

THE PRIME OBJECTIVE

A JOB SEEKING GUIDE FOR EX-OFFENDERS



WE ARE YOUR DOL



THE PRIME OBJECTIVE is a resource guide designed to help make entering the workforce as successful as possible for job seekers with convictions. Although this booklet is compiled by the New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL), a number of sources need to be credited. Without their valuable input and expertise, this guide would not exist.

- The Legal Action Center of New York City
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)
- NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS)
- NYS Department of Veterans Affairs
- NYS Department of Civil Service

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Introduction

THE PRIME OBJECTIVE is for any job seeker who has been convicted of a crime and wants to work in New York State.

Employment is one of the primary goals for all individuals with criminal records. Time and again, research shows that being employed is essential to maintaining a successful life without reoffending. Roughly two thirds of all individuals with criminal records who do not find and maintain employment commit another offense within three years. In most cases, individuals on parole or probation are directed to obtain a job as a condition of community supervision.

When you are searching for a job, there are some special challenges you may face. **THE PRIME OBJECTIVE** will show you how to address many of these issues, as well as steps you can take to help you find and maintain a job. This guide will educate you about the following:

- How to get a copy of your RAP sheet (criminal history) and correct any possible errors
- Your employment rights – know what an employer can and can't ask on an application or in person about your arrests and convictions
- How to address any possible licensing and hiring restrictions you may have
- How to answer questions on job applications and during interviews about your criminal history
- How to make yourself a more competitive candidate for any job
- And many more useful resources, including contact information for helpful agencies and examples in the appendix of this guide for applications, resumes, and interviewing

Using this guide

THE PRIME OBJECTIVE will help you with every point in the process of finding a job, from getting organized before you are released, right through tips to help you succeed once you get the job. The timeline below is shown at the top of each page of the guide, which will let you know when the information on the page will be most useful to you. In the example below, the information given will help you during your **Job Search**.



At times in the guide, certain additional information is highlighted for your attention, as below.



This is an example of information that has been highlighted for your attention.



Before You Are Released

Even if you are incarcerated, there are steps you can take to start planning your job search strategy before you are released. Since you may not have access to all of the resources you need to get started with your job search, this is a time for personal reflection and planning. You should start to think about the following:

Basic needs first - This step is an important one to think about and take care of right away after being released, even before starting your job search. Think about how you will get access to housing, food, healthcare, transportation, clothing and other basic necessities. You may be lucky enough to have family or friends to stay with on a temporary or permanent basis. However, it is possible that you may need assistance from the community or from government resources. You cannot expect to be successful in finding a job if you don't take care of your basic needs first.

Education and employment - This is something you need to think about, whether you have little to no work experience or you have years of experience in a certain field or industry. Take time to think carefully about what type(s) of work you have done in the past, if any, and what type(s) of work you would like to do in the future. Will you need to get training in order to do this job? Do you need to finish school or obtain your high school equivalency credential (now known as TASC, or Test Assessing Secondary Completion), or just learn new skills? Both training and finding a new job can take a lot of time, so knowing what steps you will need to take after being released will make this process easier.

What steps can I take if I am still in jail or prison?

Take advantage of any educational and or vocational training programs available in your facility. Also, if possible, try to create positive relationships with any vocational rehabilitation or training staff where you are so you can contact them for future references.

If you are still in jail or prison, you can get help from pre-release centers, preparation centers and other community organizations available at or through your facility. They can help you get organized, plan your next steps and help you get documents you will need for your job search.

How much education do I actually need to get a job?

The amount of education you need will depend on the type of job you want. In today's economy, it is very hard to get a good job if you don't at least have a high school diploma, or the new high school equivalency, called TASC. If you are incarcerated, your facility may offer a program for preparing for the TASC. If you are not incarcerated and you need assistance with getting your high school equivalency, you can call (518) 474-5906 or visit: www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/ready-set-test-new-high-school-equivalency-exam-here There are free test preparation locations around the state. You can find a preparation class at: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/hse-prep-programs-maps>



After You Are Released

The period of time after being released from incarceration can be both exciting and overwhelming. For many recently released individuals, transitioning back to everyday life can be a challenge – many people don't know where to begin.

As mentioned in the previous section, make sure to take care of your basic survival needs first. This is important to do before you can focus on your job search.

Where can I find out about benefits that can help me?

For information about getting help with your expenses, including: food, housing, utilities and other costs, you can use the **MyBenefits** website (www.mybenefits.ny.gov). To find out if you might be eligible for a variety of different benefits, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefits, go to the **MyBenefits** website and find the panel that says "Am I Eligible" then click on "Check Eligibility" at the bottom of the panel. After answering a few basic questions about yourself and your household- (your name or other identifying information is not asked for)- you will see a list of programs that you may be eligible to receive services from. You will also be provided with instructions for how to apply for benefits.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can contact the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) for help at:

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, New York 1224
Phone: (518) 473-1090 (General Number)

If you need to apply for services you should apply with the local Department of Social Services Office (DSS) in the county you will be living in after you are released. You can find your local DSS office by using the link or hotline number below.

Website: <https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp>
Hotline: 1-800-342-3009

What other resources are available to help me with my post-release transition?

There are many resources available to help with your post-release transition. Excellent websites such as the HIRE Network, www.hirenetwork.org, can give you valuable information to help you find resources for your transition and job search.



Also, don't forget to check with organizations in your community – they are often the best places to go to get the immediate assistance you need. Some places to research in your community may include:

- **Colleges, universities and vocational schools:** Even if you didn't attend them, many schools have placement facilities and/or networks of referrals for other assistance.
- **Public libraries:** The public library in your area may be able to refer you to free services and programs. They may also have free classes on using a computer.
- **Churches and faith-based organizations:** Churches and faith-based organizations have been known to help justice-involved individuals get back on their feet and find the right rehabilitation and employment supports.

Searching for Employment – First Steps

What documents do I need before I start my job search?

You should have the following documents before applying for jobs. Many are required as part of the application process.

