ADULT PRE-RELEASE HANDBOOK

Pre-Release Information for an Informed Re-Entry and a Successful Transition

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**ADULT OFFENDER**  
**PRE-RELEASE HANDBOOK**  
**SEVENTH EDITION — 2017**  
Graphic design by Carl Wesley and Emily Samuelson

This information will be provided in alternative format upon request. A PDF format is also available at:  

The handbook is offered to the public through our MN Department of Corrections and the National Institute of Corrections website. In posting the information, our aim is two-fold. The first is to help individuals and their supports in navigating release and the second is to assist other correctional professionals and agencies in preparing offenders for release.

We consider the MN Adult Offender Pre-Release Handbook to be public domain. It may be reproduced, published or otherwise used without permission. We would appreciate if you would please cite MN DOC as the source of the information.

Disclaimer — some materials in this handbook are delivered as a courtesy of MN DOC, however they have been modified and do not necessarily reflect policy or procedure specific to MN DOC.
Introduction

As you prepare to leave prison, you will probably need help getting a job, finding a place to live, reuniting with your family, finding affordable health insurance, continuing chemical dependency, mental health or other treatment, and improving general life skills. About half of the offenders who leave prison, return to prison within 3-years. The best way to stay in the community and be a successful citizen is to “desist” from crime. So, what is desistance? Desistance is persistent positive self-discipline from criminal behavior and becoming a productive member of society.

The likelihood that an ex-offender will commit a new crime is highest a few months, weeks or even days after he or she is released. The initial period after release is thus the riskiest time for you. Establishing positive bonds and getting involved in relationships with others who are interested in your success is crucial. Participating in positive activities is another major factor in desisting from crime. It is critically important for you to develop a pro-social identity for yourself. Getting a satisfying job is important along with job stability.

This Pre-Release Handbook is structured as a guide to help you in evaluating your current situation and creating a plan for your future. The choices you make today and the goals you set will determine how your transition from prison back to your home will be. The information shared with you will allow you to evaluate how you plan to become a productive member of society and desist from criminal behavior. It is important for you to think about this subject matter in relation to what you want your future to look like.

Awareness is the first step to long-term change. It is essential that we be aware of what we see as success, what we would like to change in our lives, and what behaviors have gotten us to where we are now. Please approach this with an open mind. We generally get out of something just what we put into it. So allow yourself the chance to benefit.

If you have any questions or need more help with your transition process, please don’t hesitate to talk with the transition coordinator or your case manager.
(Facility) Pre-Release Plan Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>OID</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduled Release Date</th>
<th>Case Manager</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

What are your plans when you get out of prison and return to the community? This worksheet is designed to help you start thinking about and planning your release. Much of the information you will describe here is covered in pre-release class. This worksheet will help you begin to work with your case manager to develop your release plan.

**Identification**

Please circle yes or no if you need this:

1. Social Security Card  yes  no
2. Birth Certificate     yes  no  what state: ______
3. State ID              yes  no
4. Drivers License Review yes  no
   - Renewal - Must be valid-expired less than 1 year.

**Housing**

Where are you going to live when you get out? There are many factors to consider when deciding where you are going to live when you first get out:

- Will your corrections agent (PO) approve where you plan to live?
- Is it in your county of commit?
- Will you be living around positive, supportive people or around negative influences?
- How do you plan to pay rent and utilities?
- Can you look for a job and/or get to work from where you plan to live?
- Can you get to your support group and/or treatment program from where you plan to live?
Use the space below to write down as much as you can about where you are going to live. Identify at least three different possibilities of where you might live when you first get out. Plan 1 should be a place that is “solid, or for sure.” Plan 2 and 3 are possibilities.

**Plan 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where: address or as much as you know:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who lives there:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible issues:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan 2:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where: address or as much as you know:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who lives there:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible issues:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan 3:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where: address or as much as you know:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who lives there:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible issues:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transportation

How are you going to get around once you are released? Do you have a driver’s license? Can you get to where you need to go by bus? Will you own a vehicle? What is you plan for getting to the places you need to go? Will you depend on others for rides (and are they dependable)?

Use the space below to identify how you plan to get to all the different places you need to go.

Personal Needs
Think about how much money you will need to get started. Rent in the Twin Cities metro area can be expensive. Typically, you will need first and last month’s rent plus damage deposit for a new move-in. On top of that, you still need to eat, buy work and/or interview clothes, get transportation, recreation, and personal hygiene items. Do you have other expenses such as childcare or child support payments? If it takes a month or two before you get your first paycheck, how do you plan to live and pay for things? Use the space below to develop a simple budget upon your release.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Debts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your gate money is not going to get you very far. Most individuals will quickly need more than the clothing and other items they have when they leave prison. You will need to eat and get around. You might get lucky and find a job quickly, but there are no guarantees. A good savings plan now can help you figure out what kind of money you will need to get started on a life outside prison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much money do you have right now in your inmate account?</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much money do you have in your outside savings/checking?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much money do you have in other types of assets?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add it all up to figure out how much money you have.</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much are you spending right now on your personal needs? Write down how much each month you spend on canteen and how you usually spend your money.

**Employment**

When you leave prison, you will find you have some ability, talent and skill for a variety of jobs. What are you looking for in a job?

- Good wages
- Benefits – vacation pay, health insurance, etc.
- Hours that suit your needs, not those of the employer.
- Work that you actually like doing.
- Opportunities for more training and advancement.
Every one of us is good at something. You may be well aware of your skills and talents, even if you have never seriously used them. In the space below, write down what you are thinking about and where you would like your job to take you.

I am most interested in the field of:

- Construction
- Food service
- Repair/Maintenance
- Clerical
- Production
- Transportation
- Sales
- Retail
- Wood work/Carpentry
- Laborer
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Cleaning
- Hairdressing
- Lawn care
- Other, please identify

Three jobs that would get me started in that field are:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Three jobs that I can aim for are:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Three ways I can start preparing for this type of work are:

1. 
2. 
3.
Recreation/Leisure Time

Boredom and lack of structure in your day are two of the biggest triggers for recidivism and relapse. While you are in prison, your day is planned out for you. Once you are on the outside, what are you going to do with your time? If you do not follow through on plans to participate in healthy and productive activities, you might get right back into a cycle of negative and destructive behaviors. Use the space below to identify healthy and productive activities that you can participate in once you are released. Try to think of activities you can start doing now and can continue doing once you are released.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>How often</th>
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Chemical Dependency Treatment/Aftercare

For many individuals, some form of chemical dependency treatment, aftercare and/or support group in the community will be helpful. For some of you, it may be mandatory. If you participated in a treatment program while incarcerated, you learned a variety of new attitudes, behaviors and skills. You will need to continue to practice those new skills, behaviors and attitudes when you are released in order to remain clean and sober. In the space below, identify treatment programs, aftercare programs, and/or support groups that you might attend in your community. If you need help with identifying these, please talk to the transition coordinator.

Chemical dependency treatment programs

Chemical dependency aftercare programs

Support System

Successful reintegration into the community often depends on having a good support system. A good support system is not just family and friends. A good support system includes a wide variety of individuals. Fill in the names of those people below. Identify the names of your supportive friends and family and their relationship to you. Include your agent, sponsors, AA/NA community support, family, friends, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Relationship to you</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Identification

Proper identification is required to cash a check, take a driver’s test, or get a job. Forms of acceptable identification are:

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Driver’s License
- Valid Passport
- Marriage Certificate

Birth Certificate

A birth certificate provides proof of when and where you were born. A certified copy of your birth certificate can be useful when providing identity in certain situations, such as applying for a driver’s license, retirement benefits, passport, or assistance programs.

You may request an application form and requirements for a certified copy of your birth certificate from transition staff or your caseworker. Application information needed:

- Your full birth name (first, middle, last)
- Date of birth
- City of birth (if known)
- Father’s name
- Mother’s name, including maiden name (as recorded at time of birth)

There is a fee charged for the certified copy, but funding is available. Ask transition staff or your caseworker for assistance and information.

Most states require your signature be notarized if you are requesting a copy of your birth certificate by mail. Notaries are available at all Minnesota correctional facilities. Once you are released, you may locate notaries in your community by searching the local Yellow Pages.

Social Security Card

Social Security is a part of almost everyone’s life, no matter what your age.
If you never have applied for a Social Security card and are over 18, you must apply in person. If you would like a free duplicate card, you must request an application from your caseworker or transition staff. Your caseworker can send a form letter to accompany the application, verifying your name.

**Minnesota State Driver’s License and ID Card Requirements**

To apply for a Minnesota driver’s license, identification card, or instruction permit, your may present either:

A Minnesota driver’s license, identification card, or permit that is current or:
- Expired for five years or less

If you do not have one of these items listed above, you must present one primary and one secondary document. The primary document must contain your full legal name (first, middle, last) and the month, day, and year of your birth. *Any document not in English must be accompanied by a qualified English translation.*

*If the name on your Minnesota driver’s license, identification card or permit has changed or the names on your primary and secondary documents do not match, you must also present proof of your legal name change(s).* Acceptable proof consists of certified marriage certificates, certified divorce decrees, or other certified court papers. The divorce decree or other court order must specify the name change. Your identity and name change documents need to show a clear link between your primary and secondary documents.

*The name on the Minnesota driver’s license, identification card, or permit that is issued to you will be the name on the primary document or legal name change document.*

*If you are a temporary, United States resident, you may need to show additional proof of your lawful admission period, such as a form I-20, DS-2019, I-797, or other official immigration document or receipt.*

If your license is stolen or lost, but still valid (and not within three months of expiring), you can get a duplicate by mail. Your request should be sent to the following address:

**Driver and Vehicle Services**
445 Minnesota Street, Suite 175
St. Paul, MN 55101-5180
Primary Documents

- Certified birth record issued by a government bureau of vital statistics or board of health in the United States, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the United States Virgin Islands.
- Certificate of Birth Abroad (FS-545 or DS-1350) issued by the U.S. Department of State.
- Certified copy of an adoption certificate from a U.S. court.
- Valid, unexpired U.S. passport book or card.
- Secure, unexpired Minnesota tribal identification card.
- Unexpired, active duty, reserve or retired U.S. military identification card (Form DD-2 or Geneva Conventions Common Access Card),
- Valid, unexpired passport from a country other than the U.S. with an unexpired I-94 form or with an unexpired I-551 stamp.
- Canadian birth or naturalization certificate with an unexpired I-94 form attached. (Must be presented with a photo Secondary Document issued by a Canadian government agency.)
- One of the following valid, unexpired documents issued by the U.S. Department of Justice or U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
  - Employment Authorization card with photo (I-688 or I-766 series)
  - Permanent Resident or Resident Alien card (I-551 or I-151)*
    *Federal regulations (8 CFR Sec. 264.5) state that cards issued before age 14 are not valid if the cardholder is age 14 or older (unless the card expires before age 16).
  - Re-entry Permit/Refuge Travel Document (I-327, I-571)
  - Certificate of Naturalization (N-550, N-570, or N-578)
  - Certificate of Citizenship (N-560, N-561, or N-645)
  - United States Citizen Identification card (I-179 or I-197)
  - Northern Mariana Card (I-873)
  - American Indian Card (I-872)

Notes: ____________________________
Secondary Documents

- Another primary document.
- Photo driver’s license, state identification card, or permit, issued by a U.S. state other than Minnesota, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or a Canadian province or territory, that is current or expired for five years or less.
- U.S. social security card (nonmetal) or Canadian social insurance card.
- Certified birth certificate from a government jurisdiction other than the U.S., the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Certified government-issued marriage certificate.
- Certified U.S. or Canadian court order with full name and date of birth.
- Certified secondary or post-secondary school transcript containing legal full name and date of birth.
- Current secondary school (grades 7-12) student identification card with student’s name, photograph, and date of birth or unique identification number.
- Government employee photo identification card from a jurisdiction in the U.S. or Canada.
- Current identification card (DD-1173 or DD-214) issued by the U.S. Department of Defense.
- Unexpired color-photo permit to carry a firearm or concealed weapon, issued by a U.S. police department or sheriff.
- Current pilot’s license issued by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Notes: ____________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Understanding Chapter 1: Identification

1. What documents do I need to get photo identification?

2. Do I have the documents I need to get photo identification? If so, where are they located?

3. If not, how do I get an application form to get a certified copy of my birth certificate?

4. How do I get a form to request a duplicate of my Social Security card?

5. How do I get a form to request a duplicate of, or to renew, my photo identification?
Chapter 2: Life Skills

Life Skills: Stress Reducers

- Procrastination is stressful. Don’t put off tomorrow what you can do today.
- Don’t rely on memory, make lists, write down everything.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Don’t just put it down — put it away!
- Become more flexible; laugh at yourself.
- Be prepared to wait; take reading material and read the time away.
- Do one thing at a time. Plan and prioritize.
- Forget about counting to 10. Count to 1000!
- Turn “needs” into preferences. Our basic needs are food, water and keeping warm. Everything else is a preference. Don’t get attached to preferences.
- Get up 15-minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Relax daily and take time to do something you enjoy.

