

Know your rights

**Building Your Own
Record:
Document!
Document!
Document!**



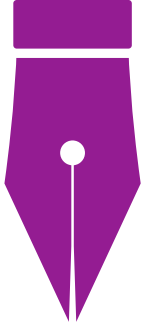


From the moment you enter the prison, you, and according to s. 3 of the CCRA, your case management team, should be focusing on helping you work toward your eventual release.

This means ensuring that all of your documentation, especially your Case Management Plan and other progress and assessment documents are accurate. This means seeking out the services, supports, and programs that will assist you to move forward and address areas you need to work on in order to be supported for conditional release.

This means documenting everything you request as well as all you achieve, in addition to any complaints or grievances you may need to file to remedy wrongs or mistakes made by others about you.

This documentation can mean the difference between a positive or negative case management, warden or parole board decision, and your progress when it comes to security levels and conditional release.



What if something in my record is wrong?

You have the right to ask for a correction.

If one of the places that had wrong information is a government institution, then you must insist that they change the original record too.

You should also contact any place that might have received this info in the last two years to have them update their records as well.

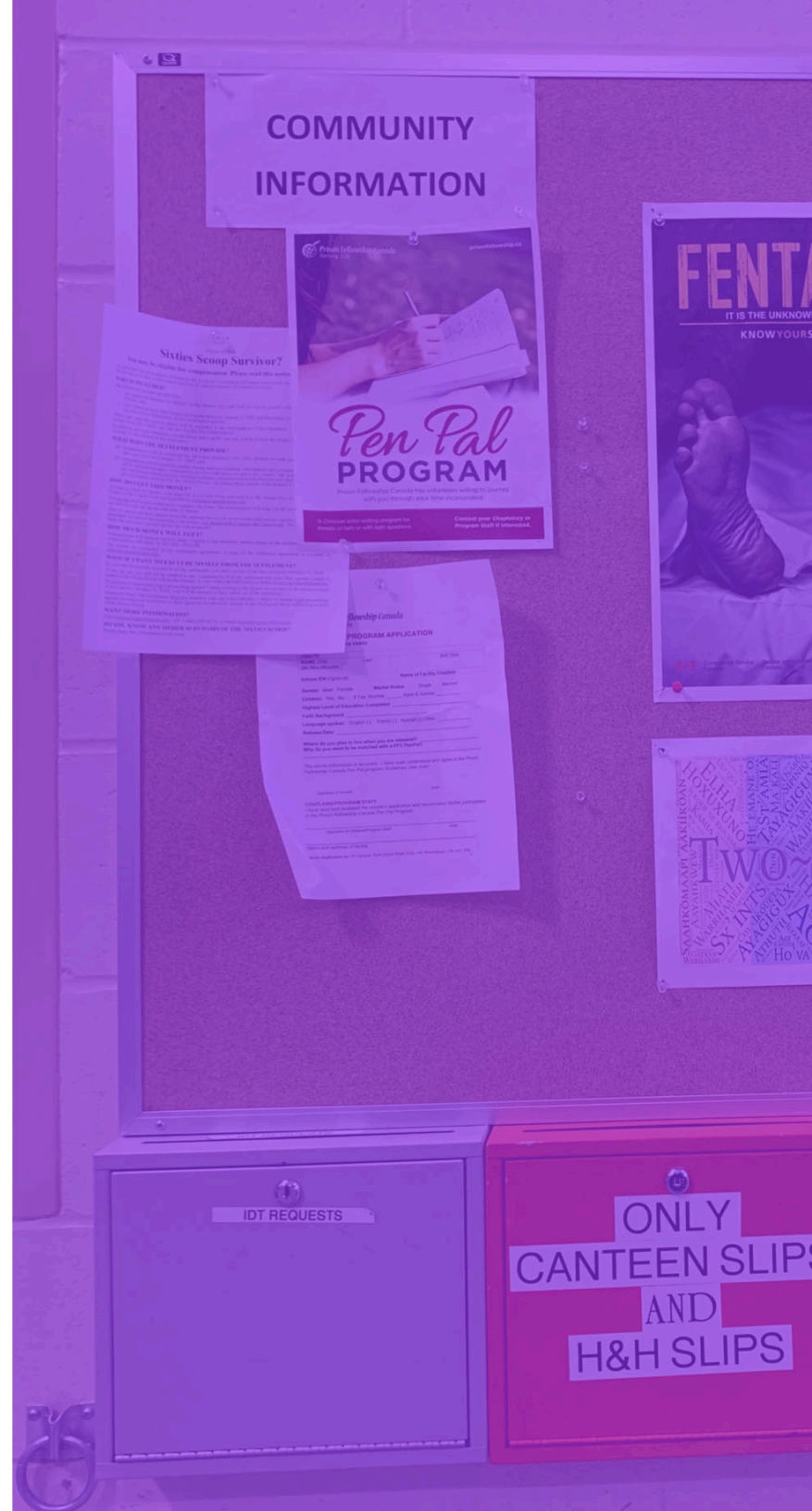
If your request to have the record changed is refused, you have the right to have a notice added to your record stating what you feel should have been changed.