- **Social Security Card:** To obtain a replacement card contact the nearest Social Security Administration office (listed under US Government Offices in your telephone book), call their toll-free number at 1-800-772-1213, or look at their website (www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/) for instructions.
- **Driver's License/Non-driver Photo ID Card:** Go to the nearest Department of Motor Vehicles office. You can find contact information in a local phone book or identify a local office at the DMV website at: (<https://dmv.ny.gov/offices>) For information on how to get a non-driver ID card go to: (<https://dmv.ny.gov/id-card/non-driver-id-card>)
- **Birth Certificate (Also: marriage, divorce or death certificate):** Outside of New York City, contact the New York State Department of Health Vital Records website at: (www.health.ny.gov/vital_records). Within New York City, contact the New York City Office of Vital Records / Bureau of Vital Statistics at: (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/birth-certificates.page>)
- **Facility Release papers:** These are papers given to you upon your release from incarceration.
- **Proof(s) of Education:** These include copies of your H.S diploma, GED, TASC and certificates or transcripts from training. To obtain a copy of a H.S. Diploma, the local school district will need to be contacted. To obtain a copy of a GED or TASC Credential, go to: www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/duplicate-diplomas-andor-transcripts for forms and instructions.



- **Military Discharge Papers (for veterans only):** Veterans receive these after being discharged from the military (also referred to as separation papers or DD-214s)

There are two ways to request military discharge papers:

- 1- The first is to request papers online at:
<https://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html>
- 2- The second way is to submit a request by mail or fax using the SF-180 form. This form can be obtained at:
<https://www.archives.gov/files/sf180-request-pertaining-to-military-records-exp-april2018-1.pdf>

- **Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) :** To obtain a replacement of a green card contact the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at: (<https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/after-a-green-card-granted#Replacing>) or call 1-800-375-5283

What other documents may be useful?

Although they are not required, the following items are very helpful:

- **Letters of Reference:** Contact previous employers and ask if they can provide you with a letter of reference, or if you can use them as a reference in your job search; you may also have letters of reference provided by staff from schools or vocational training programs you attended
- **Resumes:** If you have a resume already, this will be helpful as you start your job search
- **Fact Sheets:** If you don't have a resume, prepare a sheet that lists address and phone numbers of former employers, dates you worked at each job, job titles, etc.
- **Certificates or Awards:** Include any you have received for completing vocational training or special programs

What are Certificates of Rehabilitation?

If you have a conviction for a felony or misdemeanor, or if you have a JO (Juvenile Offender) conviction, you can apply for a certificate of rehabilitation. These certificates may help when you are looking for a job or applying for an occupational license.



You do NOT need a certificate if you have a JD (Juvenile Delinquent) or YO (Youthful Offender) adjudication because they are NOT convictions.

Why should I apply for one?

If you have a certificate when you apply for a job or a license, the employer or licensing authority must consider it as evidence of rehabilitation. This means that your conviction cannot be used as the sole reason to deny you employment or refuse to give you a license.

A certificate can usually lift automatic bars to NYS licensing because of a conviction.



Will a certificate completely protect me from being denied a job or license because of my criminal conviction?

No. Even with a certificate, the law allows an employer or licensing authority to refuse to hire or license you if your conviction(s) is job-related or could pose a risk to property or other employees or customers.



A certificate is NOT a pardon and does NOT erase your conviction.

You still must list your convictions on a job application if the application asks you to. Also, your conviction(s) will remain on your RAP sheet (criminal history).

How many types of certificates are there?

There are two types of certificates: the ***Certificate of Relief from Disabilities***, and the ***Certificate of Good Conduct***.

What is the difference between these two certificates?

The major difference is related to the number and type of crime(s) that you committed. The certificate you can apply for is determined by your criminal record. If you are applying for an occupational license, you will also need to check the type of certificate the licensing agency requires.

Who qualifies for the Certificate of Relief from Disabilities?

You are eligible to apply for this certificate if you have ***one*** felony and/or any number of misdemeanors. This certificate may be issued to you upon release from prison, upon sentencing, or release from jail to community supervision.

While you are still under parole or probation, the certificate is temporary. When you are discharged from parole or probation, the certificate will become permanent unless you receive another conviction.



If you have been convicted of a federal offense, an out-of-state crime, or a crime in another country, you may be eligible to apply for a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities in New York.

Who qualifies for the Certificate of Good Conduct?

You are eligible to apply for the Certificate of Good Conduct if you have been convicted of ***more than one*** felony and/or any number of misdemeanors.

If the most serious conviction you have received is a Class C, D or E felony, the minimum period of time required before you can apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct is three years from the date of your release from prison for your most serious conviction, or three years from the date of your last felony conviction, whichever is most recent.



If the most serious conviction you have received is a Class A or B felony, the minimum period of time before you can apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct is five years from the date of your release from prison for your most serious conviction, or five years from the date of your last felony conviction, whichever is most recent.

How do I apply for one of these certificates?

You can apply for a certificate from the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision or DOCCS.

To obtain forms and instructions go to:

www.doccs.ny.gov/pdf/DOCCS-CRD-Application_instructions.pdf

This link contains the application and instructions for both certificates of rehabilitation. The link also contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with answers.

Completed applications need to be mailed to:

New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS)
 Harriman State Office Campus / Building 2
 1220 Washington Avenue
 Albany, New York 12226-2050



Even if you do get a certificate of rehabilitation, there are certain jobs for which your conviction may automatically disqualify you. Also, to apply for any public office, such as a court officer or firefighter, you will need a Certificate of Good Conduct, no matter how many felony convictions you have. Make sure to research this before you apply for jobs.



Getting and Correcting Your RAP Sheet

What is a RAP sheet?

A Record of Arrest and Prosecution (RAP) sheet is a record of all your arrests and convictions. In New York, RAP sheets are maintained by the Record Review Unit of the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

Who can legally request a copy of a RAP sheet from DCJS?

- **You:** First and most importantly, you have a right to see your own RAP sheet.
- **Criminal justice and law enforcement agencies:** This would include:
 - Police departments
 - Courts
 - District and defense attorneys
 - Parole and probation departments, and
 - The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
- **Certain employers:** Certain employers are allowed to obtain copies of your RAP sheet as part of the hiring process, including:
 - Hospitals
 - Nursing homes
 - Home health agencies
 - Banks
 - Museums
 - Schools
 - Any employer who must legally fingerprint applicants for hiring
- **Occupational licensing agencies:** Examples of jobs requiring an occupational license include (but are not limited to):
 - Nurses
 - Barbers
 - Security guards
 - Taxi Driver



Why is it important for me to see a copy of my RAP sheet before applying for jobs?

It is important to see a copy of your RAP sheet before looking for work to make sure that there are no errors. Many RAP sheets have mistakes on them, including incorrect information, information that should have been sealed and missing court dispositions. This will give you time to correct any possible errors on your RAP sheet before you apply for any jobs.

It is also possible that you may not remember every conviction. Seeing a copy of your RAP sheet before looking for work will allow you to prepare for addressing your criminal history properly in interviews and on job applications.

