

Sample Letter to Potential Employers Explaining Your History

You must write a letter that fits your specific situation and criminal history. This sample may be helpful if you do not have an extensive criminal history.

(Date)

(Name of hiring manager)

(Company)

(Address of company)

Dear (Name of hiring manager):

I have applied for a position as a XXXXX with your company. I anticipate that you may have some concerns about my criminal history, so I wanted to explain the report to you. I have obtained a copy of my official criminal history from the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC), and I am willing to provide you with a copy. I was arrested in 2000 for two misdemeanor charges. The charges were Giving False Name and Willful Obstruction. Both charges were nolle prossed, which means that the charges were dismissed. I am in the process of having this charge expunged (restricted) from my record.

I do have one misdemeanor conviction. In 2002, I pled nolo contendere (no contest) to misdemeanor Simple Battery. I received 12 months of probation for this charge and attended anger management counseling, which I successfully completed. I made a mistake, but I have moved on with my life.

In summary, I have only been convicted of one misdemeanor and that incident occurred over ten years ago. I have worked hard on moving forward with my life in a positive manner. Thank you for considering this information. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX .

Sincerely,

XXXXX XXXXX

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(Date)

(Name of hiring manager)

(Company)

(Address of company)

Dear (Name of hiring manager):

I have applied for a position as a XXXXX with your company. I anticipate that you may have some concerns about my criminal history, so I wanted to provide you with some explanation.

From the time I was 18 years old until I turned 25 I was arrested many times, primarily for drug-related crimes. Twice I was convicted of felony offenses, once in 1998 for Drug Possession and once in 2001 for Theft by Taking. *(Don't go into extensive detail, just state the facts)*

I regret this period of my life and I take full responsibility for my actions. At that time, I struggled with addiction. After my 2001 conviction, I entered a residential drug treatment program for 18 months. I successfully completed the program and have not used drugs for 11 years. *(Speak to your specific situation)*

I have also moved forward in other areas of my life. I obtained my high school diploma and a degree in XXXXXX from Atlanta Technical College. *(What have you done to improve yourself?)*

Thank you for considering this information. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

XXXXX XXXXX

Sample Letter Explaining First Offender Act

This sample may be helpful if you were discharged under the First Offender Act and you do not have any subsequent convictions.

(Date)

(Name of hiring manager)

(Company)

(Address of company)

Dear (Name of hiring manager):

I have applied for a position as a XXXXX with your company. I understand you may be concerned about a charge from my past.

I was sentenced under the First Offender Act in XXXX (year) for XXXXX (*Charges for which you were sentenced*). I successfully completed my probation and all records of the arrest and charges have been removed from my official criminal history maintained by the Georgia Crime Information Center. Unfortunately, the charge appears on reports from private background check companies.

The First Offender Act (O.C.G.A. § 42-8-60) is Georgia's "second chance" law. People who have never been convicted of a felony can be sentenced under the First Offender Act. If the person successfully completes the sentence, they will not have the burden of a conviction as they move on with their life. I was sentenced as a first offender and successfully completed my probation. The record of the arrest and sentence are sealed from my official criminal history record.

The law states that once my case is sealed (discharged) under the First Offender Act, I do not have a conviction for that offense. The law says I can honestly answer that I do not have a conviction when asked by a potential employer. Georgia law also prohibits employers from using the arrest that has been discharged under the First Offender Act to deny employment (O.C.G.A. § 42-8-63).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at XXX-XXX-XXXX. I look forward to speaking to you about my qualifications for this position.

Sincerely,

XXXXX XXXXX