Life Skills: Low-Cost Leisure Activities

- Take a class (craft, adult education, self-improvement, etc.) — learning new things is a great way to relax, and when we accomplish something we feel better about ourselves, thus relieving stress.
- Become involved in a cause — volunteer.
- Join a support group.
- Listen to music. Music is used for fun, for releasing tension, for comfort, for getting away from yourself, and for uplifting the spirit, as well as inspiring you into action.
- Read a book.
- Go to the library — books, CDs, cassettes, videos, and sometimes even games, toys, and pictures can be borrowed from the library.
Life Skills: Resolving Conflicts

Everyone runs into problems at some point. Since things are not always perfect or ideal in any given situation, conflicts do happen. For example:

Conflict: A co-worker that you trusted tells other people at work something you asked that he keep to himself. You are angry at him, but still have to see him everyday. What would you do?

Conflict: Everyone (it seems) at work goes out drinking after work. You are trying to stay sober, and don't feel comfortable going along. When you try to explain that you don't want to go, they make fun of you and give you a hard time. What would you do?

Conflict: Your supervising agent is requesting to schedule an appointment with you during a time when you are at work. You don't want to miss work and you don't want to create any tension between yourself and your agent. What would you do?

Conflict: Your family has expectations of you that you are not certain you can meet, but you want to please them and show you are making positive changes. What would you do?

Conflict: You have a close friend who is participating in activities you think might be illegal. You are concerned and uncertain as to what you should do because you don't want to risk your freedom and put your supervised release in jeopardy. What would you do?
Conflict is an inevitable and natural part of everyday life and every workplace.

Where does conflict come from?
- Our personal fears and insecurities
- Misunderstandings in communication
- Lack of information or communication
- Need for control and predictability in our lives

What does it cost you?
- Creates stress and burnout
- Decreases your productivity
- Quitting your job
- Getting into fights at home with friends, family, and significant others
- Decreased physical well-being: tension headaches, increased blood pressure, or abdominal pain
- Decreased emotional well-being: stress, depression, mood swings, or irritability

EXERCISE: Assessing My Preferred Style of Conflict Resolution

Using the following scale, rate each item in the manner that best reflects what you actually do in a conflict situation. This is a self-assessment of your current style of conflict resolution. Be honest as to what you actually DO versus what you think you should do in a conflict.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-Always</th>
<th>4-Usually</th>
<th>3-Sometimes</th>
<th>2-Rarely</th>
<th>1-Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I go along with other’s decisions rather than disagree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I encourage others to give a little.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I point out what we agree on rather than dwell on things we disagree about.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I stand my ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I go along with others – but after I tell them, I disagree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I agree to things and hope they will work out.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I try to keep others from feeling bad in an argument.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I am concerned that we both get what we want.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I argue to get a portion of what I want.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I point out problems in the other person's logic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I try to figure out &quot;why&quot; people want what they want, and &quot;why&quot; I want what I want.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I avoid people when they are angry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I try to keep the peace.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I operate from a &quot;give and take&quot; position.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I have trouble admitting I am wrong.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I put the needs of others above my own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I will &quot;give a little to get a little&quot; and expect the same of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I win arguments.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I keep my thoughts to myself rather than create a conflict.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I ask others to tell me what they want and I work with them to find solutions that satisfy both of us.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I do whatever I can to avoid hard feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I am very concerned with how others feel.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>I try to get the other person to compromise.</td>
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<td>I clearly state what I want out of a situation and am open to coming up with options to help me get it.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>I try hard to get others to see my logic and the advantages of doing things my way.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>I seek to find a middle ground.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>I go out of my way to avoid an argument.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>I let others have their way.</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>I listen carefully to the other person to see if I understand their point of view.</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>I will go to extremes to win an argument when I am &quot;right&quot;.</td>
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**EXERCISE: Assessing My Preferred Style of Conflict Resolution Scoring Key**

Score the exercise using the following scoring key to determine your preferred style and your "backup" style. Your "back-up" style is the approach in which you scored second highest.
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**Preferred Styles**

What is your preferred style? (Highest Score)

What is your "back-up" style? (Next highest Score)
Five Basic Responses to Conflict

2. Avoiding: withdrawing or giving in.
3. Accommodating: smoothing or submitting.
4. Compromising: "splitting the difference."
5. Collaborating: working to solve the problem.

What is a Hot Button?

Things that trigger a strong emotional response in you — and particularly those things that make you angry, defensive, resistant, or in some manner push you over the edge of your self-control.

Exercise: Recognizing my "Hot Buttons"

Think about a recent situation where you found yourself getting upset and angry in your interaction with someone.

1. What was the immediate event that happened right before you became angry or upset?

2. What was it about that situation that made you upset or angry?

3. Formulate a concise description of your "hot button."
How to Control your Hot Buttons

Hit the Pause Button: Try to say or do something that will help to slow down the situation to give yourself a moment to think, a moment to develop an appropriate response rather than an angry reactive response. This could mean, taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly, counting to three, asking the person to repeat the statement, taking a short break from the discussion “I have to go do ______ I’ll be right back.” “Give me a minute to think about that.” Hitting the pause button will help you to collect your thoughts and your emotions.

“Step Back”: This means taking an emotional and mental step back from the situation while it is happening. This requires you to emotionally detach from what is being said. Admittedly, this is difficult to achieve, but it is an effective way to maintain emotional control. Stepping back and observing the situation as if from a balcony will help you to get a clearer picture of what is being said and will help you to better control your response.

Acknowledgement: Let people know that their words are having an effect on you. Doing this lets them know that they may be going too far. It also gives them the opportunity to rephrase or soften what is being said. So feel free to say, “That really hurt.” “You’re making me upset.”

Self--affirmation: Sometimes hurtful words feed right into our deepest fears and insecurities. It can feel like an old wound was cut open. After the situation has ended, you need to do some self-healing by reminding yourself of your true skills, talents, knowledge, and goodness. It is important to do this because you need to get this poison out of your system and move on.

Humor: Deactivate your Hot Button by having a good laugh. At this moment, it is the hardest thing to do but it is the best medicine for you. So make a plan to only look at comedies that night or for as many nights as you need. Laughing will help your body release some “feel good” chemicals, lower your blood pressure, and relax your muscles.
Understanding the Situation

1. Identify the issue, its impact on you, and your feelings about it.
2. Distinguish between Concrete and Relationship problems. Deal with them separately.
3. Remember that people have different perceptions and interpretations of the same event. Do not assume that your perspective is shared by others. Check it out.
4. Choose your battles wisely. You cannot fight on all fronts simultaneously.
5. Ask yourself, "Is this very important to me? Do I have the time to resolve it collaboratively?"

Tips You Can Use to Understand the Situation and Enhance Interpersonal Interaction

- If you have something important to say, WRITE IT DOWN. Writing helps organize your thinking.

- Find DISTRACTION FREE environments and choose a time when both of you can focus on the issue without distractions. Do not try to do two things at the same time – such as have a conversation and answer phone calls.

- Use OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS to invite dialogue and elicit information. Use closed questions to clarify specific information.

- Make sure your NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION expresses the message you want to send. Your body language needs to be consistent with your words.

- Use the PAUSE button before you speak. Count to three after the other person has stopped speaking before you leap into the conversation.

- Good listening means NOT ASSUMING meaning or intent. Be wary about jumping to conclusions about the other person’s message or intent.
• Ask for **CLARIFICATION** when you do not understand something.
  Requesting clarification does not mean that you are slow. It means that
  you sincerely want to understand **what is being said**.

• **RESTATE** in your own words what you think the person is saying and
  feeling about the issue. Trust the other person to correct you if you are
  not 100 percent accurate.

• **TAILOR** your message to your listener. Relate your message to the
  listener’s frame of reference and priorities — as you understand them.

• Never try to tell a person that he or she does not feel the way they do — or
  try to talk them out of their feelings. Instead, offer **VALIDATION** for the
  person’s feelings and perspectives.

**Resolving Conflict Situations with Co-Workers**

**Initiate and Listen**

• If you are aware that something is wrong, be the first to bring it up.
• Set the tone for the discussion by your calm attitude and willingness to
  discuss and resolve the situation.
• Initiate discussion at a place and time that is safe and good for all.
• Listen, Listen, Listen, and listen some more.
• Find out what is really being said — listen behind the words.
• You do not have to agree with everything that is said, but hear it out.
• Clarify what you are hearing — restate what you hear, ask questions.
• Respect differences in communication styles and cultural differences
  in approaching conflict.

**Do not be a Trigger**

• Avoid using language that triggers — reframe to neutral language.
• Use “I” rather than “You.”
• Do not over react — your attitude and actions will increase or
  decrease the conflict.
• Do not get sucked into side issues — ignore challenges. Focus on the
  issues.
• Be careful of your non-verbal communication. What is your body
  saying?
Set Respectful Limits

- Be clear about limits and consequences.
- Do not threaten. State facts, do not make the person feel threatened.
- If the discussion gets out of control, take a break, make an exit, and/or get help.
- Never use violence or physical means to set a limit.

Find Win-Win Solutions

- Generate solutions that meet the needs of each person.
- Know that the real needs might not be what is initially stated.
- Make sure everyone walks away with something.
- Use a fair process for deciding — even when you need to exert authority.
- Check in later — is the solution working, did the process of resolving the situation work?

Notes:

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Understanding Chapter 2: Life Skills

1. How do you see yourself?
2. How do others see you?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. What strategies do you use to change your attitude?

________________________________________________________________________

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4. What are some positive things you can do to resolve conflict?

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5. List some stress reducers that you can use.

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Chapter 3: Housing

Finding a place to live will be difficult for some. For others, there will be no choice because of Department of Corrections requirements. Some may be mandated to a halfway house or required to return to the county where the crime was committed.

If you have no restrictions on where you live, think hard before deciding to move back into your old neighborhood. There may be people and activities there to pull you back into criminal behavior.

Some will have a supportive friend, relative, or family member to live with and housing may not be a major concern, while others will need to explore different options.

When looking for housing, keep in mind where it is located relative to your work, what transportation is available, and what stores are in the area.

Temporary Shelter Providers and Referral Agencies

- **United Way 2-1-1, formerly First Call for Help** is a service that can assist you in finding temporary shelter like the ones listed below. Resources are accessible to you through the library transition resource center, the Internet (after your release), and by dialing 211 (cannot be called from offender phones).

- **HousingLink** is an online resource that lists affordable rental housing information.

- **Community Action Agencies** provide services to reduce the effects of poverty in the community. Many provide energy assistance, winterization, housing, and emergency shelter services. These agencies are also a good source of information and referral for related services.

- **County Social Services Agencies** administer low-income financial assistance programs such as the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and General Assistance, as well as other assistance programs such as Medical Assistance, Emergency Assistance, and Food Stamps. They may provide referrals for overnight shelter. There are strict state and federal guidelines for the above programs so immediate monetary assistance may not be possible.

- **Drop-In Centers** provide a variety of services, which may include food, clothing, and support. The centers serve as sources of information, and daytime shelter. Availability is limited to larger metro areas.

- **Emergency and Overnight Shelters** offer lodging for a short period of time (usually one or two nights) until other arrangements can be made through the county or other programs. You may use 2-1-1 (First Call for Help) to help locate these shelters. Metro-wide Engagement on Shelter & Housing (MESH) also offers a directory of shelters in the metro area that have immediate openings; call 1-888-234-1329 for this listing. There is no charge for staying at most emergency shelters. Some charity-sponsored shelters may require that you participate in their programs to use their shelter.

- **Salvation Army Units** provide shelter vouchers to individuals in need. They may also help out with meals and other essential needs.
Types of Housing

Transitional/Halfway Housing — some offenders are mandated to this type of housing as a condition of their release and to provide some structure as the offender adjusts to life on the outside. If space is available, others may also live there, provided they meet the shelter’s guidelines. You may use 2-1-1 to help you locate transitional housing in your area or you may want to ask your caseworker for assistance.

- May provide shelter for up to one year.
- Expects you to be accountable at all times and cooperate with any programming identified by the referring agency.
- Provides opportunity to ease back into the community by gaining employment, accumulating savings, developing a plan of working toward independent living, and establishing community support services.
- Includes support services (such as counseling and job search help) in addition to food and shelter.
- Provides you time to save money for your own place. Costs will depend on services provided.

Sober Housing — is NOT a treatment program and usually will not accept sex offenders.