How do I get a copy of my RAP sheet?

If you are not incarcerated or will be incarcerated for less than 45 days, you should contact the New York State DCJS (Division of Criminal Justice Services) Record Review Unit for an application packet:

DCJS Record Review Unit
 New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
 Alfred E. Smith Building
 80 South Swan Street
 Albany, NY 12210
 Phone: (518) 485-7675 or (518) 457-9857
 Email: Record Review@dcjs.ny.gov

The DCJS RAP Sheet Web Page: <https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ojis/recordreview.htm> includes instructions for requesting a RAP Sheet. You need to request either a Supressed (with no sealed information) or an Unsupressed (with sealed information) RAP Sheet. After you complete the required form, return it to DCJS with a copy of your fingerprints (see fingerprinting instructions below). There is a cost for both the RAP sheet and the fingerprints, which is approximately \$62.00. If you are currently collecting government benefits (such as unemployment, food stamps or public assistance) or if you can provide a notarized statement of your current income, you may be able to get the RAP Sheet fee waived. To request a fee waiver application send an email to: RecordReview@dcjs.ny.gov . If you get the DCJS fee waived, you are still responsible for the fingerprint cost which is around \$12.00.

If you are currently incarcerated or have been placed in a juvenile facility for more than 45 days in New York State, you must request a copy of your RAP sheet from DCJS. After DCJS gets the request, they will send you a FREE copy of your RAP sheet.

Where can I get my fingerprints taken for my RAP sheet request?

To get your fingerprints taken for a New York State RAP sheet request, contact MorphoTrust/Identogo the vendor for the state, by calling 1-877-472-6915 or by visiting their website at: <https://uenroll.identogo.com>



When you go to the Identogo website select “click here” under the box. You will then select New York State and enter the ORI code NYDCJSPRY. You will then need to select which type of RAP sheet you are requesting. There is an option to have the response sent to your attorney instead of to you. You will need to provide two forms of identification as indicated on the MorphoTrust/Identogo website. You must pay for fingerprinting.

How can I correct any errors on my RAP sheet?

An excellent resource to help you correct errors on your rap sheet is the Legal Action Center’s free publication **“Your New York State RAP Sheet: A Guide To Getting, Understanding & Correcting Your Criminal Record.”**

This publication is available on the Legal Action Center website:
http://www.lac.org/doc_library/lac/publications/YourRapSheet.pdf

You can also contact the Legal Action Center directly to request a copy. If you contact the center by phone, ask for the paralegal on call.

Legal Action Center
225 Varick St., 4th Floor
New York, NY 10014
Phone: (212) 243-1313
Fax: (212) 675-0286



Employer Access to Your Criminal History

Does an employer need my permission to conduct a background check?

Not always. Certain employers are legally able to get a copy of your legal history without your permission, which will reveal not only your criminal convictions and arrests, but also your sealed violations. Employers who are not legally able to get a copy of your RAP sheet can still use consumer or credit reporting agencies to conduct background checks on job applicants but they will require your permission to do this.

Does an employer need my permission to conduct a background check using a consumer or credit reporting agency?

Yes, always. Both the Federal and New York State Fair Credit Reporting Laws require that an employer gets your permission before running a background check on you using a consumer or credit reporting agency. You will need to sign a form giving the employer permission to run this kind of background check.

Know Your Rights

As an ex-offender in New York State, you have employment rights you should know about before you start applying for and interviewing for jobs.

What are employers allowed to do and ask?

- Employers in New York State can lawfully ask about all unsealed misdemeanor and felony convictions.
- Employers who cannot access your RAP sheet can legally ask for court disposition slips as part of the application process
- Employers have the right to conduct a background check on you through a consumer or credit reporting agency – however, under federal law, you are entitled to a copy of the report and a reasonable amount of time to review it before the employer denies your employment for reasons related to a conviction

What are employers not allowed to do or ask?

- Employers cannot ask about any arrest(s) that did not result in a conviction(s)
- Federal law bans employers from using polygraph (lie detector) tests as a basis for employment
- Employers in New York State are not allowed to discriminate against hiring ex-offenders, unless the felony and/or misdemeanor conviction(s) is related to the type of employment or license being sought (e.g., if you were convicted for fraud and you are seeking work as an accountant, the employer has the right not to hire you on this basis)



If you feel that you have been discriminated against solely because you have a criminal record, you have the right to ask the employer for a letter explaining why you were denied employment. You also have the right to see a copy of the background check they obtained no matter where it came from. The New York State Division of Human Rights enforces the New York State Corrections Law, which states the employer has 30 days to give you this letter.

You can file a complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights through their website at: <https://dhr.ny.gov/complaint>. A listing of Regional Division of Human Rights Offices can be found at: <https://dhr.ny.gov/contact-us>

Hiring Incentives for Employers

There are several hiring incentives available in New York State to help eliminate employment barriers and encourage employers to hire you. In order to be competitive in the job market, you should educate yourself about these incentives and opportunities as fully as possible. These programs can be advertised to employers during the hiring process.

Federal Bonding Program

What is the Federal Bonding Program?

The Federal Bonding Program is a business insurance policy for employers that protects against any loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. This is a free service offered by the New York State Department of Labor which provides a business with up to \$25,000 of insurance coverage if the employer hires an individual who is eligible for the program. Individuals who are eligible include anyone who has a prior felony or misdemeanor conviction. It can make the difference in whether or not an employer will decide to hire you.

How do I get bonded?

You can only apply for bonding under the program once you have a job offer with a start date. Once you have a start date with an employer, either you or the employer can contact the local bonding coordinator in your area to get the bonding process started.

What if I don't have a job offer or start date yet?

If you are eligible for the program but do not yet have a job offer, the New York State Department of Labor can provide you with a letter stating you are eligible which can be shown to a prospective employer. Whether or not you have a job offer you can still choose to educate yourself about this and other work incentives so that you can educate employers about them in the interviewing and hiring process.

Where can I get more information about the program or get started?

To learn more, or to start the bonding process, visit the Department of Labor's Federal Bonding Program web page to identify a Local Bonding Coordinator.

<https://labor.ny.gov/businessservices/services/fbp.shtm>



Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a tax credit for employers who hire individuals from one of the target groups for the program, which includes individuals with felony convictions. Employers can receive a tax credit up to \$2,400. Ex-offenders must be hired within one year of their release or conviction to qualify. More information is available on the Department of Labor’s WOTC web page: <https://labor.ny.gov/businessservices/edsu/edsu%20wotc.shtm>

On-The-Job Training

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a program that provides funding to a business that trains employees at its workplace. To see if you qualify for an OJT position, visit your nearest One-Stop Career Center.

