

INMATE CHECKLIST



Your Name: _____ Inmate # _____

Introduction: The following questions are designed to give you a running start on being a successful returning citizen in the shortest time. Taking some time and working through each question (see helpful hints in second section) will give you more time when you are released to do other equally important work. One of the overriding themes in this is asking for help when needed. It may be from prison counselors, religious leaders or family and friends. It is important to cultivate these relationships as you will need friends on the outside. You also should be developing helpful relationships on the outside. If you don't have pen pals, please contact Friends Over Fences.

These questions should be answered in prison and most times can be taken care of while in prison

1/ Which county near Central PA are you going to be staying? Circle One:

Dauphin York Cumberland Perry

2/ Do you have a VALID driver's license? Yes / No

2a/ If not, are you eligible for a driver's license? Yes / No

2b/ Do you need a VALID state ID? (Prison ID are not valid) Yes / No

3/ Do you have a Social Security Card? Yes / No

4/ Do you have a Birth Certificate? Can be done in prison (Cost?) Yes / No

5/ Do you have (documented) disabilities? Yes / No

5a/ How was your disability documented? _____

5b/ What are the disabilities? _____

6/ Have you obtained your pre-release checklist for outstanding warrants? Yes / No

6a/ Have you checked with every county you were arrested in?

This section will help you prepare for a Home Plan and should be prepared in prison.

7/ Do you have cash available for deposit or rent? Yes / No How much? \$ _____

7a/ Are you qualified for Social Security Disability? SSI?

8/ What is your total benefits income? \$ _____

9/ Do you have outstanding fines? Yes / No How much? \$ _____

9a/ Are you on a payment plan? Yes / No How much? \$ _____

10/ Do you have children to support? Yes / No How much per month? \$ _____

11/ Do you have Spousal support to pay? Yes / No How much per month? \$ _____

12/ Do you have any unique circumstances that require special consideration such as heart issues or wheelchair disability, etc.:

Please explain: _____

13/ What are your offenses?

Please explain: _____

This section will help you when you are paroled to a halfway house or transition housing unit.

14/ What skills do you have that will help you get a job? _____

14a/ Did you graduate from high school? Yes / No College? Yes / No

14b/ Do you have a current resume? Yes / No

14c/ Do you have any leads for employment? Yes / No Where? _____

15/ Do you have a vehicle? Yes / No

15a/ Ready to be driven? Yes / No

15b/ Insured? Yes / No

15c/ Are you the sole owner? Yes / No

16/ If possible what would you like to do for a living?

17/ Do you have civilian clothing? Yes / No

18/ Do you know where to get free food? Yes / No

WHEN YOU ARE RELEASED: If you have already done the above before your release then go directly to the next list. But if you haven't, you need to go back and include them in your "to-do" list.

19/ Go to Welfare Office for temporary Food Stamps.

20/ Get vouchers and visit thrift shops for clothing

21/ Visit CareerLink in Harrisburg and other employment agencies to find work

22/ Do you have a case manager? Name _____ Phone # _____

22/ Do you have a person who will always know where to find / contact you?

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone # _____

23/ Keep all documents and receipts. If you give cash for any service, get a receipt and keep it.

Explanation and details regarding previous questions:

1/ Which county near Central PA are you going to be staying? Different counties offer different services and each have different organizations to help inmates and returning citizens

2/ Do you have a VALID driver's license? If a driver's license has been revoked or suspended it is important to know what you have to do to get it back. Your time in prison doesn't count against the time of your suspension. In prison you should talk with your counselor who can actually help you get started on getting your license renewed.

2a/ If not, are you eligible for a driver's license? You may have to go to the DMV to see if you are on a suspended list or to find out what you have to do to get it back.

2b/ Do you need a VALID state ID? (Prison ID are not valid) Before you get a PA ID make sure you can't get an actual driver's license. If you have a valid license from a different state and get a PA ID, your other state's driver's license will be cancelled. It is easier to get a PA license if you have a valid license from another state. Your counselor should be able to help if you ask.

