



*There is more to sentencing than just showing up.*

Before you go into your sentencing hearing, there are a few helpful steps you can take to put your best foot forward. Some things are out of your hands in the weeks leading up to your sentencing, but some things are in your control. Actions you take now may be helpful later on. It is important that you put forth your best effort and follow through.

- Be sure to meet with your probation officer as scheduled and always be prepared to provide a drug/alcohol test if asked (this means avoiding cough/cold/allergy medicine that either contain alcohol or can look like methamphetamine on a drug test, or any medicine for which you do not have a prescription).
- Meet with your attorney as scheduled.
- Read your presentence investigation report and make notes on any factual information that is wrong and needs corrected. Follow through on other recommendations your attorney makes and get proof of your activities for court.

### Things To Do:

- Take steps to work on your drug/alcohol problem. Go to 12-step meetings, treatment groups.
- Look for work (find a job).
- Enroll in a high school diploma/equivalency class.
- Get involved in an organized activity (church group, fishing club, recovery group).
- Make sure you have transportation and child care for work, treatment, or school.
- Be sure you have safe, stable housing (no drugs, alcohol, guns).
- Get proof: of 12-step meetings, job applications, classes attended. If you can't show proof, it did not happen.

### I met with my attorney and I need to do the following things before my sentencing:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



## Quick Guide: How to Prepare for your Sentencing Hearing

The weeks leading up to sentencing in a court case are some of the most stressful. Before you go into your sentencing hearing, there are a few helpful steps you can take. Talk to your attorney about your situation and listen to the suggestions your attorney gives you. Most importantly, *FOLLOW THROUGH ON YOUR ATTORNEY'S RECOMMENDATIONS.*



## DID YOU KNOW?

- ❖ *Earnings data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted people with a high school diploma or the TASC (WV's high school equivalent) will earn \$9,620 more a year than those who did not graduate high school.*
- ❖ *If an employer is worried about hiring you because of your criminal background, you can be bonded to work in a job. Bonding\* is a kind of insurance that protects your future employer against theft, loss, or embezzlement so there is less risk to hiring a job applicant. Many West Virginia job seekers may qualify for bonding, and having information about bonding can help you get hired, even with a conviction. WorkForce can provide you more information and tell you if you qualify.*
- ❖ *Help4WV can help you enroll in Medicaid over the phone and determine if you qualify.*

My attorney is:

\_\_\_\_\_

My appointment with Probation is:

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ .m.

My next Court date is:

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ .m.

*\*Bonding is **not** a bail or court bond. This is Fidelity Bonding for employment only.*



## SOBRIETY AND RECOVERY

Help4WV is a 24-hour, statewide hotline that offers free help and referrals for a variety of issues including mental health and addiction treatment. Certified professionals answer calls and ask simple questions to get you into the right kind of drug/alcohol or mental health treatment. Having more needs or fewer problems will not link you with a bed quicker so be honest. The professionals answering your call will listen to your specific needs and work to match you with the right kind of treatment available now.

Call or text 1-844-435-7498. *Help4WV will accept collect calls from all jails across West Virginia.*

12-step meeting information available for Alcoholics Anonymous, <http://www.aawv.org/meetings> or call 1-800-333-5051; for Narcotics Anonymous, <http://www.mrscna.org/> or call 1-800-766-4442. *It is helpful to get proof of attendance at meetings to bring to court. Take a sheet to get signed at every meeting you attend, and bring that sheet to your sentencing.*

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

WorkForce West Virginia can help you find a job, bond your future employer against loss/theft, introduce you to employers at job fairs, and help you create a resume and practice interviewing skills. Call 1-800-252-5627, or go to <http://workforcewv.org/job-seekers.html>

The West Virginia Department of Education can help you locate services to help you earn your high school equivalency diploma, known as the TASC test. Call 1-800-642-2670, or go to <http://wvde.state.wv.us/tasc/>

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitative Services may be able to offer you services and assistance in getting a job, or can help you determine if you qualify for Social Security benefits if you are unable to work. Call 1-800-642-8207, or go to <http://www.wvdrs.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.displaystory&groupID=88&itemid=26>