NYS Department of Labor: One-Stop Career Centers

The NYS Department of Labor’s One-Stop Career Centers are a major resource as you begin your job search. To find the Career Center that is closest to you go to: <https://labor.ny.gov/career-center-locator/> Enter your zip code to find the Career Center that is closest to you.

Services available at One-Stop Career Centers include:

- Career counseling
- Job search assistance
- Local and statewide labor market information
- Workshops on topics such as resume writing and interviewing
- Local and statewide labor market information
- Training opportunities
- Veterans services
- Access to computers, phones and faxes you can use for your job search



Veterans receive priority of service at all One-Stop Career Centers. This means that veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for employment, training, and placement services. Therefore, a veteran or an eligible spouse receives access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person, or, if the resource is limited, the veteran or eligible spouse receives access to the service instead of or before the non-covered person.



Other tools available on the Department of Labor’s website include:

- **New York State Job Bank** – Post your resume and search for jobs at <https://newyork.usnlx.com> You will need to create an account to do this.
- **JobZone** – Use the site’s career planning and self-assessment tools for job seekers: www.jobzone.ny.gov You can choose to create an account if you would like to save your resume or other information on JobZone- but it is not required.
- **Jobs Express** – Search for local jobs in ten different regions of New York by job industry at: <http://jobs.ny.gov>
- Listing of **job fairs** and **continuous recruitments** at career centers near you go to: <https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/career-center-events.shtm>

Apprenticeship Programs

Another option to consider is to train as an apprentice. Apprenticeship training is a program through which a worker earns a starting apprentice wage while learning a skilled craft or trade on the job, along with additional related learning that usually takes place in a classroom setting.

How does the Apprenticeship Program work?

As an apprentice, you are a full-time, paid employee usually starting at about 40%-50% of the journey-worker wage rate, with increases periodically until training is completed. You will then earn full journey-worker wages. There are also fringe benefits in many programs, like paid vacations, paid holidays, insurance, and retirement plans. The length of training, which is given under the guidance of an experienced journey-worker, varies from one to five years, depending on the trade.

Do I need to be a high school graduate?

For most apprenticeship opportunities, a high school diploma or high school equivalency is required before you start.

What kinds of apprenticeship opportunities are available?

Currently, there are over 100 active apprenticeship trades listed with the Department of Labor, including, but not limited to: construction, machining, infrastructure (such as heating, electrical and plumbing) and masonry.

Check the Department of Labor’s Apprenticeship Program web page at:

<https://labor.ny.gov/apprenticeship/general/registration.shtm> for more information on how to become an apprentice, and to see current recruitments that are available in regions around the state.

Apprenticeships that are currently recruiting can be found at:

<https://labor.ny.gov/pressreleases/apprenticeshiparchive.shtm>



I already completed a Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Program. How do I get verification that I completed the training?

When you complete a Department of Labor registered apprenticeship training program, you are issued a certificate of completion. If you haven't received the certificate or no longer have it, you can submit a request in writing by email or by calling to receive verification that you completed the training or to receive a copy of your certificate of completion. Your request, whether made through email or on the phone, should include the following information: your full name; any other names you have gone by; the last four numbers of your Social Security Number; your date of birth; your DOCCS Department Identification Number (DIN) if applicable; the approximate dates you started and finished the training; and a mailing address.

The request should be directed to the New York State Department of Labor Central Office at:

NYS Department of Labor
 Apprenticeship Training Program
 WA Harriman State Office Campus, Building 12 Room 459
 Albany, NY 12240
 ATCO@labor.ny.gov
 (518) 457-6820

Note: If you have completed a training program while incarcerated, keep in mind that not all training programs completed in state correctional facilities are Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Training programs. There are many training programs that are operated by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS). **The Department of Labor does not have any record of these trainings.** If you are currently under Community Supervision (probation or parole) you should request a document called a T.A.P.E.R. from your Supervising Officer. This document will list training you completed while incarcerated. There is no cost for this document.

If you are no longer under Community Supervision, there are a few ways to request the T.A.P.E.R. Report. For proof of completing the apprenticeship submit a written request for a copy of your T.A.P.E.R. There is no cost for this document.

In your written request please provide the following information: your name used while incarcerated, date of birth, Inmate DIN #, address, email address, phone number and the name of the facility where training occurred. Send your request to:

NYS DOCCS
 Attention: Division of Education
 Harriman State Campus
 1220 Washington Avenue
 Albany, New York 12226-2055



The second way to request a copy of a T.A.P.E.R. if you have completed Community Supervision is to call the correctional facility where you last served time. Follow these steps: 1) Ask for extension 4100 (this is the same extension at every facility), 2) ask to speak with the Inmate Record Coordinator, 3) request a copy of the T.A.P.E.R. and provide the following information:

- Full Name
- Date of Birth
- Address (for report to be mailed to)
- Telephone Number
- Email address
- Inmate DIN #

Be aware that there may be a charge of \$0.25 per page if the report is requested this way.

Planning Your Job Search

Finding work when you have a criminal record can be challenging, and certain obstacles can make your job search difficult at times. Here are some suggestions to help you plan your time and create an effective job search plan.

Tips to get started

- Begin your search as soon as you are able to do so – do not put it off
- Register with your nearest One-Stop Career Center as soon as possible for help with your job search, resume, cover letter development, and interviewing skills
- Job hunting is a full-time job – plan to spend 30-40 hours a week looking for work
- Do some research about the best way to contact each possible employer: online application, phone call, in-person meeting, etc.
- If coming in person to contact a business, find out in advance when is the best time and day of the week to apply for a job
- Apply early enough in the day to allow time for employers to respond to your application and to set up interviews, tests or other steps needed for hiring
- Be on time for all appointments

Where Can I Find Jobs?

There are many resources available to help you in your job search.

Networking – It's all about who you know

Networking when looking for work means telling everyone you know that you are looking for work and following up with each contact in your network for possible job leads. Since many job vacancies are filled by word-of-mouth or referrals, and many aren't advertised online or in the want ads, building an extensive network can be a powerful resource in your job search.

Make sure to let everyone you know you are looking for new employment. This includes friends, family, neighbors, acquaintances, employment counselors, One-Stop Career Center staff, and anyone else who might be able to help you find job leads. Check in with your contacts often.



