

## **WRITING A COVER LETTER**

### **So, what's a cover letter?**

A cover letter is basically just a few paragraphs telling your future employer a little about yourself, what your skills are, and what you want to accomplish at the job you're applying to.

Your cover letter should convey your genuine interest in the position, and explain to the employer why you are a strong candidate for the position.

The cover letter is also a place to let your personality shine – it gives your future employer a chance to hear your voice and learn about your goals.

### **Should I mention the work I did while incarcerated?**

Yes. Try not to think of your time spent incarcerated as something that will keep you from getting a job. Many of your employment, volunteer, and educational experiences make you an ideal candidate for employers—you just need to highlight your skills and explain why they'd be useful! Your cover letter is a great place to do this. Just remember that all of your work experience is valuable and don't discount the skills you have learned or the work you have done.

### **Who should I use as a professional reference?**

Corrections Officers, former team leaders, or program leaders you have met while incarcerated are all valid choices for a professional reference.

## SAMPLE OF A COVER LETTER

To Whom It May Concern: [Enter the employer's name]

### **Paragraph 1**

My name is [name] I am applying for the position of [name of job] with [name of company]. I am a strong candidate for the aforementioned position because I have significant experience in [list any and all certification/vocational study you have earned or planned to earn]. I live in [enter city] and see this position as an opportunity to apply the skills I have gained from my professional experience, academic studies, and diverse background. [Show your future employer you are motivated and eager] I am strongly motivated to take this next step and contribute to the goals of [name of company/employer].

### **Paragraph 2**

[In this paragraph, talk about your education or work experience and the skills you've obtained from them. Feel free to also list any programs you were enrolled in and what you learned while enrolled. You can be as specific as you want to be – list some details of what you did and the things you learned from these programs.] Since receiving my HVAC certification in [enter year], I have gained extensive experience working to install, repair, and maintain heating and air conditioning units in a number of settings. While doing this work, I have further honed my technical skills, and have also proven myself to be a reliable and effective employee who works well both independently and with others.

Beyond my HVAC certification, I have also gained valuable work experience in other fields, such as [enter other work experience] and have completed a additional programs, including [enter program name].

While enrolled in the [Enter program name] I gained the following skill sets:

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### **Paragraph 3**

[End the cover letter by letting your future employer know how eager you are to apply and get this job. Thank them for their time and let them know you look forward to speaking with them about the job again in the future.] Overall, I am applying to this job because I want to continue to grow and develop professionally and believe that working for your company would give me a great opportunity to do so. Thank you for your time, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your name]