- Provides long-term support, allowing residents to stabilize and develop healthy relationships with other people pursuing similar goals.
- Generally, the only requirements are sobriety and lawful means of paying bills. Often, there is no second chance — a resident who "uses" one time will be evicted.
- Is sometimes less expensive than an apartment and makes saving money for more independent living easier.

Notes:__________________________________________________________
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Getting Started — You’re getting out of prison soon. Finding a landlord (or employer) who can look past a criminal record is a tall order. Whether you have a place to live or not, there are some things you need to think about. The information in this chapter will help guide you through the rental process.

How Much Money do I Really Have to Spend on Rent?

Serious problems can result when you move into a place and you cannot afford the rent. If you cannot make the rent payments or you continually pay your rent late, the landlord may ask you to leave. If you get formally evicted, it will be even tougher to rent in the future. Before you commit to renting an apartment or home, it’s a good idea to take stock of what you can afford for rent and how much money you have to spend. To make good spending decisions, you need to know the difference between things you need to buy and things you want to buy. In addition (no pun intended), it is wise to find ways to save money as well.

So, it is important for you to create a realistic budget that will give you an idea of how much money you have coming in and how much money is going out. Only then will you be in a position to determine what you can really afford to spend on rent. Besides rent, you’ll be spending money on food, electricity, gas, telephone (cell phone), transportation, cable, clothing, entertainment, laundry, and much more.

My Budget — Making significant progress on achieving your financial goals means knowing your income sources and where your money goes. The worksheets in the Money Management chapter of this handbook will help you develop a budget.
To Have a Roommate or Not to Have a Roommate —

There are a number of reasons why you might choose to live with a roommate. First, after determining your budget, you've found that you cannot afford to live on your own. You need to live with a roommate so they can share in the cost of your rental. Second, companionship may be another reason. Many people like to live with other people. Also, by choosing the right roommate, you'll have someone who will support your new crime-free lifestyle.

Choosing the right roommate can make for a great living arrangement. But... choosing the wrong roommate can be a nightmare. There are many reasons why choosing the wrong roommate can be a disaster including:

- Your roommate is untrustworthy.
- Your roommate is not “clean and sober.”
- Your roommate does not support a crime-free lifestyle.
- Your roommate doesn't pay his/her share of the bills.
- You and your roommate thought you were in love; you're not. Your roommate likes to party; you don't.
- One of you is a “neat freak.” The other is “messy.”

The list can go on and on. Keep in mind, different people have been raised in different living environments and not everyone is compatible. Moreover, not everyone is willing to “adapt” to another person's likes and dislikes. You already know that small disagreements can grow into larger problems when you're living in close quarters.

So, what's the trick to finding the perfect roommate? Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to that question. You need to put some serious thought into choosing the right roommate. The important thing to keep in mind is that you should size the person up regarding compatibility before you move into a place together. They should do the same with you! Be honest with each other. Ask a lot of questions. Discuss your likes and dislikes. Then, if you decide to move in together, keep the dialogue open after you become roommates. Good communication is the key to good relationships.
Criminal History —

One of the biggest issues facing ex-offenders is housing. Federal law allows public housing agencies to deny eligibility to almost anyone with a criminal background. Additionally, private landlords have discretion in selecting tenants to live in their housing units, but they cannot discriminate against protected classes (i.e., based on race, ethnicity, or religion). Ex-offenders are not a protected class. Some private landlords are not willing to become involved with the issues they may face having an ex-offender living in their units regardless of the history.

Because many ex-offenders find housing difficult as they re-enter the workforce, job searching becomes complicated and much harder to use for suitable results. What happens is that many ex-offenders become homeless or rotate back to criminal activity within the first year.

Most ex-offenders return to families or friends in their old neighborhoods. Often, this is the environment that helped them get into trouble in the first place. Others are no longer welcome home or don't want to return. They come out and they've got some "gate" money. They don't have a job. They cannot afford first and last month's rent and damage deposit, which is huge. So they drift, from the homeless shelter to the couch of a friend to a low-rent hotel. That leads to instability and chaos in which small — and sometimes large — crimes flourish.

Many cannot return home because offenders convicted of drug crimes are barred from public housing. So how do you, as an ex-offender, get yourself around this enormous problem?
• Know that there are alternatives to housing roadblocks

Here are a few suggestions which may help:

Supportive Housing Programs and housing projects that house ex-offenders have long waiting lists (6-months or longer). Make application as soon as you can, even if the timeline doesn't work for you, apply anyway. Your name will eventually make it to the top of the list and you can always turn them down.

• HousingLink is a primary distributor of affordable housing information to service agencies, housing providers and policymakers in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and selected regions in Greater Minnesota. Their mission is to connect people and communities to information that supports the resolution of their affordable housing issues.
HousingLink’s on-line directory has a free, searchable database of affordable and accessible rental housing options. You can search by rent options, location, amenities, and more (http://www.housinglink.org/hlist/Default.aspx).

Talk to your family and (positive) friends. They can do a lot of leg work for you and (hopefully) provide you with some housing leads.

Check bulletin boards at grocery stores, AA/NA clubs, community centers, libraries.

Talk to folks at the half-way houses in the community you are returning to, or nearby community; they often have affordable housing leads.

Locate the Goodwill or Salvation Army chapter in your community. They often provide transitional housing and have housing leads.

Locate a hotel which charges by the week.

Locate rooming houses, dorms, or the local YMCA/YWCA.

Check with local non-profit programs or church ministers for ideas or aid.

Check with local missions or the local government assistance offices.

Selecting the Right Place for You —

Finding the best rental unit to suit your needs won’t happen without a little work on your part. There are many factors to consider so you won’t run the risk of getting into a very bad living situation if you don’t take the time to weigh the various possibilities.

Obviously, location is the primary concern. It is important for you to live near your work. Is public transportation an issue? How close do you want to live to activities you enjoy? Are grocery stores or laundromats nearby? Is living near relatives or friends important to you?

After weighing your location priorities and deciding upon the area you plan to live, the budget you developed will play a key role in your decision-making. Here’s a list of considerations:

- Do I rent an apartment or house?
- How many bedrooms and bathrooms do I need?
- Is there a backyard, side yard, patio, deck?
- Does the property allow pets?
- Is the place air conditioned?
Where do you find properties that are available to rent? Your best bet is to ask family and friends for recommendations. You can do a search on the Internet, and check out newspaper classified ads. Most communities have free magazines and newspapers dedicated to listing local rental properties. Check for them in the library, coffee shops and grocery store lobbies.

As you zero in on a specific property, consider:

- Does the building and neighborhood appear safe (look for off-street lighted parking lot connected to the property, security door on the property, possible illegal activities)?
- Are the property’s grounds and common areas kept clean and attractive?
- Do the property units appear maintained (look for working windows with locks, toilets that flush, faucets that don’t drip and have good water pressure, no bad odors, etc.)?
- Is the property in your price range?

Remember to check out the landlord. Consider asking other current tenants and neighbors about the landlord. You can make a call to the Better Business Bureau to see if there have been any complaints against the landlord or property.

**Completing the Rental Application —**

All landlords will require you to complete a rental application as part of the screening process. Rental applications provide landlords with your background information. Completing one is similar to completing an employment application. The rental application will typically ask for your:

- Social Security and/or driver’s license number.
- Employment and income history.
- Credit information
- References from former landlords, employers, friends.
- Any past evictions, criminal history or bankruptcies.

**Tip:** Consider visiting the property and talking with the landlord before you complete a rental application. Find out if they’ll accept someone with your criminal history. It is probably better not to pay an application fee. Because of your criminal history, it will be easy for them to reject your application and keep the application fee. You might consider having written references from previous landlords, employers, friends and a copy of your credit report and criminal history to share. This might give you the edge you are looking for.
Tenant Report

The Tenant Report is a written or oral communication by a tenant screening service. The report consists of information about the prospective tenant’s credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or lifestyle. The tenant report is used to approve or deny tenancy.

The Rental Agreement: Spelling it Out —
When the landlord notifies you that your rental application has been approved, the next step is to sign a rental or lease agreement. The agreement will detail what the landlord is agreeing to provide and what is expected of you. It is critical that you read the agreement carefully. If there is something you don’t understand, ask the landlord for clarification. Ask for a copy in advance so you have time to read it. You might want to ask a friend or family member whom you trust to review the agreement with you. Rental Agreements are often filled with legal jargon. Don’t let yourself get overwhelmed. Simply take the time to review the document and ask for help if needed.

Monthly or Yearly Lease: What’s the Difference?

Rental Agreements are usually monthly or yearly. A monthly rental agreement (referred to as a “month-to-month” agreement) will state the length or time between rental payments (once a month). Monthly agreements do not state a specific termination date, like six months or a year. Consequently, monthly rentals expire each month. They are automatically renewed when the landlord receives a new rent check from you. The person ending the tenancy must give the other “proper notice.” The length of the notice and what form it must take will be stated in the rental agreement. If the agreement doesn’t state a notice requirement, written notice must be given on full rental period plus one day before the tenancy’s end. For example, a tenant with a month-to-month tenancy who wants to leave at the end of February would have to give written notice no later than January 31.

In contrast, a lease agreement will specifically state how many months or years the agreement is in effect. The tenant agrees to be responsible for renting the property and the landlord agrees to make it available to the tenant for the entire length of the lease. In general, the landlord cannot require the tenant to move out of the property before the lease expires. If the tenant decides to leave the property prior to the lease expiring, the tenant is still responsible to pay the agreed upon monthly sum until the lease expires.
Both the monthly rentals and yearly leases are defined by unique features as described below:

**Monthly Rental Agreement —**

- Will state when the rent is due and the amount.
- Will state how much notice the tenant must give the landlord if he or she decides to move out.
- Will state how much notice the landlord must give the tenant if he or she decides not to rent to the tenant any longer or if he or she decides to change the terms of the agreement.

**Yearly Lease Agreement —**

- Will state when the rent is due and the amount.
- Will state how many months or years the lease is in effect.

Of course, monthly rental agreements and yearly lease agreements contain many additional provisions as well. It is important to know that most oral monthly rental and yearly lease agreements are legal. However, because there is no way of proving “who said what,” it is advisable that all agreements be in writing. This should include any “side agreements.” For example, when a landlord says, “Oh, yeah. I'll throw that in.” Or, “We'll fix that before you move in.” Don’t be shy; ask that the terms of all “side agreements” be in writing.

Keep in mind that the monthly rental agreement and the yearly lease agreement is a contract. Consequently, both sides are bound by what is contained within that agreement. Do not sign an agreement that has blank spots that have space for writing in information. If there is nothing to be written in, cross it out and both you and the landlord initials that space to show that there is nothing added. Make sure you get a copy of the agreement. As a matter of fact, it is wise to keep a folder of all correspondence, lease agreement, rent receipts, etc., for future reference.
Who's Responsible for the Utilities?

Utilities are a major consideration for any new tenant. You need to know who’s responsible for paying the various utilities. You need to be able to at least estimate the cost of these utilities before agreeing to rent a property. Keep in mind that your rent payment is only one portion of your monthly housing expense. If the utilities on your new rental property are expensive, you may not be able to afford it over time. Here are some examples of utilities you may be responsible to pay:

- Electricity
- Gas
- Water
- Sewer
- Telephone
- Garbage/recycling
- Cable

Usually, tenants are responsible for utilities that “fluctuate,” based upon tenant use, such as electricity, gas, telephone and cable. The landlord is usually responsible for “fixed-price” utilities, like sewer, water, garbage. However, “who covers what” can vary from one property to the next. So it’s up to you to make sure you find out what you will be responsible for and make sure it is written into the rental or lease agreement.

Deposits and Fees —

There are typically a number of deposits and fees that you will have to pay to the landlord. Generally, the deposits will be returned to you at some point if you meet certain conditions. On the other hand, fees typically are costs that are not refundable.

The most common deposit is the security (damage) deposit. Landlords charge tenants security deposits to protect themselves from financial loss. There is no limit to the amount a landlord may require as a security deposit. A landlord can increase the amount of the security deposit at any time during a “month-to-month” tenancy, but only if the tenant is given proper advance written notice (generally one rental period plus one day).
It is important to note that all or part of your security deposit may not be returned to you under certain circumstances. Make sure these circumstances are clearly defined in the written rental agreement. Examples include a tenant’s failure to make final payments upon move out, damage to the rental unit beyond normal wear and tear, or a tenant’s failure to leave a unit as clean as when they moved in.

Within 21 days of the end of your tenancy, a landlord must return a tenant’s security deposit plus four percent interest, or give the tenant a written explanation as to why the deposit (or any part of the deposit) will not be returned. If the landlord does not return the deposit in the time allowed, the landlord must pay the tenant an amount equal to two times the amount of the deposit wrongfully withheld, plus interest. Please note that the security deposit cannot be used by the tenant to pay the rent.