Also, don't forget to check out other sources for jobs. Some examples include:

- **New York State Job Bank** – <https://newyork.usnlx.com>
- **Jobs Express** – <http://www.jobs.ny.gov>
- NYS Department of Labor's **job fairs** and **continuous recruitments** page – <https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/career-center-events.shtm>
- Other **online job sites** and job boards
- **Job placement agencies** and **temp agencies** that don't charge fees
- **Placement services** from your previous school(s), union or trade association
- **Previous employers** you worked for in the past

Working for the Government

Another source you may want to consider in your job search is government jobs. New York State is an equal opportunity employer, which means that you cannot be discriminated against for employment opportunities based on your arrest and/or criminal conviction record, unless based on a related occupational restriction.



Although you can apply for government positions, keep in mind that the law may still disqualify you if your conviction(s) is related to the job responsibilities (e.g., persons convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes under Federal or State law are "prohibited from employment in any position requiring the individual to: ship, transport, possess, or receive firearms or ammunition"). If you need help with this, check with the hiring entity first.

To find out more information about getting a job with the State of New York, check out the StateJobsNY website at <https://statejobsny.com/public/index.cfm>

For many state jobs, you will need to first take a civil service exam before you can be considered for the position. To see a list of currently scheduled exams, visit the Department of Civil Service's page at <http://www.cs.ny.gov/examannouncements/types/oc/>. There is usually a fee to register for exams, but this may be waived if you are unemployed or receiving public assistance benefits.

You can also search for jobs with the federal government at: www.usajobs.gov.



Be honest about your conviction(s) when applying for government jobs. If you lie on government applications, you can be fired and also face possible misdemeanor charges. Lying on a government application may mean that you will not be eligible to apply for any government jobs in the future.



Filling Out Job Applications

When filling out job applications, it can be difficult to decide what you need to reveal about your criminal history and when to do so. Be sure to read all questions concerning your criminal history carefully. You should only answer what is being asked – you do not need to give any information that is not being requested.

In all cases, you should be familiar with the following information about any of your criminal charges and convictions:

- The specific conviction and sentence (if applicable)
- The disposition (outcome) of the case – did it result in conviction or was it dismissed?
- The date of disposition

Employers in New York State are not allowed to ask about arrests that do not result in convictions. However, they can ask about all unsealed felony and misdemeanor convictions and can ask you to provide a certificate of disposition from each applicable court of conviction.

Helpful tips for completing job applications

- Read the job application and follow instructions carefully.
- Write neatly and be complete and accurate in your answers.
- In the work history, you can include any applicable work you did while incarcerated.
- Make sure to write down the name and contact information of the person who accepts your application in your notes and ask them how you should follow up with your application – do this for each employer, and make sure to follow up afterwards.

Have you ever been convicted...?

Some job applications may ask if you have ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor. If so, don't leave this question or section blank – doing so could be considered "lying by omission." Some employment experts recommend answering "yes" to having a conviction and then writing "will discuss at interview", which is honest without getting into too much detail.

The Legal Action Center has an excellent resource called "*Criminal Records and Employment: Protecting Yourself from Discrimination*" which goes over how to answer the "conviction question" on applications and in person. View this resource at:

https://lac.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Criminal_Records_Employment.pdf



Do not lie on a job application. A job application is a legal document. Even after you successfully get a job, you can still be fired at any time for having lied on your application.



Preparing Your Resume

You will need to have a resume prepared for almost all types of jobs. A prepared resume is important because it:

- May help you get a job interview
- Reminds interviewers and employers of who you are
- Provides a way for employers to compare your skills and qualifications with other job candidates
- Helps organize all of your employment-related information in one spot
- Can help you focus and prepare for your interview

To get you started in thinking about how to prepare your resume(s) and cover letter(s), some examples with notes have been provided in the appendix of this guide.

If the jobs I am applying for only require me to fill out applications, do I still need a resume?

It is strongly recommended that all job seekers have a resume. Even if you are applying for jobs that do not require you to submit a resume, there are several reasons you should. It can serve as a quick reference for you to fill out applications – sometimes you can even just copy and paste information from your resume into online job applications. A resume is also a valuable tool to bring to job fairs, recruitments and job interviews. It is also needed to use tools such as the New York State Job Bank and SMART (Skills Matching and Referral Technology) where keywords on your resume are matched with jobs in online databases.

Do I need to customize my resume for every job opening?

Yes. You should revise a copy of your resume when you apply for each job opening. Take the time to customize your resume to match each job description with your own skills and experience. This extra step of personalizing your resume shows the employer that you are serious about getting the job and you are willing to put forth the extra effort to get the job.

Where can I go to get help with my resume?

There are many places you can get resume assistance.

One-Stop Career Centers: You can register at your nearest One-Stop Career Center for assistance with writing your resume, to attend resume workshops and to submit your resume for **SMART**, a job-matching tool that sends job leads based on your skills directly to your email.



The Job Interview

For almost any job an employer considers to hire you, you will be contacted for an interview. The job interview gives a possible employer the strongest impression of who you are, and it can be the most important step on the path to being hired.

Before the interview

- Do your **research** – Look up whatever information you can about the business to show interest and initiative at the interview.
- Check your **appearance** – First impressions are important, so be sure to look neat and professional and dress for the job as though you are starting the job today.
- Arrive at least a few minutes **early** – this shows that you are responsible about being on time and that you respect the interviewer’s time.
- **Practice** some of the most common interview questions – You can practice with friends, family and One-Stop staff.
- Bring copies of your **resume** and any other requested documents.
- **Prepare yourself** before the interview to speak about your conviction(s).

Preparing to speak about your conviction(s)

This is a critical step in your interview preparation. At some point in the interview process, you will be asked about or need to discuss your criminal history. Remember: **You** have control over how you handle this part of the interview.

- **Stay positive** – avoid being negative when discussing your criminal history and do not blame anyone else for your circumstances.
- **Determine when** you will need to discuss your conviction(s) – you want any possible employers to know that you have nothing to hide.
- **Be prepared** to deal with any objections or negative reactions to your background and **show** that you are a person of value and a strong candidate for the job.
- **Accept responsibility** but do not dwell on it. Be brief and truthful, and then move on.
- Focus on what you have done to **rehabilitate yourself** and discuss how your **skills** will make a positive contribution to the business.



During the interview

- Bring several copies of your **resume** and other employment documents (if applicable).
- **Smile**, shake hands firmly with your interviewer and **maintain eye contact**.
- Breathe normally, take your time and **think** before you answer questions.
- **Be prepared** to discuss what you have learned since your legal history
- Show that you have done your **research** about the business and this job by mentioning specific ways you will be an ideal candidate.
- **Thank** the interviewer for their time and interest.
- Do not discuss any personal problems or health issues.
- Never criticize former employers or coworkers.
- Ask for professional cards of the individuals who interviewed you.
- Send a thank you note to each person who interviewed you.

