: January 2008–December 2009. Sentence date: January 2011. Court: U.S. District Court, fictional district and case 10-CR-SAMPLE-001. Conviction: wire fraud, 18 U.S.C. § 1343. Sentence: 144 months' imprisonment, three years' supervised release, $100 assessment, $24,000 restitution, no fine. Released from confinement September 2021; supervision completed September 2024. All dates, court, case number and amounts are fictional teaching facts.
Conduct: I knowingly transmitted false invoices to obtain payment for services that had not been performed. I prepared the invoices, sent them, and used the money to keep my business operating and pay personal expenses. My actions caused financial loss to the customer and burdened people who relied on honest business records. See Continuation A.
Responsibility: I accept responsibility. Financial strain and fear help explain the setting; they do not excuse my decisions. I concealed the truth instead of addressing the problem.

Other criminal history: none in this fictional scenario, including juvenile arrests, expunged matters and other convictions. Real applicants must report the history requested by the current form.

CONTINUATION A — ACCOUNTABILITY AND REASONS FOR PARDON

I wanted my business to succeed, but by 2008 I had taken on obligations that I could not meet. Rather than tell the customer that work was incomplete, I prepared invoices that falsely represented services as finished. I transmitted the invoices and accepted payment. I used some of the money to cover business expenses and some for personal needs.

My customer had a right to accurate records and an honest account of the work. My decisions caused a financial loss, created work for people who had to identify the discrepancies, and damaged confidence in the business relationship. I cannot describe repayment as if it removes the effects of my conduct. In this fictional history I completed restitution, and I would provide the actual payment record in a real application.

Prison gave me time to examine how my choices affected other people. I could not undo the offense, but I could respond to it. I studied, held institutional jobs, wrote about decisions, and learned to accept correction. Near the end of my sentence, I found Prison Professors resources that helped me organize goals and explain what I was doing to prepare for life after release.

I request a pardon because I seek forgiveness and hope that a review of my life will include the work that followed my conviction. I understand that a pardon would not erase my conviction, establish innocence, guarantee a job, or transfer credit for another person’s choices to me. I will continue meeting my responsibilities whatever decision the President makes.

CONTINUATION B — SERVICE, JOURNAL AND FOLLOW-THROUGH

In this fictional example I became an ambassador by introducing free Prison Professors lessons and profile tools to people in my prison community. From June through September 2021, I led or assisted with small-group sessions and individual conversations reaching 56 people. I encouraged each person to identify a goal, describe the steps under his own control, and use a journal or other record to review progress. The count represents imagined attendance, not a verified Prison Professors program record or official endorsement.

After release I kept in touch with eight of those people. Seven told me that they were working and described responsibilities such as arriving on time, supporting family, and continuing to learn. Three of those seven provide the fictional testimonials in this packet. Their statements tell readers what each writer personally experienced; the four other reported outcomes remain my fictional account, not independently verified exhibits. I cannot claim that my teaching caused any person's employment.

Selected fictional journal entry — June 25, 2021
Today I introduced a small group to the idea of working backward from a goal. One person wanted to find work after release but had not identified a skill or a first step. I asked him to choose a job, list one skill it required, and describe how he could begin learning. I wrote down that I need to ask better questions instead of telling people what their plans should be.

Selected fictional journal entry — August 20, 2021
A participant told me that one of my examples did not fit his circumstances. He was right. I revised the next session to offer several choices and asked participants to explain what they would use. I recorded the change because I want to teach in a way that respects the experience and judgment of each person.

Selected fictional journal entry — September 30, 2022
After release I spoke with a former participant who described working through a difficult first month at a new job. He credited the planning exercise for helping him set a routine, but his attendance and decisions belonged to him. I wrote down a goal to follow up next month and ask what support he wanted rather than assume.

CONTINUATION C — LIFE AFTER RELEASE AND SUPPORTING RECORDS

I began work at Example Facilities Services in October 2021. My fictional supervisor can describe how I report a maintenance problem, follow safety procedures, and communicate when an assignment takes longer than expected. I completed supervision in September 2024. I continue to volunteer at a food pantry and keep a budget for household costs and savings.

Record register for a real application:
• Judgment, statement of reasons, presentence report and case docket: obtain authentic records; none are manufactured here.
• Release and supervision completion: obtain actual documents; dates in this sample are invented.
• Restitution and assessment: obtain a payment history before asserting amounts or completion.
• Employment and community service: request genuine records and first-person statements from people with direct knowledge.