**Other common types of deposits and fees include:**

**Holding Deposit:** This is a deposit that a tenant pays to a landlord if the tenant cannot move into a rental unit right away. In making the deposit, the tenant agrees to rent the unit and the landlord agrees not to rent the unit to anyone else for a specified period of time. Be sure you have a written agreement that spells out how the deposit will be refunded and if the deposit is refundable if you should change your mind and not rent the unit.

**Pet Deposit:** If you have a pet, many landlords require an extra deposit to cover potential damage caused by pets.

**Application Screening Fee:** This is a fee which a landlord may charge to cover his or her cost of obtaining credit or reference information about you prior to move in.

**Remember:** it is very important that all deposits and fees be spelled out in advance and in writing. Make sure you insist on it!

**The Move-in Process —**

Before you move in, you need to inspect the unit along with the landlord and agree to the overall condition of the unit prior to move-in.
The Walk-through Process —

Your rental agreement should contain a provision for inspecting your new rental unit prior to moving in and as you move out. You and your landlord should inspect the unit together and agree on its condition. Some landlords may provide an inventory checklist to be used during the walk-through. The checklist is to be filled out and signed by you and the landlord. A sample checklist is provided with this workbook.

The checklist itemizes various items in your unit room-by-room, such as sink, counter surfaces, light fixtures, stove, etc. With each item you will note what the condition is at the time of your move-in. The same checklist will be used when you move out, and the condition will again be noted. After the move-in inspection is completed and you and your landlord sign the checklist, be sure to get a copy for your files.

Things To-Do List —

There are a number of things you need to take care of upon moving in. Check with the landlord to determine what your responsibilities are and what the landlord’s responsibilities are. Your To-Do list might include:

- Contact the utilities companies to have the service put in your name.
  - Electric company
  - Gas company
  - Telephone company
  - City or County water/sewer/garbage service
  - Cable company
- Notify friends, family and creditors of your new address and phone number.
- Initiate newspaper service (if desired).
- Check to see that your name is placed on your mail box (if required).
- Complete change-of-address forms at the post office.

During your first month of tenancy, it’s a good idea to introduce yourself to your neighbors and promote open lines of communication with them which can go a long way in avoiding unwanted disagreements in the future.
Tip: It is wise to purchase renter’s insurance to protect yourself against theft and fire. As a renter or tenant, you need to only insure the personal possessions such as furniture and any other moveable items that belong to you. All of the other fixed items in the residence, which belong to the landlord and/or owner, are totally his or her responsibility. This is one of the reasons that renter’s insurance is usually quite reasonably priced and affordable to where it doesn’t break your budget. The renter’s insurance premium only needs to cover your personal possessions that you have brought to the property. If the policy will break your budget, you may want to consider seeking out a lower cost rental unit to where you will have enough money left over to obtain the policy.

Since renter’s insurance policies are usually quite affordable they can usually be obtained through many insurance agents right in the phone book yellow pages or you may want to search online to compare rates. Some agencies will indicate right in their ads that they sell renter’s insurance, but usually agents who sell homeowners insurance policies will also sell renter’s insurance as well.

It will be much easier to compare rates and get a more accurate quote if you prepare yourself before you make the calls for estimates. You will definitely want to make a list and take pictures or videos of all of your personal property items that you desire to cover with the renter’s insurance policy. It’s a good idea to separate your possessions into categories on your list and you should make a separate category for electronics, furniture, and miscellaneous household items. You should write down anything of value, no matter if it is something that is used everyday in your household or if it’s stored in the garage, basement, or attic.

Incredibly, the majority of renters do not have any type of renter’s insurance policy

Rules to Live By: Tenant’s and Landlord Responsibilities
Once you move into your new home, you need to know your basic rules and responsibilities. Where do you find out about these rules, rights and responsibilities? A great place to start is your rental agreement.

Most landlords use very standardized rental agreements. They are typically very thorough and detail your legal rights and responsibilities, as well as those of your landlord. Certain rights and responsibilities are simply a matter of Minnesota law. The Office of the Minnesota Attorney General has an excellent publication titled: Landlords and Tenants Handbook: Rights and Responsibilities. There’s one available in the Transition Coordinator Resource Library right here in the prison. You can also find one you can download for free on the Internet (http://www.ag.state.mn.us/consumer/housing/default.asp). Other rights and responsibilities may be unique to your agreement with your landlord. Again, it is very important to carefully read and understand your rental or lease agreement.
Tips for being a Good Tenant

Here are a few things that that you need to be aware of to be a good tenant:

1. **Guests:** One of the most common reasons a landlord moves a tenant towards eviction, beyond nonpayment of rent (which is common sense no matter what the intelligence level), is behavior of your guests. It is important for you to understand the fact that you are responsible for your guests' behavior **at all times**. Even if you don't want them there, even if you're not in the building at the time. The reason that individual is in the building (defecating in the hallways or screaming up to your window) is because of YOU. To remove that problem, the landlord must remove you. In order to prevent this, you can either keep your new home a secret from old relationships, or if this is not an option, move through the legal process to show your landlord you sincerely want to cure the problem, etc.

2. **Subleasing:** This also has to do with your guests. You are **NOT** allowed to have anyone that is not named on the lease live with you, no matter the situation. If a relative is coming into town for a few weeks to a month, let the landlord know. It is vital that you are open and honest with your landlord. Landlords often tell those coming out of transitional housing, or well-monitored housing with front desk etc., that this is your home, you may have guests, but anyone staying here longer than a week, they will ask both of you to leave **UNLESS** you speak with the landlord prior to the extended visit.

3. **Pest control:** Many apartment complexes fight the bed bug situation. Landlords will evict people because they are not only unwilling to work with them to remove the problem, but they are keeping the problem a secret. **MOST** pest control issues are not a housekeeping issue and should not be shame-based, especially bed bugs. If you do not tell the landlord what the situation is, “I am getting bitten,” or “I noticed a funny bug under my sink” then the tenant is at stake for eviction or paying a large amount of fines if others become infested etc.
4. **Communication:** Communication is critical with your landlord – as in any other relationship. Tell your potential landlord up-front about any poor previous rental history or criminal history. It is guaranteed they will find everything out anyway. If you are open-and-honest, they will be more likely to work with you and help you in the process. Even if you don’t qualify for their building, they will have other connections. These connections can work in your favor or against you. While renting, letting your landlord know about your financial hardships: perhaps you can’t pay rent on time this month but you can pay it on the 10th. Let your landlord know prior and they may waive the late fee. Landlords dislike court, it’s a significant amount of money and it’s a stressful waste of time. If you are open with your landlord, you could avoid the fees and the legal ramifications by agreeing to leave the apartment in good condition on your own terms. Don’t be afraid to sit down and talk with your landlord about your options. It will only get worse by avoiding them.

The housing market fluctuates. When vacancies are plentiful, renters are a commodity. Landlords need you. Sell yourself by being open, honest and professional. Convincing your potential landlord that you will be a great tenant and benefit to the building might just result in your signing your name on the lease.

**The Eviction Process: What You Should Know**

Landlords cannot forcibly remove tenants. In order to evict a tenant, a landlord must first bring an *Eviction Action*, or what used to be called *Unlawful Detainer* action against the tenant. This is a legal proceeding conducted in district court. To bring such an action the landlord must have a legitimate reason. According to Minnesota law, legitimate reasons can be nonpayment of rent, other breach of the lease or cases where the tenant has refused to leave after notice to vacate has been properly served and the tenancy’s last day has passed. In general, if a tenant does not pay rent on the day it is due, the landlord may immediately bring an Eviction Action, unless the lease provides otherwise.

With proper written notice a landlord can end a month-to-month tenancy unless the landlord is limiting a tenant’s right to call the police for emergency assistance, or retaliating or discriminating against the tenant. Definite term leases can only be ended according to the notice specified in the lease, or if there has been a significant breach of the lease and the lease allows eviction for breach.
There are a number of steps both landlords and tenants must take in an Eviction Action:

1. The landlord must file a complaint against the tenant in district court. At least seven days before the court date the landlord must have someone else serve the tenant with a summons ordering the tenant to appear in court.

2. A court hearing must take place within seven to 14 days after the court issues the summons. At the hearing, both tenant and landlord will be asked to give their sides of the story. The judge will then deliver a decision. If the judge decides the tenant has no legal reason for refusing to leave or pay the rent, the judge will order the tenant to vacate the rental unit. If necessary, the judge will order a law enforcement officer to force the tenant out. If the tenant can show immediate eviction will cause substantial hardship, the court shall allow the tenant a reasonable period of time - up to one week - in which to move. A tenant may not seek or receive a delay based on hardship if the tenant is causing a nuisance or seriously endangering the safety of other residents, their property, or the landlord's property.

If the Eviction Action has been brought only because the tenant owes rent, and the landlord wins, the tenant can still “pay and stay.” To pay and stay, the tenant must pay the rent that is past due (in arrears) plus interest (if charged), plus a $5 attorney fee if an attorney represented the landlord, and finally, any “costs of the action.” Costs of the action means the filing fee (now about $245) plus the process server fee, plus witness fees if one was subpoenaed (called) for trial; costs do not include other legal or similar fees for handling/processing the case as those are capped at $5.

The court may give the tenant up to a week to pay the court costs. If a tenant has paid the landlord or the court the amount of rent owed, but is unable to pay the interest, costs and attorney’s fees, the court may permit the tenant to pay these amounts during the time period the court delays issuing a Writ of Recovery (eviction order).

Following a motion by the tenant, the court may find that the landlord’s eviction case is without merit. The judge may then decide to expunge (remove) the eviction case from the court record. If a tenant screening service knows that an eviction case file has been expunged, the tenant screening service must remove any reference to that file from data it maintains or disseminates.
It should be understood that only a law enforcement officer can physically evict a tenant. The landlord cannot do this. A Writ of Recovery - which is issued at the time the decision is handed down - must be posted on the premises at least 24 hours before the actual eviction. The law enforcement officer can show up to perform the eviction anytime after the 24 hours have expired.

**Eviction for Illegal Activities**

Every oral or written residential lease now includes a requirement that the following activities will not be allowed on the premises: making, selling, possessing, purchasing or allowing illegal drugs; illegally using or possessing firearms; allowing stolen property; or allowing prostitution or related activities. A tenant violating this law loses the right to the rental property. An Eviction Action filed by a landlord for these reasons will be heard within five to seven days (rather than the usual 7 to 14 days.)

If illegal drugs or contraband valued at more than $100 are seized from the property, the landlord, upon being notified, has 15 days to file to evict the tenant, or ask the county attorney to do so.

The tenant has a defense against eviction if the tenant has no knowledge of, or reason to know about, the drugs or contraband, or could not prevent them from being brought onto the premises.

**The Move-out Process**

When it's time to move on, there are some important things to know about the move-out process. Most renters will need a substantial portion of their deposit refunded in order to afford the move to their next place of residence. If you expect to receive a refund of your deposit money, it is important that you refer to your rental or lease agreement and meet the conditions outlined.
Giving Proper Notice

Your rental agreement will spell out the process for giving proper notice of your intention to move out. Check your agreement to see how many days notice you are required to give. Your notice, whether required by the rental agreement or not, should be given in writing. This will help avoid any disputes. Simply write a short note to your landlord stating that you intend to move out of your rental unit. You should state the date of the notice and the date you intend to move out. It is important to keep a copy for your records. It is best to deliver the notice to your landlord in person. If this is not possible, mail it by certified mail with return receipt requested.

For Month-to-Month Agreements

If there is no provision in the lease stating how much advance notice must be given to end the tenancy, the law says written notice must be received by the landlord at least one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy. This means the day before the last rent payment is due.

For example, if a tenant who pays rent on the first day of each month (in a month-to-month agreement) wishes to leave at the end of June, the tenant must inform the landlord in writing on or before May 31. This is because May 31 is one day before the June rental period begins. No matter when during June the tenant actually leaves, the tenant is responsible for the entire month's rent. If the tenant or landlord misses the proper notice deadline - even by a day - the notice is void (no good) and the tenancy continues as if no notice was given.

The effective date of the notice is the date it is received. If the notice is mailed May 31, it will not be received by the other party until at least June 1, and will be ineffective to end the tenancy by June 30. The proper notice provision also applies to the landlord. If the landlord wants to end the tenancy, he or she must give the tenant advance written notice the day before that last rental period begins. If the landlord misses the deadline, the notice is defective and the tenancy is automatically extended for another month. The landlord must provide the tenant a second proper, written notice to vacate the rental property at least one day before the last rental period begins.
Yearly Lease Agreements

Procedures for ending the yearly lease agreement are generally written into the lease. Tenants with a definite term lease have to pay for the entire term no matter when they leave, unless the landlord agrees to accept new tenants who would take over the remaining payments. But some term leases have provisions allowing the tenant to “break” the lease. Often in such cases, the tenant is required to pay a “break-lease” fee - a sum of money and/or the tenant’s security deposit.