After the interview

Use this helpful checklist to reflect on what went right in the interview, what you want to work on for your next interview and what your follow-up steps will be.

- Did you arrive on time?
- Did you introduce yourself to the interviewer?
- Did you review your resume with the interviewer?
- Did you smile and maintain eye contact throughout the interview?
- Did you discuss your interest in the business?
- Did you handle the discussion about your conviction(s) well?
- What could you do better next time?
- Did you send a follow-up letter or email (commonly called a thank-you note) after the interview?

Realize that even if an interview doesn't result in you getting a job, it is still a great opportunity to practice your interview skills. Use this checklist and your notes as a reference point to improve your skills each time you interview.

Is it really necessary to send a follow-up (thank-you letter or email) after the interview?

Yes. A follow-up letter or email message shows the employer that you are serious about your interest in the job and gives the impression that you are the kind of thoughtful and dedicated person who will follow through with tasks and duties on the job if you are hired.



Also, if the interviewer has interviewed multiple people for the same position, a follow-up letter or email message serves as a timely reminder to the interviewer of who you are while the hiring decision is being made. The small, considerate gesture of sending a follow-up message after the interview can make the difference in whether you are chosen for the position, or whether you will be considered for future positions with this business.

You're Hired! How to Keep the Job

If you have succeeded in getting a job, congratulations! Here are some tips to help you continue your success at the new job.

Show up and be on time. This is the #1 piece of advice for keeping a job. Employers rarely have patience for people who are continually late or absent. If you absolutely have to be late or absent, call ahead to let them know (give as much notice as possible).

Be positive. When you are the new employee, sometimes it takes a while to adjust to your coworkers and boss. It's easy to feel alone and become defensive, but don't have an attitude – always be professional and polite. If there is an issue at work with a coworker or your boss, ask to meet with your supervisor or other management staff to discuss your concerns in a professional manner.

Do your job the right way, every time. Do your best to be dependable, responsible and motivated in your new job. It can be tempting to sit and chat with coworkers when your boss is not around, or take an extended break or lunch. Don't do it! Never assume that your actions are going unnoticed.

Communicate effectively. Everyone has different opinions about what is expected at work and how people should communicate in the workplace. If you are not sure if your voice is being heard or if your point is being understood clearly, ask. Use phrases like "Did I explain that well enough?" and "Could you please explain that again?" and "Do you need anything else for this?" to politely and professionally check in with coworkers and supervisors if you think there may be possible confusion.

Notify your parole or probation officer as soon as possible. If you are on parole or probation and your employer doesn't know, contact your parole or probation officer. Verification of employment does not have to jeopardize your job – observation and pay stubs may be able to serve this purpose. Be sure to communicate with your parole or probation officer as soon as you are employed so you can work this out as soon as possible.

Appendix – Resume and Cover Letter Examples

To get you started in thinking about creating your resume(s) and cover letter(s), here are some examples for your consideration. Take note of how information about each job seeker’s criminal history is handled and think about how you want to model this information in your resume and cover letter.

Job Seeker #1 – Steve Jones

Steve Jones spent over two years in a correctional facility, where he learned building maintenance and cleaning skills. He has some other work history, but he is looking for a job where he can put these skills to work. Steve wants to include his work experience from his correctional facility, but he is worried that he won’t get an interview if he includes this information upfront. Look at Steve Jones’ cover letter and resume to see how he handled it.



Job Seeker #2 – Pam Kelly

Pam Kelly was incarcerated for five years. Before that, she worked for almost ten years in the healthcare field. However, her felony is related to the job she used to do, so her chances are not good for getting her license renewed, or for finding work again in this field. She has applied to get a certificate of rehabilitation to lift bars to licensing and employment. She needs to find other work in the meantime and would consider many different jobs.

See Pam’s example application, cover letter and resume for tips on how she addressed her employment challenges.

Job Seeker #3 – Hector Nogales

Hector Nogales has served a long series of sentences, mainly related to drug possession and selling charges. He has several felonies and a few misdemeanors on his record, and not a lot of work history. However, he did receive some vocational training at his last facility and he is interested in applying for an apprenticeship program. Hector also completed mandated rehabilitation and has started to rebuild his network of family, friends and colleagues.

Check out Hector’s resume and interview to see how he worked through what could have been possible obstacles to getting a job.



Steve Jones – Example Cover Letter

Steve Jones

123 First Street, Apartment B27A
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 000-1212
stevejones@gmail.com

December 17, 2012

Mr. Drew McDermott
Building and Grounds Supervisor
North Western University
P.O. Box 289
Lake George, NY 12845

Tip #1 – In his cover letter, Steve clearly states the position he is applying for without going into where he learned the related skills for the job. Like Steve, you may decide to disclose this information later.

Dear Mr. McDermott,

This letter of application for the Building Maintenance position is in response to your listing with the New York State Department of Labor’s Job Bank.

The combination of my vocational training and over two years experience has provided me with the necessary background for this position.

Enclosed is a copy of my resume for your review. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon to schedule an interview for the Building Maintenance position.

Sincerely,

Steve Jones

Steve Jones

Tip #2 – At the end of your cover letter, make sure to note any other documents you have included (e.g., resume, application, etc.).

Enclosure: resume

Steve Jones – Example Resume

Steve Jones

Tip #1 – Include all of your contact information, including your best contact phone number and a professional email address.

123 First Street, Apartment B27A
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 000-1212
stevejones@gmail.com

Objective

Building Maintenance

- Over 2 years building maintenance and cleaning experience
- Capable of maintaining a variety of floors, including wood, cement, tile and carpet
- Able to operate equipment used to maintain outdoor grounds in all types of weather
- Experience working in a fast-paced, multiple-task environment
- Skilled at handling difficult individuals and situations

Related Abilities and Experience

Floor and Production Area Maintenance

- Swept, mopped, scrubbed and vacuumed building floors
- Cleared production work areas of all scrap materials for recycling
- Cleaned walls, ceilings, windows, equipment and building fixtures
- Applied paint, waxes and sealers to wood and concrete floors

Tip #2 – Like Steve, you can describe the skills you learned while incarcerated with an emphasis on **what** you can do, not where you learned these skills.