• Journal and profile: preserve dated original entries and select relevant excerpts; a profile does not itself submit an application.
• Supporters: three fictional non-relative writers appear below. In a real case select exactly three qualifying primary references; each must sign and be willing to be interviewed. Additional relevant letters may be included as directed by the current form.
• Actual signatures and authorization: not executed in this example.

M1 — TESTIMONIAL OF MARCUS VALE

Fictional primary reference • unrelated by blood or marriage • unsigned

I met Elias Ward in June 2021 in a fictional prison education group. He showed me how to use free Prison Professors lessons to make a plan for work and record what I completed each week. I remember telling him that I did not know what to write about because I had never kept a journal. He suggested I start with one decision I wanted to make and return to it after a week. He did not write the answer for me.

After my release, I stayed in touch with Elias. I told him when I started work at a fictional warehouse and when I had trouble arriving on time during the first month. He asked me what I could change. I began arranging transportation the night before and told my supervisor when I needed help. I remain employed in this example, and I am responsible for the decisions that helped me keep the job.

I am grateful that Elias treated my plan as my own and continued to ask about it after we left prison. I know about his efforts from our sessions and later conversations. I have not observed every part of his life and cannot speak for the other participants. I support his request for a pardon based on the care and consistency I have personally observed. In this fictional scenario, I would be willing to speak with an investigator.

Marcus Vale | Fictional writer; no signature or affirmation executed.

M2 — TESTIMONIAL OF ANDREW PIERCE

Fictional primary reference • unrelated by blood or marriage • unsigned

I came to know Elias Ward in a fictional group in July 2021. He introduced me to the Prison Professors book-report format. He asked what I had learned from a book and how I might apply one idea rather than simply summarizing its chapters. When I wrote that I wanted to work in maintenance, he suggested that I list the tasks I needed to learn and ask a supervisor for feedback.

We remained in contact after release. In this example I work for a fictional maintenance company. I told Elias that a supervisor had corrected my first attempt at a repair report. I revised the report and began checking my work before turning it in. Elias listened and encouraged me to keep learning. He did not get me the position or perform the work for me.

I appreciate that he continued to treat me as someone capable of taking responsibility. My knowledge comes from our group meetings and the conversations we have kept up since release. I support his petition because I have seen him make time to teach and follow up, even when he had no obligation to do so. In this fictional scenario, I would be willing to speak with an investigator.

Andrew Pierce | Fictional writer; no signature or affirmation executed.

M3 — TESTIMONIAL OF JAMES BELL

Fictional primary reference • unrelated by blood or marriage • unsigned

I met Elias Ward during a fictional Prison Professors resource session in August 2021. I had spoken about wanting to provide for my family, but my plan did not explain how I would manage my time or spending. Elias showed me an example of a weekly schedule and asked me to build one around my own responsibilities.

After release we stayed in touch. I reported that I had found work with a fictional delivery business. I also told him about the challenge of balancing that schedule with family obligations. Our conversations helped me return to the plan and revise it as my circumstances changed. In this example I remain employed, contribute to household expenses, and keep a calendar of family and work commitments.

I am grateful for Elias’s willingness to listen and his respect for the fact that I had to do the work myself. I know he has a federal conviction because he discussed his conduct with our group. I cannot independently verify his full case history. I can describe the way he has shown up in our relationship, and I support his request for pardon. In this fictional scenario, I would be willing to speak with an investigator.

James Bell | Fictional writer; no signature or affirmation executed.

CERTIFICATION, AUTHORIZATION AND SUBMISSION — TEACHING NOTES

No signature, personal oath, authorization, primary-reference certification or sworn statement is executed in this sample. In an actual application, follow the current DOJ instructions for the applicant's signature and signed authorization and for the three signed letters. Each reference should write and sign an honest account based on personal knowledge and be willing to be interviewed. A teaching sample cannot substitute for required signed materials.

The government may request or independently review supporting documents. Do not invent official records, certificates or commitments. Follow current instructions when assembling and submitting a real petition, and update the application if important information changes.

OFFICIAL SOURCES REVIEWED NOVEMBER 20, 2026

DOJ Application for Pardon After Completion of Sentence, May 2024, OMB 1123-0016, printed expiration May 31, 2027: https://www.justice.gov/pardon/file/960581/dl
DOJ Apply for Clemency: https://www.justice.gov/pardon/apply-clemency
DOJ Frequently Asked Questions: https://www.justice.gov/pardon/frequently-asked-questions
Prison Professors: https://www.prisonprofessors.org/