Some definite term leases spell out what kind of notice is needed to end the tenancy when the lease ends. Typically this is a written notice presented 30 to 60 days before the lease ends. Often such a requirement is part of an automatic renewal provision. Automatic renewal means if the tenant does not give notice he or she can be held to an additional period of time - for example, one or two months.

But if the automatic renewal is for an extra two months or more, the landlord must give the tenant written notice and call the tenant’s attention to the automatic renewal provision. If the landlord does not, the automatic renewal provision cannot be enforced. The renewal notice must be given either by personal service or by registered or certified mail. It must be received by the tenant 15 to 30 days before the tenant has to give the landlord written notice to vacate. The tenant may not use the security deposit as the last month’s rent.

Cleaning Up and Clearing Out

As your move-out day approaches, it is important to schedule your time carefully. Keep in mind that you must get all your belongings moved out and still leave time to clean your rental unit before turning over the keys to your landlord by the day stated in your notice. This can get a bit crazy, especially if you’re trying to coordinate with a specific move-in date at your new residence, attempting to get friends lined up to help with the move, and doing it all around your work schedule.
It is important that you be out of your rental unit on the day stated in your notice. Your landlord has probably already rented the unit to another person who may need to move in. Remember, if you plan to get a refund of your deposit money, you must clean your rental unit and leave it in the same condition as when you moved in (except for normal wear and tear). After cleaning the unit, you should schedule a final walk-through inspection with the landlord. This is a good time to take another look at the inspection list you used during your move-in walk-through inspection.

**Things To-Do List - Again**

Just like when you moved in, there are a number of things you need to take care of upon moving out.

- Contact the utilities companies to have the service discontinued at the rental unit you are moving out of (and possibly started at your new residence).
  - Electric, gas, and telephone company
  - City or County water/sewer/garbage service
  - Cable company
  - Notify friends, family and creditors of your new address and phone number.
  - Submit a change-of-address card with the post office so that your mail will be forwarded to your new residence.

- Leave a forwarding address with your landlord for your deposit money return.
SAMPLE LEASE OR RENTAL AGREEMENT

By this agreement made at __________________________, MN

on the _________ day

of ________, 20____, the Landlord ________________________ and the Tenant ________________

1. PROPERTY

The landlord hereby leases to Tenant for the term of this agreement

a. the property located at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Street name</th>
<th>Unit #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Zip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And

b. the following furniture and appliances on that property:


2. TERM

The term of this lease is for ____________, beginning on ____________, and ending on ____________.

At the expiration of said term, the lease will automatically be renewed for a period of one month unless either party notifies the other of its intention to terminate the lease at least one month before its expiration date.

(or)

At the expiration of said term, the lease will expire unless the tenant gives a written notice at least 15 days before the termination date of the lease. Thereafter, the lease will automatically be renewed for periods of one month until either party notifies the other of its intention to terminate the lease. The notice of termination will be in writing and will be effective on the next rental date no less than 30 days after the date of the notice.
3. RENT

Tenant agrees to pay rent in the amount of ______________ per month, each payment due on the ______ day of each month and to be made at:

Address:

4. UTILITIES/SERVICES

Landlord agrees to provide the utilities and services indicated:

electricity _____  gas _____  water _____
garbage collection _____  snow removal _____  other _____

5. DEPOSIT

Tenant has paid a deposit of $_________ of which Landlord acknowledges receipt. Upon regaining possession of the property, Landlord shall refund to Tenant the total amount of the deposit less any damages to the property, normal wear and tear expected, and less any unpaid rent.

6. REFUND PROCEDURE

Forwarding Address: Tenant shall provide Landlord with a forwarding address at which the Landlord can send him/her the deposit refund.

Landlord shall return the entire deposit to Tenant within 21-days after retaking possession; or shall return so much of the deposit as exceeds any damages done to the property during the Tenant's residence, normal wear and tear expected, and any unpaid rent. If the Landlord returns any amount less than the full deposit, he/she shall also provide a written itemized list of damages and charges.

Tenant maintains the right to sue Landlord for any portion of the deposit not returned to him/her which the tenant believes he/she is entitled.
7. INVENTORY CHECKLIST

The Tenant is provided with an Inventory Move-In Checklist attached to this lease. The Tenant shall note the conditions of each item on the checklist and return a copy to the Landlord within 10-days after taking possessions. If the Landlord objects to inclusions of any item, he/she shall notify the Tenant in writing within 10 days. The Tenant and Landlord shall note the condition of each item on the checklist after the Tenant returns possessions to the Landlord and shall give a copy to the other party.

The Landlord may not retain any portion of the Security Deposit for damages noted in the Move-Out Checklist to which the Landlord did not object.

8. THE PARTIES ALSO AGREE

A. Tenant shall not sublet all or any part of the premises, nor assign this agreement or any interest in it without the landlord’s prior written consent which will not be unreasonably withheld.

B. The Landlord may not enter the premises without having given tenant at least 24-hours notice, except in case of emergency. Landlord may enter to inspect, repair, or show the premises to prospective buyers or tenants if notice is given.

C. Tenant agrees to occupy the premises and shall keep the same good condition, and shall not make any alterations, improvements, or additions in or about the premises without the written consent of the landlord.

D. Landlord agrees to regularly maintain the building and grounds in a clean, orderly, and neat manner.
   Landlord further agrees not to maintain a public nuisance and not to conduct business or commercial activities on the premises.

E. Tenant agrees not to use the premises in such a manner as to disturb the peace-and-quiet of other tenants in the building. Tenant further agrees not to maintain a public nuisance and not to conduct business or commercial activities on the premises.

F. Tenant shall, upon termination of this Agreement, vacate the premises, remove all personal property, and leave the premises in the same condition that it was received, except for normal wear and tear, and other damages beyond the Tenant’s control.
G. Additional Terms:


H. Any alternations to this Agreement shall be in writing and signed by all parties. We, the undersigned, agree to this Lease:

**LANDLORD**

Signature

Typed Name

Address

**TENANT**

Signature

Typed Name

Address

Signature

Typed Name

Address
INSPECTION CHECK-LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landlord/Property Manager Name:</th>
<th>Amount of Security Deposit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Name:</td>
<td>Date Paid:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address of Rental Unit:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This form is designed to assist in recording the condition of a rental unit upon moving in and moving out. To be most useful, it should be completed in the presence of the property owner/landlord and the tenant. You should both keep a signed and dated copy for your records. You will be using this check-list when you move out to help you document the condition of the unit to get your damage deposit back.

For each line item, either check "OK" or describe any problems present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move-in Condition</th>
<th>Move-out Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kitchen</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light fixtures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oven/Range</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls &amp; Ceiling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bathroom</strong></td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tub or Shower</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterproof floor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Walls &amp; Ceiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outlets</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Window or fan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living Room</strong></td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

51
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move-in Condition</th>
<th>Move-out Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bedroom #1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OK</strong></td>
<td><strong>If not OK, describe problems</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls &amp; Ceiling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor/Carpet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each line item, either check "OK" or describe any problems present.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bed-room #2</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>If not OK, describe problems</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>If not OK, describe problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls &amp; Ceiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floor/Carpet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures</td>
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<td>Outlets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Room</strong></td>
<td><strong>OK</strong></td>
<td><strong>If not OK, describe problems</strong></td>
<td><strong>OK</strong></td>
<td><strong>If not OK, describe problems</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Cleanliness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walls &amp; Ceiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floor/Carpet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures</td>
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<td>Outlets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>If not OK, describe problems</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>If not OK, describe problems</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heating system</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water pressure</td>
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<td>Entry doors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smoke detector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire extinguisher</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (describe)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Use the space below to note any disagreements to the checklist

I was present at the time of the inspection, and agree with the checklist, except as noted in the space above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move-in</th>
<th>Move-out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord Signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenant Signature</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4: Education

Furthering your education will help you develop a variety of transferable and marketable skills. Knowledge and skills in the areas of problem solving, speaking/listening, math, science and technology, management, critical thinking, medical and human service are important in the job market. Knowledge and skills in all of these areas can be obtained by taking classes.

Adults go to school for a variety of reasons. Some go for academic reasons, such as to earn their High School diploma, Adult diploma, or G.E.D., or attain the skills necessary to enter post-secondary education at a college or university. Some want to master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school. Some adults go to school for financial reasons. They may want to attain employment, better their current employment, and/or exit public assistance and become self-sufficient. Many want to learn to speak and write the English language or become United States citizens. Many are looking to gain self-esteem, personal confidence and a sense of personal and civic responsibility.

Adult Basic Education

The mission of Adult Basic Education (ABE) in Minnesota is to provide adults with educational opportunities to acquire and improve the literacy skills necessary to become self-sufficient and to participate effectively as productive workers, family members and citizens.

These programs are generally free or very inexpensive.
The ABE programs offered in Minnesota are:

- **GED (General Educational Development diploma):** These diploma programs are provided for eligible adults who lack a high school diploma. The GED is the national high school equivalency program that includes a set of 5 tests; Math, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, and Science.

- **High School Diploma:** This program is provided for eligible students under age 21 and leads to a high school diploma from Walter Maginnis High School in Red Wing.

- **Adult Diploma:** This program is available for adults over age 21 in the State of Minnesota and is competency-based.

- **ESL (English as a Second Language):** Instruction is provided for those whose native language is not English. It is sometimes referred to as English Language Learning (ELL). ESL classes, from pre-literacy level to the advanced level, help students develop speaking, listening, reading, writing, and grammar skills to communicate effectively in English within their workplaces, communities, and families.

- **Basic Skills Enhancement:** These programs are provided for students who need goal-specific elementary— or secondary-level basic skills such as work-related math, functional literacy (e.g. banking skills), reading, or writing assistance.

- **Work Readiness/Workforce Preparation:** This program builds the literacy skills students need to obtain, retain, or improve their employment. Workforce Education provides basic academic and literacy skills to students who are already employed by a specific business, industry, or company — typically provided at the student’s place of employment. Employment Readiness programs include general employability skills and instruction in soft skills that are essential in the workplace.

- **Citizenship/Civics Education:** This program is provided to prepare Minnesota non-citizens for U.S. citizenship. Includes application preparation and English language instruction. Civics Education includes content related to general civics knowledge and participation in a democratic society.

- **Family Literacy:** These programs are provided for adults and their children. This features instruction for adults in literacy, instruction in parenting, and educational/developmental services for children.

To be eligible for ABE programming, an individual must be over age 16, not enrolled in secondary school, and functioning below a 12th grade level in any of the basic academic areas including reading, math, writing and speaking English.
Call the Minnesota Literacy Council's (MLC) Adult Literacy Hotline at 1-800-222-1990 to find classes or one-to-one tutoring for adults. MLC helps adult learners find convenient programs in the Twin Cities or across the state. Phones are staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. For after-hours calls, leave a message on the voicemail and you'll get a call back on the next business day.

**Education While You Work**

**Apprenticeships: Practical On-The-Job Education**

Many jobs, especially in the construction trades, offer apprenticeships. An apprentice works at the occupation he or she wants to learn. The apprentice learns "on-the-job" and receives pay increases as their skills increase. Acquiring an apprenticeship can be competitive, and some who obtain an apprenticeship may work full-time for less than half the salary that the job will eventually pay. In addition, some employers will pay their apprentices to take classes.

Typically, it takes about four years to complete an apprenticeship and earn journeyman status and salary. At last count, there were roughly 10,500 apprenticeships representing 105 occupations training in Minnesota. Apprenticeship training is available in selected trades at correctional facilities. Apprenticeship training does not guarantee job placement upon release. Hiring decisions and credit for on-the-job training remains the final decision of the employer and associated union, but training does improve your opportunities and likelihood of finding employment in the trade.

**For more information contact:**

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry Apprenticeship Unit
443 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

**Part-Time Student Options**

After getting released from a correctional facility, most offenders need to focus on getting reestablished so that they can support themselves and/or their family. This does not mean that you cannot continue your education. It is possible to work a job and attend school part time. Many schools offer evening and weekend programs, and these programs often qualify for financial aid.
Post-Secondary Education

Acceptance and Enrollment

Each school may have different enrollment requirements for enrollment in their programs. As a rule, colleges and technical schools require a high school or GED diploma. In Minnesota, most community (2-year) colleges require an Accuplacer test to determine your readiness for college-level coursework. Four year colleges and universities generally require an ACT or SAT score, which will demonstrate your knowledge and/or potential in a broad range of academic subjects.

