

## SECTION ONE

### Understanding the Stakes of the PSR

Purpose of this section:

Help participants fully grasp why the PSR matters, how it differs from sentencing arguments, and why ignoring it creates irreversible harm. This section builds urgency without panic.

#### Lessons in Section One

##### 1. What the PSR Is and Why It Matters

- ◇ What the PSR is
- ◇ Who writes it
- ◇ Why it becomes a permanent record
- ◇ How it follows a person long after sentencing

##### 2. From Presumption of Innocence to Convicted Person

- ◇ How status changes after conviction
- ◇ Why the system now evaluates the person differently
- ◇ Why expectations must shift after conviction

##### 3. Who Relies on the PSR (and Why You'll Never Meet Them)

- ◇ Judges
- ◇ Probation officers
- ◇ BOP administrators
- ◇ Case managers and counselors
- ◇ Why unseen decision-makers rely on the PSR

##### 4. What Happens When People Are Unprepared

- ◇ Real consequences of inaccurate PSRs
- ◇ Examples like Arnie, Carlos, Randall, Raymond, Rich
- ◇ Why sentencing success can still lead to harsher confinement

## 5. What Happens When People Are Unprepared

- ◇ Limits of legal advocacy
- ◇ Why many attorneys underweight PSR consequences
- ◇ Why personal preparation is still required

### Outcome of Section One:

Participants understand that the PSR is not a formality — it is a life-shaping document they must take responsibility for influencing.



# SECTION TWO

## Preparing Before the PSR Interview

Purpose of this section:

Shift from fear to actionable preparation. This section teaches how to think, what to document, and how to prepare before speaking to probation.

### Lessons in Section Two

#### 6. How the PSR Investigation Works

- ◇ Timeline after conviction
- ◇ Where interviews occur
- ◇ What probation officers already know
- ◇ Why the interview is not neutral

#### 7. How the PSR Investigation Works

- ◇ Law-enforcement authority
- ◇ Caseload pressures
- ◇ Verification mindset
- ◇ Obstruction and credibility risks

#### 8. When to Speak and When to Be Careful

- ◇ Cooperation vs. silence
- ◇ Appellate considerations
- ◇ How to defer respectfully
- ◇ Why lying or minimizing is dangerous

#### 9. Engineering a PSR-Ready Mitigation Strategy

- ◇ Using the sentencing narrative
- ◇ Using character references
- ◇ Documenting rehabilitation and conduct
- ◇ Preparing materials probation can verify



## **10. Preparing Your Personal Narrative for the PSR**

- » How probation officers use narratives
- » Cut-and-paste reality
- » How narratives influence multiple PSR sections

## **11. Preparing Family and Supporters for Contact**

- » What probation may ask others
- » Why families must be ready
- » How inconsistent statements create problems

## **Outcome of Section Two:**

Participants enter the PSR process prepared, documented, and intentional, rather than reactive.



## **SECTION THREE**

### **Protecting the Record and Influencing Outcomes**

#### **Purpose of this section:**

Teach how to safeguard accuracy, anticipate downstream consequences, and understand what can — and cannot — be fixed later.

#### **Lessons in Section Three**

##### **12. Anatomy of the PSR**

- » Offense conduct
- » Defendant participation
- » Offender characteristics
- » Substance abuse
- » Physical and mental health
- » Education, employment, finances

##### **13. High-Risk Sections That Require Extra Care**

- » Leadership or organizer language
- » Drug quantity attribution
- » Violence or weapon references
- » Organized crime insinuations

##### **14. Acceptance of Responsibility and Obstruction Risks**

- » How probation interprets remorse
- » Timing matters
- » How silence may be framed
- » How obstruction allegations arise

##### **15. Programs, Classification, and Release Implications**

- » RDAP eligibility
- » Security level



- » Camp vs. higher security
- » Halfway house and home confinement

## **16. Reviewing, Objecting, and Correcting the PSR**

- » Draft review process
- » Working with counsel
- » Making objections that matter
- » Why late objections fail

## **17. Statement of Reasons as a Critical Backstop**

- » What it is
- » Why it matters to BOP
- » How it can mitigate PSR damage

## **18. Why Fixing the PSR Later Rarely Works**

- » Post-sentencing reality
- » BOP reliance on original reports
- » Lessons from Raymond, Rich, and others

## **Outcome of Section Three:**

Participants understand how to protect their future self, even after lawyers exit the picture.



# Big Picture Result

## With this structure, the PSR course becomes:

- » A guided preparation pathway
- » Emotionally survivable
- » Strategically aligned with:
  - ◇ Sentencing Narrative
  - ◇ Character Reference Campaign
- » Clearly focused on before, during, and immediately after the PSR process

## If you'd like, next I can:

- » Draft module titles + one-line descriptions for this new structure, or
- » Write the top-of-page PSR course overview that introduces these three sections cleanly and calmly.