Equipment Maintenance

- Performed preventative and routine maintenance on a variety of equipment and machinery
- Notified management about needed repairs on buildings and equipment
- Managed and replaced defective parts on machines and equipment

Outdoor and Building Maintenance

- Removed snow and ice from parking areas, driveways and sidewalks
- Used snowplow, snow blower, shovel and front end loader to remove snow
- Performed preventative and routine painting, plumbing and electrical repairs
- Mowed lawns and grounds using power mowers, tractors and attachments
- Watered, seeded and covered new grass growth areas
- Applied herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides using spreaders and spray equipment

Work History

Building Maintenance – CCF, Dannemora, New York – April 2010 to July 2012
Teller – Albank Savings Bank, Albany, New York – March 2003 to October 2009

Education and Training

Building Maintenance Training, CCF, Dannemora – January 2010 to March 2010
High School Diploma – Received June 2002

Tip #3 – In the Work History and Education and Training sections of your resume, you can use abbreviations (in this example, CCF instead of Clinton Correctional Facility).

Pamela Kelly – Example Application

Trusted Bank Co.



Employment Application

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Company is an equal opportunity employer. This application will not be used for limiting or excluding any applicant from consideration for employment on a basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation in the application and/or interview process should notify a representative of the organization.

Please fill out all sections completely.

Applicant Information

Name: Pamela Kelly
Address: 124 Maple Lane, Apt. 26B
City: Rochester **State:** NY **Zip:** 14610
Contact Phone #: (585) 333-0101
Email Address: Pamela_Kelly@yahoo.com

Tip #1 – When you fill out job applications, type or write as neatly as possible so that it will be easy for an employer to read.

How were you referred to Trusted Bank Co.?: NYS Job Bank

Employment Information

Position(s) applying for: Loan Consultant

Are you applying for:

- Temporary work – such as summer or holiday work? [X] Y or [] N
- Regular part-time work? [] Y or [X] N
- Regular full-time work? [X] Y or [] N
- What days and hours are you available for work?
Any
- If hired, on what date can you start working? 1/8/2013
- Can you work on the weekends? [X] Y or [] N
- Can you work evenings? [X] Y or [] N

Salary desired: \$ Open to discussion

Tip #3 – Do not lie about or skip the section about your convictions. You do not need to give more information than the employer is requesting - however, you should include information about the court, the penal code related to your conviction and the disposition date. Here, Pam also includes that she has applied for a certificate of rehabilitation and also gives information about hiring incentives for which the employer may be eligible.

Tip #2 – When you fill in your availability and desired salary, be as flexible as you can. You may choose to write that your desired salary is open to discussion, as Pam does here.

Personal Information

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor)? [X] Y or [] N

If so, please explain for each conviction.

Monroe County Court PL 177.10 Disposition Date: 4/2007
Applied for Certificate of Relief from Disabilities 6/2012
Eligible for bonding under Federal Bonding Program

(Note: No applicant will be denied employment solely on the grounds of conviction of a criminal offense. The date of the offense, the nature of the offense, including any significant details that affect the description of the event, and the surrounding circumstances and the relevance of the offense to the position(s) applied for may, however, be considered.)

Pamela Kelly – Example Cover Letter

Pamela Kelly

124 Maple Lane, Apt. 26-B
Rochester, NY 14610

☎ Phone: 585-333-0101

✉ Email: Pamela_Kelly@yahoo.com

December 18th, 2012

Ms. Claudia Hughes
Branch Manager – Branch Office #037
Trusted Bank Co.
1 Starlight Way
Rochester, NY 14608

Dear Ms. Hughes,

I am writing with interest to apply for the **Loan Consultant** position at your branch. I submitted an online application last week, and as per our phone conversation yesterday, I am following up by sending in my resume.

As a dedicated service professional with over 10 years of experience in the healthcare field, I have especially strong skills in customer service and building long-term relationships with clients. I am very proficient in math and computational skills, and I was part of a three-person team that restructured the consumer case management system (HealthNYPro) to streamline the intake process for clients at my last job. I am capable of working in demanding, high-stress environments while still performing at my best and providing the best possible customer service.

These are only a few of the many reasons I believe I would be the ideal candidate for this position. I look forward to the opportunity of discussing this with you in person.

Please feel free to contact me if you need anything else. I will contact you in a few days to make sure you received my resume and cover letter, and discuss the possibility of arranging an interview at your convenience.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Pamela L. Kelly

Pamela L. Kelly

Enclosure: Resume

Tip #1 – Be sure to clearly identify the purpose of your letter, the position you are applying for, and what steps you are taking to get the job.

Tip #2 – Describe how you can use your previous experience and skills to succeed in the position – this helps the employer get an idea of how you will be at the job.

Tip #3 – Pam ends the letter by stating what she will do to follow up for this job – it shows the employer that she is highly motivated to get the job.

Pamela Kelly – Example Resume

Pamela Kelly

124 Maple Lane, Apt. 26-B
Rochester, NY 14610

☎ Phone: 585-333-0101

✉ Email: Pamela_Kelly@yahoo.com

Summary

Loyal, hardworking and dedicated professional with over 10 years of experience in customer service is interested in pursuing new challenges in the banking industry, bringing valuable skills to the position such as:

- Proven ability to build and maintain lasting client relationships
- Superior customer service with three awards of recognition
- Capacity to multi-task and stay focused in a fast, demanding environment
- Excellent organizational skills and ability to learn and adapt skills quickly
- Strong computer skills, including all versions of Windows, all MS Office applications, proprietary databases (e.g., HealthNYPro, QuickHealthNY, etc.), and some programming in Java and HTML
- High-level math proficiency
- Experience with handling money and processing financial transactions

Work History

<i>MCJ</i> – Rochester, NY	<u>Baker</u>	2007 – 2012
<i>HealthVision</i> – Rochester, NY	<u>Licensed Practical Nurse</u>	2004 – 2007
<i>LiveWellCare</i> – Henrietta, NY	<u>Certified Nursing Assistant</u>	2002 – 2004
<i>LiveWellCare</i> – Henrietta, NY	<u>Medical Biller</u>	1999 – 2002
<i>LiveWellCare</i> – Henrietta, NY	<u>Data Entry Clerk</u>	1997 – 1999

Education

<i>Rochester Health Tech</i> – Rochester, NY	<u>LPN Certificate</u>	2004
	<u>CNA Certificate</u>	2002
<i>MedCode Institute</i> – Rochester, NY	<u>Medical Billing Certificate</u>	1999
<i>Henrietta High School</i> – Henrietta, NY	<u>Regents Diploma</u>	1997

Tip #1 – Notice how Pam organized her resume so that her objective and summary of skills are customized to this position.