3/ Do you have a Social Security Card? This card is a necessity and you can get it while you are in prison.

4/ Do you have a Birth Certificate? Can be done in prison but there is a cost.

5/ Do you have (documented) disabilities? If your disability has not be documented you will have to visit doctors and lawyers when you get out of prison which will add more time to get the services you need. Do whatever it takes to document your emotional and physical disabilities documented while you are in prison.

5a/ How was your disability documented? Having the proper paperwork will help when you get out and apply for disability.

5b/ What are the disabilities? _____

6/ Have you obtained your pre-release checklist for outstanding warrants? This is supposed to be done in prison but you should make sure it included all counties where you committed crimes

6a/ Have you checked with every county you were arrested in?

7/ Do you have cash available for deposit or rent? One of the main reasons returning citizens can't get housing is lack of cash for deposit and rent. (The other is lack of job)

7a/ Are you qualified for Social Security Disability? SSI? Even if you qualify for disability you will probably be denied the first and maybe the second time. You should start early and be persistent.

8/ What is your total benefits income? It is important to know how much your monthly income is so you can plan of what size and where your apartment will be.

9/ Do you have outstanding fines? Outstanding fines are causes to be hauled back in court. By taking care of these before you are subpoenaed or picked up means you will not be visited by Officers at your job and risk being fired.

9a/ Are you on a payment plan? Make a plan and honor it

10/ Do you have children to support? If your baby's mother is receiving welfare and she listed you as the father, welfare will come after your for support when they see that you are working. And you can be picked up if you don't pay.

11/ Do you have Spousal support to pay? Although not as risky as #10, if the courts are involved they can come after you.

12/ Do you have any unique circumstances that require special consideration such as heart issues or wheelchair disability, etc.: In order to find a suitable place to live it is necessary to make sure the building will work for you. Do you need a ramp? Can you climb stairs? Do you need to be close to other services?

13/ What are your offenses? This is not a judgmental question but to find out if your situation suits what the landlord is looking for. Different landlords have varied degrees of risk.

14/ What skills do you have that will help you get a job? Be specific and honest about your skills.

14a/ Did you graduate from high school? Helpful

14b/ Do you have a current resume? If not, ask for help and go to CareerLink in your area. Even if you have a resume, go to Careerlink to have it reviewed and ask if they can help you find work.

14c/ Do you have any leads for employment? It is always easier to find a job if you know someone or if they can give you a referral. Ask family and friends for help.

15/ Do you have a vehicle? Having a vehicle gives you a larger possibility of finding housing as you don't have to live within walking distance to your job.

15a/ Ready to be driven? You can't waste time trying to fix up a vehicle at this time.

15b/ Insured? Even if the vehicle is ready, don't drive it if it is not insured.

15c/ Are you the sole owner?

16/ If possible what would you like to do for a living? Taking time to think this out helps others find fulfilling work for you.

17/ Do you have civilian clothing? If not, you can find inexpensive clothing at Thrift shops and church closets – Goodwill, Volunteers of America, Salvation Army etc. Most halfway houses offer vouchers for free clothing.

18/ Do you know where to get free food? In Harrisburg you can get 3 Meals a day/7 days a week and food banks are available to get food you can prepare yourself.

19/ Go to Welfare Office for temporary Food Stamps.

20/ Get vouchers and visit thrift shops for clothing

21/ Visit CareerLink in Harrisburg and other employment agencies in your area to find work

22/ Do you have a case manager? This is as much for you as for those who want to help you. You should contact your case manager for as much help as they will give.

22/ Do you have a person who will always know where to find / contact you? Cellphone numbers change as returning citizens get newer phones and this way those who are helping you can find you if need to tell you about a job, a house, or a good place to eat.

23/ Having a receipt or statement is solid proof of what you have spent and even where you were at a certain time. Also take notes in meetings so you can remember what was said.

For more information please contact:

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