

GUIDELINES FOR AN APOLOGY LETTER

As part of your probation/diversion you have been ordered to write a letter of apology to the victim(s) of your offense(s). Writing this letter will provide you with an opportunity to take responsibility for your actions, understand the effects it had on others, and to apologize for your behavior. You are required to submit this apology to your agent within two weeks, or as otherwise directed by your agent.

Please follow the format below, keeping in mind that the victim(s) will be receiving this letter. If the letter is not written appropriately and is not legible, (Can be hand written or typed.) you will be asked to rewrite it until it has been done correctly. Please enclose with the apology letter your full name on a separate sheet of paper for our records. Send the letter to Court Services, 604 East 4th Street, Chaska, MN 55318, Attention: Your PO's name.

Points to consider for an appropriate apology letter:

- Demonstrate regret for your actions, not just regret for the victim's pain
- Do not ask the victim to forgive you or place any other expectations on the victim
- Think about what have you learned from this; how will you change the way you think and behave in the future
- Keep in mind why it's important to remain law-abiding
- Remember the emphasis of the apology letter should be on the victims' losses, not on the losses you have suffered by your actions
- Is this the letter you would like to receive if you were the victim of this same offense

At a minimum, the apology letter should include the following statements:

- "Dear _____," (write victim's name or Dear Victim)
- "I did....." (take responsibility for your actions, avoid excess detail, do not blame the victim)
- "I'm sorry for...." (do not offer excuses)
- "I think this made you feel...." (describe the impact of your offense on your victim and the community)
- "This has affected my family and myself by....." (in 1-2 sentences, briefly describe the consequences for yourself and your family)
- "This is what I'm doing...." (explain what you are doing to repair the harm/damage you caused)
- End your letter with "Sincerely, _____" (write first name only)