Tip #2 – Since Pam has listed her related skills in the Summary section, she keeps the Work History section of her resume short, without listing individual tasks she did at each job.

Tip #3 – Pam's most recent job was a work experience she had at Monroe County Jail (abbreviated as MCJ) – by including this on her resume, she avoids having any gaps in her work history.

Hector Nogales – Example Resume

Hector Nogales

125 Brookview Apt. #23-C
New York, NY 10111

Phone: (347) 000-0000
Email: HNogales@mail.com

Tip #1 – Like Hector has done, you can write your resume so that the detailed information most likely to help you get a position is highlighted first.

Related Skills and Abilities

Mechanical Skills Training Fishkill, NY 2007 – 2009

Two year program in mechanical skills, including the following:

- Practice using traditional tools such as hammers, screwdrivers and pliers
- Supervised practice using power tools, such as a power saw
- Drawing, scaling and measuring for practice projects
- Training and compliance in all required safety practices
- Introduction to manual drafting

Tip #2 – Be sure to include work experiences and education/training you completed while incarcerated.

Work History

Metal Furniture Manufacturing The Metal Shop at Fishkill – Fishkill, NY 2009 – 2012

Preparation and assembly of special metal projects contracted through the Metal Shop, including beds, furniture and security screens

- Instructed in the use of an arc welder and some metal fabrication machines
- Spray painted and finished final products
- Trained on custom products, such as made-to-order enclosures, doors, jambs, snow plow racks, etc.

Food Service Attendant BHCF – Malone, NY

Cooked and prepared meals for several hundred diners daily

- Prepared ingredients for breakfast and lunch meals
- Served and plated food
- Kept serving area and surrounding areas neat and clean

Tip #3 – Hector abbreviates Bare Hill Correctional Facility as BHCF to focus on the skills learned, not the location. He also chooses to list only the city Fishkill, NY instead of listing Fishkill Correctional Facility.

Education

General Equivalency Diploma (GED) BCHF Education Center – Malone, NY 2006

Hector Nogales – Example Interview

Tip #1 – Prepare yourself to answer questions about your conviction(s) in a job interview. Notice here how Hector acknowledges his convictions and how he has shown rehabilitation. Then he explains how his past will not affect his work, what supports he has in place, and how his skills are valuable to the company.

At the Interview

The Scene

Hector applied for a position as a carpenter with a company in Manhattan. He has been called in for an interview. So far, everything is going smoothly. Now, the interviewer is about to ask him about his prior convictions.

Interviewer: Now getting back to your application – you answered “yes” to having a previous conviction and said that you’d prefer to discuss it at the interview.

Hector: Yes, I do have some previous convictions for drug-related offenses, but they will not affect my ability to do this job. I have already been through rehab and have my completion certificate here [*hands copy to interviewer*]. After serving all of my time, I can honestly say that I don’t want anything to do with my old life. Now, I’m happy to spend time with my family, my kids and friends who support me.

I’m just looking forward to getting to work and starting a new and better future. As you can see, I have three years of mechanical skills training I can bring to the job, as well as several references you can contact from Fishkill [Correctional Facility].

Interviewer: I appreciate the honesty, but we have had some bad experiences with recovering addicts on the job in the past. How long have you been clean and how do you plan to support your recovery?

Hector: I have been sober for over a year now – my wife, family and friends help me stay focused, and I check in with my rehab counselor twice a month and test once a month.

Interviewer: A drug test is required as part of the application process. Are you okay with that?

Hector: Yes, I definitely am.

Interviewer: Well I am impressed with how you’ve handled yourself in this interview. We do have a few other candidates to interview before we make our final selection.

Hector: Thank you for your time. Before I go, are you familiar with the Federal Bonding Program?

Interviewer: No, what is that?

Hector: It’s a free, six-month insurance policy that provides up to \$25,000 in insurance to employers. It covers any employee acts of dishonesty from certain employees, including ex-offenders. This is an informational sheet if you are interested in learning more about the program [*hands over sheet*].

Interviewer: I didn’t know about it – thank you for the information. We should have a decision to you by next week.

Hector: Great, I look forward to hearing from you – thank you again for your time and consideration.

Tip #2 – You should educate yourself about incentives for employers who hire ex-offenders, such as the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Informing the interviewer about these incentives may increase your chances of being hired.

State Agency Contact Information

NYS Department of Labor

For all questions and information about **THE PRIME OBJECTIVE**, including Department of Labor programs and incentives listed in this guide, please contact the Special Populations Team at:

NYS Department of Labor
Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions
Program Development Unit
Special Populations Team
SOC, Building 12, Room 440
Albany, NY 12240
Phone: 518-485-8037
Email: SpecialPopulations@labor.ny.gov

The Department of Labor Cannot Accept Collect Calls from Inmates

NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services

To request a copy of your suppressed or unsuppressed rap sheet, contact DCJS at:

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
Record Review Unit
Alfred E. Smith Building
80 South Swan Street
Albany, NY 12210
Phone: 518-485-7675 or 518-457-9847

Instructions for requesting a RAP sheet:
www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ojis/recordreview.htm

New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS)

For information about obtaining a Certificate of Rehabilitation (Certificate of Relief from Civil Disabilities or Certificate of Good Conduct) find complete instructions at:

<https://doccs.ny.gov/certificates-relief-good-conduct-restoration-rights>

Send completed applications to:

NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Harriman State Office Campus, Building 2
1220 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12226
518-485-8953

NYS Division of Human Rights

If you feel that you have been discriminated against for having legal history when applying for jobs, contact the NYS Division of Human Rights. A complaint must be filed with the Division of Human Rights within one year of the alleged discrimination.

For complete instructions on filing a complaint go to:

<https://dhr.ny.gov/complaint>

For a listing of all regional Division of Human Rights offices with contact information go to:

<https://dhr.ny.gov/contact-us>

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)

To find out about temporary benefits, including food stamps, cash assistance, heat, healthcare, and housing, contact the OTDA at:

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12243
Phone: 518-473-1090
Email: nyspio@otda.ny.gov
Toll Free: 1-800-342-3009 (food stamps, temporary assistance, HEAP)

For a listing of local Department of Social Services Offices by county in New York got to:

www.otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp

NYS Education Department (NYSED)

For information about getting a GED High School equivalent credential go to:

<https://www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/ready-set-test-new-high-school-equivalency-exam-here>

To identify free testing materials and classes go to:

<https://ged.com>

