

Explaining Your Criminal History to an Occupational Licensing Board?

You must write a letter that fits your specific situation and criminal history.

[Date]

Dear [Licensing Board],

I have been asked to provide a statement of explanation for each incident on my criminal history report. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to explain.

I have been arrested [X] times. The first incident was in [year] during [insert context here.] I made a poor choice and [explanation of events.] I was charged with [list all charges]. The final disposition of the charges was [guilty/not guilty/dismissed/etc.] I regret my actions now, but I still take full responsibility for the choices I made.

- Repeat the above for each incident on your criminal history.
- Don't go into extensive detail, just state the facts of each cycle. You should take responsibility and say what you have learned. Spend less space explaining charges that were dismissed and more space explaining convictions.
- Include details about any expungement or pardons you have received and emphasize that you received these due to your rehabilitation.

Since my last charges in [year], I have been a law-abiding citizen and an upstanding member of my community. I have overcome my past struggles with [substance abuse/mental health/trauma/etc.] and found stability in my life. I have gotten involved with [any volunteering or community work you do.] I have pursued my education by [speak to your individual situation.] Finally, I have found a passion for [licensed career.]

- Include any other ways in which you have improved yourself:
 - Treatment Programs
 - Certifications
 - Hobbies
 - Family or Community Relationships

I know that I have made mistakes in my life. I am grateful for those mistakes, though, because they have helped me grow into the person I am today. Now, I hope to start a new chapter in my life as a [licensed career.] I ask for your approval not only so that I might chase my passion, but so that I can have a second chance to give back to my community by doing what I love. I hope you will take all of this into account when considering my application for licensure.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]