When applying for college, students will probably need a copy of their high school transcript or GED certificate. It may involve contacting the high school for a copy. To obtain a copy of a GED certificate earned in Minnesota, a written signed request by the GED graduate can be submitted to GED Testing, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113-4266. The request for record(s) (transcript and/or diploma) should contain the following:

- Your date of birth
- The last four digits of your social security number
- The name under which you took the GED tests
- The approximate year you took the GED tests
- The address to which the transcript should be sent

There is no charge for the service at this time. Requests are filled as soon as possible and mailed out within 2-3 working days of receipt.

Most schools will have you speak to an advisor to help set up your class schedule. You may need to take additional placement testing.

Talk to your education unit staff about researching college options. When you have identified the school to which you’d like to apply, write to the college for an application and complete it as directed. You may need to visit the school for an interview once your application has been returned.

An education isn’t how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It’s being able to differentiate what you do know and what you don’t.

Anatole France (1844—1924)
Paying for Higher Education

Financial Aid

Higher Education is expensive. Private schools tend to cost more than public schools. Four-year colleges usually cost more than trade and technical schools. Most people do not have enough money saved to pay for college so they might need to ask for assistance from family, work full- or part-time, apply for loans, and/or earn a scholarship in order to pay the tuition.

When you receive a grant or a scholarship, an institution gives you money to pay for your schooling. Usually the money is paid directly to the school. You do not have to pay anything back if you receive a scholarship or grant. The best way to find out about scholarships and grants is to contact the Financial Aid Office at the school you want to attend.

To get a loan for your education you will also have to demonstrate need. Getting loans is not as competitive as getting grants or scholarships. After you graduate you will have to pay back your loans and any applicable interest.

FAFSA — Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Completing the FAFSA form is the first step in the financial aid process. You can fill out the FAFSA form while still in prison. The Education unit or Transition Coordinator can help you access the FAFSA form.

Read the information titled "What is FAFSA?" on the side of the form and "What Does Your School Want You to Know?" on the other side of the form. Make sure that you complete and submit your FAFSA months before the semester in which you hope to attend. When you decide on a school, contact the school and/or review their admissions information to see if the school requires additional forms for Financial Aid. After filling out and mailing the FAFSA form, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) by mail. If the SAR has any errors, correct the mistakes and send corrections to the address indicated on the form.
The federal government considers financial need to be the cost of attending school minus the "expected family contribution." Individuals filling out this form are reporting how much money they make and have saved, and how much their immediate family makes. If an individual and/or the individual's family have a high income or a lot of money saved, he or she will be eligible for less financial aid.

In order to be eligible for financial aid, adult men must be registered for Selective Service. Be aware that a drug conviction may make you ineligible for some types of financial aid. Situations are handled on a case by case basis. More information may be requested to determine eligibility. Be sure to answer every question on the FAFSA and all other forms honestly and completely. Skipping questions or leaving sections blank are likely to cause your application to be rejected.

**Work Programs**

Many schools offer work/study programs where you work part-time and go to school part-time. The money earned while working at a job provided by the school will help pay for tuition.

**Student Loans**

These loans are provided to students and, depending upon the rules connected to each type of loan, may be used to pay for the tuition, books, fees, and in some cases, housing and personal expenses. The most typical student loan programs are:

- Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan Program
- Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
- Federal Direct Student Loans
- Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)
- Federal Perkins Loan Program
- Minnesota Student Educational Loans
In addition, veterans of United States military service may be eligible for:

- Veteran's Education Assistance Program
- Montgomery GI Bill
- Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veteran’s Programs
- National Guard Benefits
- Minnesota Educational Assistance for War Orphans and Veterans

Notes:

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*Life is only this place, this time, and these people right here and now.*

*Vincent Collins*

**Understanding Chapter 4: Education**

1. What programs/topics are offered in Minnesota ABE?
2. What is an apprenticeship?

3. What specific tests are necessary to take in order to qualify for college?

4. What is the name of the federal financial aid form?

5. What steps must be taken to get a grant or scholarship?
Chapter 5: Transportation

As you prepare for your return to the community, it is very important that you plan how you are going to get around. Having access to reliable forms of transportation is essential. Going without wheels can create all types of anxiety, not just as transportation to work, but transportation almost anywhere. Given that many ex-offenders are not released with a car, having transportation is a necessity to finding almost any employment. There are many modes of travel to consider. Modes of transport include automobiles, bicycles, buses, trains, and people. Because regular or reliable transportation is often unavailable in rural areas, there may be limits to work opportunities, advanced education or vocational training, proper health care, or recreation. In short, ex-offenders aren’t able to participate in their communities if they can’t get to where they need to be. Let’s explore the different means of transportation.

Walking/Bicycling — You can make your plans so that you live within walking or bicycling distance from work, shopping, and your family and recreational activities. If you are going to live a long distance from your work or recreation, you will need motorized transportation.

Carpools — Typically, you’ll save hundreds of dollars a year in commuting expenses, including gas, oil changes, tires, repairs, and parking fees. In addition, you’ll have the opportunity to read, study, work, or relax on the days you don’t drive. You’ll arrive at work better prepared to face the day. For example, you can carpool every day or just a couple days a week. One person might drive all the time, with the passengers contributing gas and parking money. Carpools can pick up their riders at their homes or everyone could meet at a convenient location, including any of the region’s Park & Ride lots.

The Bus — If you are going to the Twin Cities or some larger urban areas in Minnesota, you will be able to take the bus. All cities with bus systems have free bus schedules available.

The Twin Cities bus system has a website at www.metrotransit.org and hotline at (612) 373-3333 which helps you plan trips, get news, help, schedules, and bus passes.
Riding the Bus

Fares & Passes
*ALL FARES SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

Rides within the downtown zone are generally reduced. Buying a “SuperSaver” card will save you money. If you are taking more than one bus ride or will be back on the bus soon, request a transfer. Transfers are good for rides on any metro bus within two and one-half hours after you purchase your ticket. Super-Saver 31-Day passes and Stored Value Cards are prepaid fares that save you money. The Super-Saver 31-Day Pass may be purchased at any time and is good for unlimited rides on buses or trains for 31 consecutive days beginning the first time you ride. The price of a 31-Day Pass is based on 42 rides at a discounted rate, every ride you take after 42 is, in-effect, free.

The bus accepts $1 bills and U.S. coins, including $1 coins. Bus fare boxes and drivers cannot make change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fare Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bus</strong></td>
<td>The base fare is charged for local and limited-stop buses. Higher fares apply during rush hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Express Bus</strong></td>
<td>Express buses travel on freeways for at least four miles. On many express buses leaving downtown areas or the University of Minnesota campus during rush hours, fares are collected as customers leave the bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Light Rail</strong></td>
<td>Fares for rides on light rail are the same as for non-express buses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northstar Line</strong></td>
<td>Northstar fares are determined by where you’re boarding, whether you’re traveling to/from downtown or between suburban stations and day of the week. There are no rush-hour fares for Northstar trains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fares are subject to change. IDs required for Seniors, Youth, and Persons with disabilities.
Transfers — Transfers give you unlimited rides on buses and trains — for 2½ hours. Ask for one when you pay your cash fare. Transfers are automatically embedded on fare cards and rail tickets. To transfer from bus to rail using a SuperSaver Stored Value Card, you must ask the bus driver for a rail transfer.

SuperSavers

SuperSaver 31-Day Passes and Stored Value Cards are pre-paid fares that save you money. For the same savings along with faster boarding and reusable convenience, upgrade to a Go-To Card.

Which SuperSaver Should I Buy?
If you take the bus or train nearly every day, the SuperSaver 31-Day Pass is a great deal. Its price is based on 42 rides per month at the discounted rate. If you take the bus less than five days per week, a Stored Value Card may work best for you.

Please note: Stored Value Cards cannot be used on trains. If your trip begins on a bus and you transfer to a train, purchase a Go-To Card. SuperSaver 31-Day Passes (including Mobility) are no longer sold online or at Metro Transit Stores. SuperSavers continue to be available by mail or at over 150 fare retailers.

Do SuperSavers Have Expiration Dates?

Stored Value Cards may be used on buses at any time. The SuperSaver 31-Day Pass may be purchased at any time and is good for unlimited rides on buses or trains for 31 consecutive days beginning the first time you ride.
**Note:** You must activate your 31-Day Pass on a bus before using it on a train.

I ride during rush hours and non-rush hours. Which SuperSaver should I buy?

If you use Stored Value Cards, the fare box reader on the bus will automatically deduct the correct fare for the time you board so there are no worries about carrying several cards and change. However, if you use 31-Day Passes, we recommend buying a pass for the lower fare and adding coins to the fare box when you ride at a higher fare. Stored Value Cards cannot be used on trains (see above).

**Does one SuperSaver save me more than another?**

No. Each saves you money on every ride. However, since the price of a 31-Day Pass is based on 42 rides at a discounted rate, every ride you take after 42 is, in effect, free.

**Can I use my Stored Value Card to ride the train?**

Sorry, Stored Value Cards cannot be used on trains. If your trip begins on a bus and you’ll transfer to light rail, use your Stored Value Card to pay your bus fare and ask the driver for a rail-only transfer. Show the transfer (along with your Stored Value Card) to the police officer, when asked. Your rail-only transfer is good for 12 hours so keep it and use it for your return trip on the rail line, then pay your bus fare using your Stored Value Card.

**What do I do when my card has less than the current fare left on it?**

Stored Value Cards work just like cash. You can insert your card into the reader and any remaining value will be deducted from it. The reader’s display will show the remaining fare needed. Then add the difference in cash, or simply insert another Stored Value Card.

**Can I pay for a friend with my Stored Value Card?**

Yes. If you are paying for others and planning to transfer, tell the driver before you insert your card into the reader. The driver will then issue individual transfers for each person in your group.
Taxi Cab

Taxi cabs charge per trip, not per person. If possible, ride/share with family and friends. Cabs also charge for waiting, sometimes up to $25 an hour. Cabs are the most expensive, so check the bus routes before calling a cab or call the bus hotline to see if the bus runs through the area.

Responsibilities Related to Owning a Car

- insurance
- gas
- repairs
- the overall maintenance of the car
- tabs and license plates
- depreciation
Chapter 6: Living Under Supervision

Most individuals released from Minnesota correctional facilities will have supervised release, wherein the convicted individual is directly supervised by a supervision agent upon their release from prison. The person responsible for the monitoring and supervising of a convicted individual is called a Corrections Agent.

Under the conditions of supervised release, the convicted individual must report regularly to his or her assigned agent. The ex-offender must not only present himself or herself regularly to the agent, but he or she must also abide by all the rules and conditions set by the Commissioner of Corrections. Such rules and conditions may include random drug testing and requesting permission before leaving a certain area or geographic region. Any changes in residency or employment must also be reported to the agent.

Other conditions may be imposed upon the ex-offender related to the nature of the offense committed. A person who has been convicted of a predatory offence must register as a sex offender in the area where he or she is residing.

Types of Release

About 95 percent of all offenders sent to prison will ultimately be released to the community in one form or another. The following categories define the method of release.

- **Supervised Release (M.S. 244.05):** Unless an offender has been sentenced for a crime that prohibits release the judge imposes a determinate sentence that sets prison time and time on release. Upon entry into prison, a Supervised Release Date is set and it is based on the offender serving two-thirds of the imposed sentence in prison and one-third on Supervised Release. This date can change if the offender has discipline infractions in the prison.

- **Intensive Supervised Release (ISR) (M.S. 244.05; 244.13):** This is a specialized category for offenders being released on Supervised Release. It is a level of supervision that is determined by the offender's current offense and assessed risk. This level of supervision is reserved for those offenders presenting high risk to the community. The standards of supervision are contained in statute.
Work Release (M.S. 241.26; 244.065): Work Release is available to select offenders who meet the Work Release Selection Guidelines and who are committed to the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Department policy requires offenders to have served at least one-half of their term of imprisonment. Department policy further requires inmates to be within eight months of their supervised release date.

Work Release is an extension of the limits of confinement and affords an offender the opportunity to transition to work and establish permanent employment. The Work Release Program provides a continuum of care by connecting offenders to appropriate resources in the community as a follow-up to institutional programs. It also provides an opportunity for the offender to establish positive support networks with family, friends and the community and establish a stable residence at the time of their release to Supervised Release Status.

The Work Release unit administers contracts with county jails, jail annexes and community correctional residential facilities to house and provide programming to work release offenders throughout the State of Minnesota.

Offenders participating in work release must adhere to strict rules as established by the Department of Corrections and the contracting facility. Offenders may be terminated from the program and returned to a MN Correctional Facility or lose privileges, depending on the severity of any rule infraction.

Community Phases of the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) (M.S. 244.172): Selected non-violent offenders are allowed to participate in the CIP program at the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Moose Lake/Willow River and the MCF-Togo/TC. Upon completion of this six month program these offenders are released to intensive supervision (ISR).

Expiration: Offenders otherwise eligible for release may be kept in prison for the entire term of the sentence if they have significant and ongoing discipline problems. Some offenders also may be assigned expiration if their supervised release is revoked and it is determined that another release would be inconsistent with public safety.
Parole: As a general process, parole was eliminated in Minnesota in 1981. Sentencing Guidelines (determinate sentencing) replaced this discretionary release in favor of a more certain prison sentence. Parole still exists for offenders committing crimes prior to 1981 and for life sentences that are granted release by the Commissioner of Corrections.

You, your caseworker, and supervision agent will develop a release plan, including an approved residence and conditions of release. You have a responsibility to find a residence by informing your caseworker of any possible address locations that would be available to you upon release. If you are aware that you have personal identification documents (such as driver's license, birth certificate, or social security card) in your file, be sure to remind your caseworker or send a kite to the records unit to have these documents included with your release paperwork.

Be sure that you understand the conditions of release before you are released.

If you have any questions, ask your caseworker. Before you leave prison, you will be signing paperwork that states you have been read, and had explained to you, the conditions of release and that you fully understand all the rules, regulations, and conditions in the document. At the time you actually leave prison, you will receive copies of these documents.

Tips for Being Successful While on Supervision

ASK QUESTIONS. Your case manager and agent will be able to explain your conditions of release and answer your questions.
• COMMUNICATE. Your agent cannot read your mind. If you are experiencing problems, call your agent. Do not wait until your issue becomes a huge problem and you are facing return to prison. Your agent will want to work with you if you are upfront and honest about every situation.

• ASK FOR HELP. We all need help from time to time. Make the call and let your agent know you need some help.

• YOU WILL BE MAKING SOME TRANSITIONS. Things may not move as fast as you wish. Be patient. Things in your community may have changed. Be flexible. Find a support network, ask your agent if you do not have one.

• EMBRACE CHANGE. We all know that change is hard. But you now have the opportunity to get and keep your freedom. Understand what got you to prison and make a plan to change that behavior and lifestyle.

More Tips for Success

1. Report to your agent as directed — even when you’ve made a mistake.
2. Abide by conditions of release.
3. Have a positive attitude — use positive self-talk.
4. Have achievable goals in your life.
5. Learn to say no.
7. Take time to think things through before acting.
8. Take life in small bites — one day at a time.
10. Stay away from high-risk situations.
11. Believe in yourself and your ability to succeed.
12. Stay involved with all support meetings.
13. Maintain your support system.

A person without a plan for the day is lost before he/she starts.  
Lewis K. Bando, M.D.

Notes:
Standard Conditions of Release

These standard conditions apply to all offenders being released from a Minnesota prison.

1. The offender must go directly to the residence specified and report to the agent/desigee by telephone, in person or as directed by agent/desigee within 24 hours of release.

2. The offender must reside at/maintain an approved residence and may not change residence until approved by the agent/desigee.

3. The offender must comply with all agent/desigee directives and/or instructions. The offender must keep agent informed of activities and comply with all programming specifically designed to promote a positive transition to the community.

4. The offender must maintain contact with the agent/desigee as directed and respond promptly to any communication.

5. The offender must remain in the State of Minnesota unless granted written approval from the agent/desigee, and then only under the terms prescribed in writing.

6. The offender must submit to any unannounced visits and/or search of the offender’s person, residence, possessions, cellphone, vehicle, or premises by the agent/desigee.

7. The offender must sign release(s) of information for medical/mental health treatment or any other required programming as required by agent/desigee.

8. The offender must refrain from the use and/or possession of mood altering substances and/or drug paraphernalia. If prescribed medications by a licensed medical physician/psychiatrist, the offender must take them as directed. The offender must comply with all drug/alcohol testing, as directed by the agent/desigee.

9. The offender must refrain from engaging in any assaultive, abusive, violent, harassing, stalking, or threatening behavior.
10. The offender must refrain from the purchase, possession, access or control of any type of firearm, ammunition or dangerous weapon. The offender must not be found in the presence of a firearm, including those weapons found in a vehicle where the offender is also present. This includes replica weapons.

11. The offender must inform the agent/designee within 24 hours of any court appearance and/or contact with Law Enforcement. The offender must remain law abiding and refrain from involvement in any activity defined as criminal. Acknowledgement in the form of a confession under oath in open court before a judge may be considered a conviction for the purpose of this condition. A finding of probable cause by a court of competent jurisdiction, citation or other credible evidence showing a criminal charge has been filed, are all considered grounds to hold the offender in custody unless and until the offender is found not guilty.

12. The offender must refrain from direct or indirect contact with any person deemed a victim by the Department of Corrections, any person listed in a criminal justice agency report as a victim, or anybody who the court has determined is in need of protection as demonstrated by a current/previous Order for Protection, Harassment Restraining Order, or Domestic Abuse No Contact Order, without prior documented approval of agent/designee.

13. The offender must pay restitution as directed by the agent/designee.

A request to restructure the conditions of release contained herein must be submitted in writing by the offender to the agent/designee. The Executive Officer of Hearings and Release or designee will have the final authority to grant or deny restructuring of the above conditions of release and any such changes will be set forth in writing.
There are a number of special conditions that may be added or designed specifically for the individual offender. These special conditions may include but are not limited to: residential placement, intensive supervision, electronic monitoring, day reporting, special programming, limitations on activities, and limitations on contact with specific individuals and/or groups of individuals. There are also special conditions for offenders released to another authority, such as ICE or an interstate transfer.

It is important to note that if you abscond from supervision, your time stops from the time the warrant is issued until you are arrested for being in violation of your conditions of release. The amount of days that you were “on the run” will be added to the end of your sentence.

**Intensive Supervised Release (ISR) Phases**

These phases are structured for offenders being released on ISR status.

**Phase 1**: four months or one half of the time remaining until expiration of sentence, whichever is less. During this phase, the offender will be on strict house arrest (a schedule will be determined for job seeking, school, work, and/or verifiable religious activities).

**Phase 2**: four months or one third of the time remaining until expiration of sentence, whichever is less. During this phase, the offender will be on modified house arrest.

**Phase 3**: two months or one third of the time remaining until expiration of sentence, whichever is less. During this phase, the offender will be subject to daily curfew instead of house arrest.

**Phase 4**: two months or until expiration of sentence. During this phase the offender will continue to be subject to daily curfew.
Supervision Fees

Most jurisdictions charge supervision fees, but the fees can differ depending on your supervising agency. Ask your agent about your fee when you are released. Supervision fees may be waived under certain circumstances, but waivers also differ across jurisdictions, so talk to your agent if you would like to explore that option.

Within the Minnesota Department of Corrections, supervision fees are assessed at the rate of $300 per file number. For example, if you have one file with multiple counts it is $300, if you have 3 different files open you will be charged a $900 supervision fee. Supervision fees are assessed at the time you are placed on supervised release. If your sentence is executed and the fee was not paid it will be submitted for revenue recapture. If at sentencing you are sentenced directly to prison, you will be assessed the supervision fee when you are placed on supervised release.

All payments must be made by money order or cashier’s check to the agent or agent support staff. The supervision fee may be waived under certain circumstances. If the releasee has a restitution obligation too large to be paid over the course of the supervision term or if the releasee does not have the monetary resources, the agent may recommend the releasee to community work service (CWS). Every hour of CWS is worth $5 off the fee obligation so approximately two hours of CWS every month would cover the cost.
**Registration/Predatory Offender**

Pursuant to M.S. § 243.166, Subd. 1b, any person charged with, petitioned for, or Court Martialed for a violation of, or attempt to violate, or aiding, abetting or conspiracy to commit any of the following crimes and convicted of, or adjudicated delinquent for that offense or for an offense arising out of the same set of circumstances is required to register.

**List #1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Statute</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Degree Murder</td>
<td>609.185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>609.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Sexual Conduct in the First Degree</td>
<td>609.342</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Second Degree</td>
<td>609.343</td>
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<td>Indecent Exposure</td>
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<td>False Imprisonment</td>
<td>609.255</td>
<td>Subd. 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soliciting a minor to engage in prostitution</td>
<td>609.322</td>
<td>609.324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soliciting a minor to engage in sexual conduct</td>
<td>609.352</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a minor in a sexual performance</td>
<td>617.246</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of pictorial representations of minors</td>
<td>617.247</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predatory Crime and sentenced as a Patterned Sex Offender</td>
<td>609.108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparable violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Comparable Federal Offenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparable Offenses from other states</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offenders from other states who enter Minnesota to work or attend school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Commitments</td>
<td>253B.185 or 526.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(or a similar law in another state)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pursuant to M.S. § 243.167, anyone previously convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for an offense listed on List #1, who was not required to register at the time of conviction or release from imprisonment because the registration law did not apply to them at that time, is required to register if they commit a “Crime Against a Person” on or after July 1, 2000, and are convicted of an offense listed below (List #2).

This section also applies to offenders who we previously registered, but whose registration period has expired, if the offender commits a “Crime Against Person” after July 1, 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conviction From List #1</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>Conviction from List #2</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>Required to Register</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Or-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished Initial</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Conviction from List</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>Required to Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Period</td>
<td></td>
<td>#2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List #2

<p>| Unlawful Possession of a Firearm | 609.165 |
| Murder in the First Degree      | 609.185 |
| Murder in the Second Degree     | 609.19  |
| Murder in the Third Degree      | 609.195 |
| Manslaughter in the First Degree| 609.20  |
| Manslaughter in the Second Degree| 609.205 |
| Assault in the First Degree     | 609.221 |
| Assault in the Second Degree    | 609.222 |
| Assault in the Third Degree     | 609.223 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assault in the Fourth Degree <em>(committed on or after 08/01/05 only)</em></td>
<td>609.2331</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault in the Fifth Degree</td>
<td>609.224</td>
<td>Subd. 2 or 4 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Assault</td>
<td>609.2242</td>
<td>Subd. 2 or 4 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Assault by Strangulation <em>(committed on or after 08/01/05 only)</em></td>
<td>609.2247</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Drugs to Injure or Facilitate a Crime</td>
<td>609.235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Robbery</td>
<td>609.245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>609.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Imprisonment</td>
<td>609.255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Fifth Degree</td>
<td>609.3451</td>
<td>Subd. 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampering With a Witness</td>
<td>609.498</td>
<td>Subd. 1 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary in the First Degree</td>
<td>609.582</td>
<td>Subd. 1 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent Exposure</td>
<td>617.23</td>
<td>Subd. 2 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Committed for Benefit of a Gang</td>
<td>609.229</td>
<td>Felony Level Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malicious Punishment of a Child</td>
<td>609.377</td>
<td>Felony Level Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment; Stalking</td>
<td>609.749</td>
<td>Felony Level Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlawful Possession of a Pistol or Semiautomatic Military-Style Assault Weapon</td>
<td>624.713</td>
<td>Felony Level Only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**You are expected to register the following:**

- Primary Residence
- Secondary Residence
- Telephone (Home, Cell)
- Motor Vehicle Information & License Plate Number
- School information
- Employment information
- Homeless offenders need to register within 24-hours of becoming homeless.
- Homeless offenders need to report any changes within 24-hours to law enforcement.
- Homeless offenders must provide in detail where they are sleeping.
- Homeless offenders must report weekly to law enforcement between 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. until a residence is secured.

Predatory Offender Registration (POR) offenders must disclose their status to any hospitals, nursing homes, group residential housing facility upon admittance—facility must notify patients.

Offenders have 10-days to return the annual verification letter from BCA

POR starts over based on any period of jail time for new convictions or revocations for new offenses committed

**Who is required to register for life?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conviction Resulting in POR</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>Second Conviction Resulting in POR</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>Lifetime POR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Or any of the following convictions after August 01, 2000:
- 1st Degree Murder (M.S. 609.185 Clause 2)
- 1st Degree CSC (M.S. 609.342 Subd. 1; a,c,d,e,f,h)
- 2nd Degree CSC (M.S. 609.343 Subd. 1; a,c,d,e,f,h)
- 3rd Degree CSC (M.S. 609.344 Subd. 1; a,c,g)
- 4th Degree CSC (M.S. 609.345 Subd. 1; a,c,g)
- Or a comparable federal offense or comparable offense in another state

It is *YOUR* responsibility to know what these laws are and how they affect you. Ignorance of the law is no excuse. Failure to comply with these laws has serious consequences, and in many states failure to register is a felony.
It is also important to note that many offenders will be required to register for a period of time up to, and including, lifetime registration. This varies from state to state and according to the offense committed. While you are under supervised release, your agent will assist you in getting properly registered. However, after you are off supervision it is YOUR responsibility to keep your registration current and comply with all applicable laws if you relocate to another state.

It is important to note that if you are found in violation of your release, the registration period starts over.

**Frequently Asked Questions about Registration**

1. **If a register offense is expunged from my criminal record, am I still required to register?**

   Pursuant to M.S. 609.04 subd. 4, a conviction for which registration is required may not be expunged.

2. **Why isn't a risk level assigned to every offender?**

   The State of Minnesota began registering predatory offenders in 1991. Community notification did not take place until January 1997. Only those offenders who have been sentenced to prison and released after January 1, 1997, have been assigned a risk level. In other words, there are over 8,000 offenders who were registered prior to the community notification law taking effect.

3. **What if a citizen requests information on a registered offender?**

   Information in the Predatory Offender Registration (POR) database is managed by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). This information is available to law enforcement agencies only. The amount of information regarding predatory offenders that can be provided to citizens is determined by the risk level assigned to an offender by the Department of Corrections. A risk level 3 permits the local law enforcement agency to conduct community notification meetings.
4. *What if I am homeless and cannot provide an address for registration?*

Effective June 3, 2005, registrants who do not have a primary address are required to report to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction where they will be staying to complete the Weekly Check-In Form. On the form, the registrant will be required to describe the location where they will be staying with as much specificity as possible. Registrants are required to report to the law enforcement agency within 24 hours when they no longer have a primary address. The registrant will be required to return to the law enforcement agency on a weekly basis, between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm to complete the Weekly Check-In Form until a primary address is obtained. If the registrant begins staying at a new location he/she is required to report to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the new location within 24 hours.

5. *Am I still required to register even after my supervision has expired?*

Yes, you are required to register for 10 years or the duration of your supervision, whichever is longer. Most offenders are required to register for additional time on probation after supervision has been expired.

6. *What if I receive a legal name change?*

If you receive a legal name change, your supervising agent must forward a certified copy of the court record to the BCA Predatory Offender Registration Unit so that your file can be updated. Future information forwarded to the BCA should reflect both your current and previous names. You must sign all BCA documents using your legal name.

**Understanding Chapter 6: Supervised Release**

1. How many hours do you have before you need to call your agent/designee upon release?
2. What paperwork will you be signing upon release from the institution?

3. Can you leave the State of Minnesota?

4. If you abscond (go on the run) from supervision, what will happen to your sentence?

5. Who is responsible for knowing the laws of registration?

6. List 3 ways to succeed in your supervision program.

   A. ____________________________________________

   B. ____________________________________________

   C. ____________________________________________
Chapter 7: Family

Just as you had to adjust to life in prison, you will have to adjust to life as you return to a free world. You cannot expect to feel comfortable in the real world for quite a while, but the following suggestions will help.

- Begin by appreciating the small things that others take for granted — such as privacy, being able to come and go as you please, etc.
- Avoid talking about life behind bars as your only conversation topic. Practice making “small talk” about daily happenings instead. Begin visualizing positive ways to react to possible situations.
- Don’t try to catch up on what you have missed; you cannot relive time lost.
- Be patient — know that you have to take small steps toward a new way of living.
- Gradually you will feel more “here” than “there” (prison).

Family Relationship Changes

You can’t expect to just walk back into a family’s life without adjustments on both sides. A partner may have learned to do things around the house (budgeting, grocery shopping, car repair, etc.) that you did before. Once you return, who does them?

Children may get used to living without their mom or dad. You may be rejected as a disciplinarian/parent or role model because of your “ex-con” status or just because you haven’t been around.

Your children aren’t the same as when you left — don’t try to treat them the way you did before you left. You can’t treat a child like you would an infant, or teenager like you would a child. Show your children that you care about their needs, are interested in what they are doing, and that you are willing to spend time with them.

A divorce or child custody proceeding may have occurred and significantly affected the family as you once knew it.

Your relationships with your parents will change, or maybe already have changed, because of aging.
Show your family that you understand how you have hurt them

Allow members of your family to share painful memories with you.
Admit you were wrong.
Ask for forgiveness.

If asked about your incarceration, answer questions honestly. Do not tell people it was “no big deal.” Acting “tough” about your experience does a serious disservice to your family and friends. Let them know that being incarcerated is no way to spend your life. As your family learns to trust you, they will be able to start treating you like your crime and imprisonment didn’t happen.

Former Friends/Associates

Let go of a negative past and look forward to a positive future.

That may mean no longer associating with old friends that have not changed. If your former associates are still using drugs, are violent, or are stealing, you need to find new friends.

Don’t be pulled back into your former lifestyle!
Remember that it’s YOU who comes back to prison!
Rebuilding the family can be likened to a spider’s web
“Although it is made of thin, delicate strands, the web is not easily broken. However, a web gets torn every day by the insects that kick around in it, and a spider must rebuild when it gets full of holes.” — E.B. White

Your Parents

Will you be living with your parents following release? Is their advancing age becoming a factor in your relationship with them? If so, it is essential that you prepare yourself for a changed, more supportive role with them. You may even find yourself caring for other relatives and friends.

Families are a primary source for the care giving of an older adult. In fact, the National Alliance for Caregiving estimates that one in four households are providing care for someone who is at least 50 years old and has a disabling condition.

Will you be a Caregiver?

You may be a spouse, son or daughter, neighbor, close friend, or distant relative that is helping someone maintain their independence. You may be young or old yourself. It doesn’t really matter your relationship or your age. As a caregiver, you are making concessions and personal sacrifices to provide care for another person. The 21st century will be marked by a dramatic increase in the size of the older population as the baby boomer generation ages and helps elders and, in turn, will need assistance.

The job of care giving can evolve slowly, over a long period of time, or suddenly, in the case of an accident or an illness. Care giving can mean having an elder live with you, or live hundreds of miles away, with you dealing with issues from a distance.

What people say behind your back is your standing in the community.
Edgar Watson Howe
Take this simple test to see if you identify yourself as a caregiver

- Will you do errands like shopping, telephoning, arranging for healthcare?
- Will you travel to and from your relative’s home more often than usual?
- Will you provide social activities?
- Will you supervise medications and arrange medical visits?
- Will you listen, talk, and provide emotional support?
- Will you supervise others who provide direct care?
- Will you maintain two homes — your own and that of your relative?
- Will you assist in personal care like lifting, bathing, dressing, or feeding?
- Will you manage financial/legal affairs?

If you answered “yes” to one or more of these questions, you are a caregiver. The wide range of needs defies definition. Whether you provide around-the-clock assistance or are just becoming aware of the needs, you are still a caregiver. You are responsible, to some degree, for another person’s wellbeing. At any point on the continuum of care giving, the challenges and demands can become too great. It can cause emotional and physical exhaustion, depression, marital and family problems, as well as work conflicts.

One solution is to access resources to help you in this job. Locally, an entry point is the Senior Linkage Line (1-800-333-2433). It is an easy place to find community resources and support in Minnesota. If you live a distance from your family member, the national toll-free line Elder Care Locator (1-800-677-1116) can locate resources in the area where they reside, as well as local area agencies on aging. They can direct you to local resources in your area that will support your efforts to do a successful job of care giving.

More information on eldercare and aging is available in the transition resource center.
Seven Characteristics of Strong Families

The following are simple reminders as to what is important in keeping a family strong. You aren't expected to have all characteristics in your family, but begin by concentrating on one or two:

1. Appreciation
   At least once a week show appreciation to your children or spouse when they are being good or you see your relationship growing stronger.

2. Democratic Decision-Making
   It is important to involve all members of the family in making decisions.

3. Flexibility and Openness to Change
   Change is unavoidable.

4. Communication
   Family members share their feelings, hopes, dreams, fears, joys, sorrows, experiences, and needs. We communicate by our words, with our body language, and by our behavior.

5. Shared Values
   Values provide direction and meaning to life — parents have to know what they expect of their children and how to communicate expectations clearly.

6. Quality Time Together
   The family bond is valued and efforts are made to make time for family activities and interaction.

7. Connection with Others
   Building and maintaining supportive relationships between family members and others in the community helps families cope with stress and crises.

To love others, we must first
learn to love ourselves.
Anonymous

Notes:__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Tips for Incarcerated Parents

Establish and maintain a positive relationship with the other parent of your child. Even if your relationship has ended, try to find ways to connect respectfully for the sake of the children.

Make a plan of how you can connect with each of your children and follow the plan.

Be honest with your children regarding why you aren’t living with them, but respect their ability to understand, depending on their age.

Let children know how important they are to you, but remember they may not necessarily respond as you might want. They may be angry because you did something wrong and cannot be there with them.

Be prepared to make amends, and say you are sorry.

Take your time. Don’t expect big changes from family members overnight.

As much as possible, find ways to support your children emotionally, financially, and spiritually.

Be consistent in your approach and contact schedule. Your children need to be able to rely on you to call or write regularly.

Observe family celebrations, special occasions, and cultural events from the inside.

Make gifts, if you are able, using the classroom, carpentry, craft, or metal shop.

Create a game to play long distance. Make up a story for the children to finish. Draw pictures and make them into a coloring book that tells a story. It may help if they have a stuffed animal to hug or talk to when they miss you.

Focus on cleaning up any outstanding legal problems before your release, especially things like unpaid fines and tickets which can affect your driver’s license. If you have court-ordered child support obligations, contact the child support officer assigned to your case.

Develop a realistic plan to reconnect with your child after you are released.

Connect with others inside who share your situation as a parent behind bars trying to connect with their children.

Don’t be afraid to ask for counseling from the prison psychologist, chaplain, or your caseworker.

If possible, take some time to read about becoming a better parent. Look in the library transition resource center for parenting information.

If your offense history includes victimization of children, you may have restrictions prohibiting contact with them. Abide by these rules.
Child Support

The information in this section has been compiled with the cooperation of the Minnesota Child Support Enforcement Division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This resource gives you general information about child support and is not legal advice. Since child support is a serious issue, you may wish to contact an attorney.

- Every child needs financial and emotional support.
- Every child has the right to this support from both parents.
- Devoted parents can be a loving and supporting force in a child’s life. Even when parents don’t live together, they need to work together to support their child.
- You make the difference in your children’s lives.
- Regardless of economic status, education, race, or cultural background, many people lack one important skill — how to be a parent. In previous generations, the most critical qualification of being a good parent was being a good provider. Children also need parents as nurturers, teachers, and role models.
- Children whose parents are actively involved in their lives do better in school than children who don’t have both parents around. They are less prone to depression, have better social skills, and are more likely to become good parents themselves.
- Millions of children never get a chance at life. Children who aren’t taught any morals and values, are neglected by their parents, or live in homes affected by drugs and alcohol face barriers in life. Typically, these are the children that grow up with no sense of responsibility and feelings of low self-worth. They end up abusing drugs and alcohol, committing serious crimes, and going to prison.
- You can prepare and give your child a better life regardless of your age, education, or income level by learning how to relate to your child in positive, healthy ways.

Notes: 

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

90
What is Child Support?

Child support is money parents pay to support their children. The court orders the support. The support may be part of an interim, temporary, permanent, or modified court order in a legal action, which could include:

- Divorce or legal separation
- Paternity action
- Child custody action
- Separate child support action

Most support is collected by withholding income from parents' paychecks.

With income withholding, employers collect child support payments and send the funds to the Minnesota Child Support Payment Center. The state processes and sends the payments, either by check or electronic transfer, to the person to whom the support is owed.

How is the amount of child support determined?

In Minnesota, child support is determined using the guidelines established in the state law. Child support guidelines are based on monthly income.

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
Theodore Roosevelt

Notes:
Guidelines for Setting Child Support

Child Support — Guidelines

Basic support is determined using guidelines established in Minnesota law. An income share method is used that considers the income of both parents, the number of children, and the cost of raising a child at different income levels. The court may deviate from guidelines to encourage prompt and regular payment of child support and to prevent either parent of the joint children from living in poverty. A child support order will have provisions for basic support, medical support, and childcare support.

Child support guidelines are reviewed every four years by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and are set by the legislature.

Gross monthly income

Gross income includes any form of monthly income received, but does not include:

- A child support payment received by a parent
- The income of a parent’s spouse
- Public assistance benefits

A child’s Social Security or Veteran’s Benefits based on a parent’s eligibility are included in that parent’s income.

Child support and spousal maintenance payments ordered by the court for a non-joint child or a former spouse are deducted from gross monthly income.

If a parent is determined to be voluntarily underemployed or unemployed, potential income may be used to determine the parent’s income.

There is a Child Support Guidelines Calculator available on the Internet which can be used to estimate the amount of support that may be ordered on a case. It is not a guaranteed determination of support, but rather a tool which will calculate a support amount based on the information that you input.

There is a link to the web calculator and a more complete definition of terms that can be found at www.dhs.state.mn.us. Follow the quick links to child support on the right.

The court has the final authority in determining the child support amount ordered. If you have specific questions about child support guidelines, you should contact your county child support worker or an attorney.