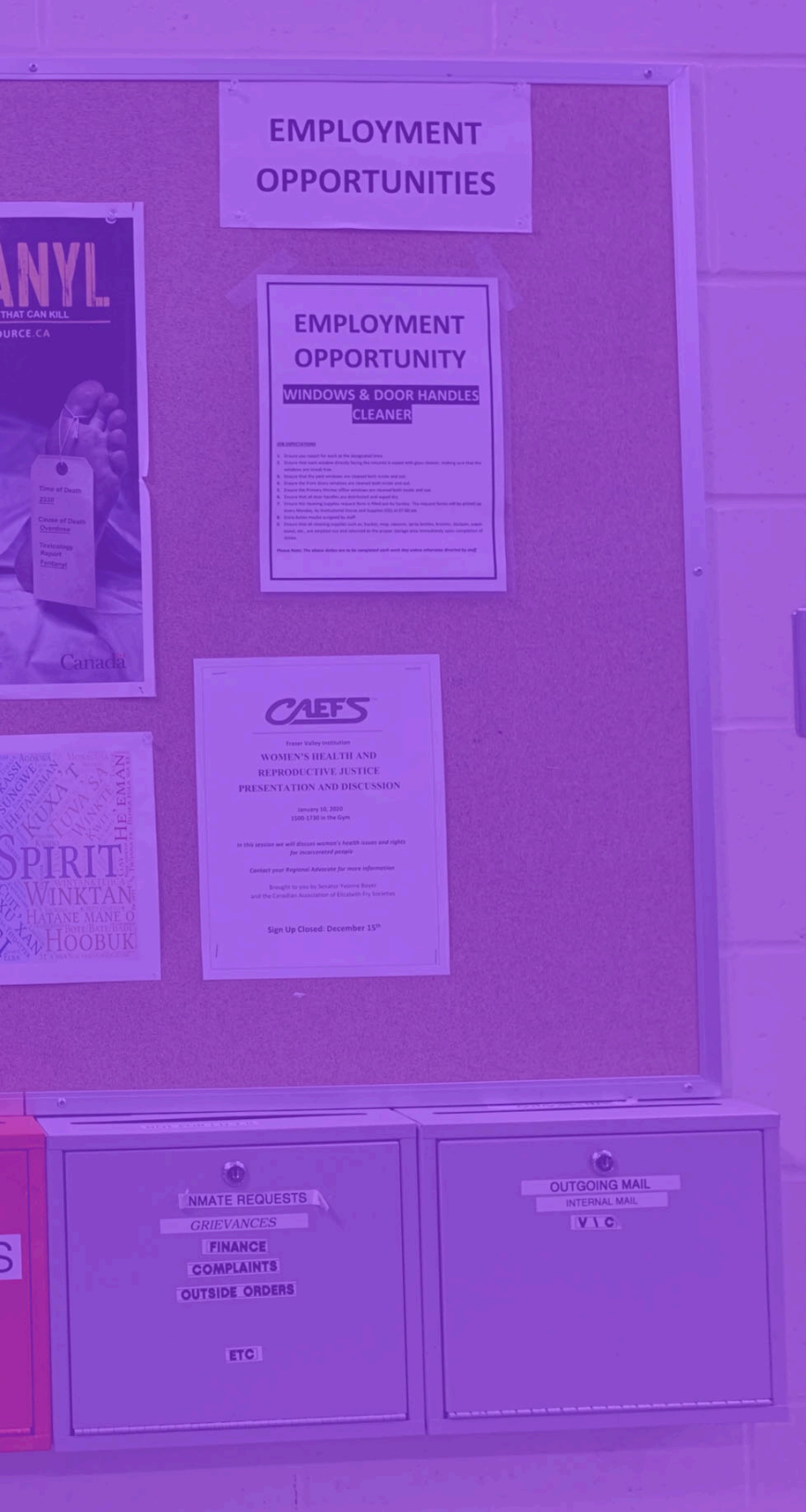


Recording for Yourself

When the parole board or the court is making decisions about your future, they are looking to see whether or not you pose a risk to the community and how well you will integrate on your return.

If you are participating in programs, volunteering, or helping others, write down the reasons why these actions are helping you to grow and to return with success to the community to include this in your positive record.





Some of the things decision-makers are looking for are:

- For you to show that you have the necessary social skills that will help you to build healthy relationships on reintegration
- List the ways you are helping others to lead a better life and are creating safety for them, peer support and collaboration
- List the technical skills that will lead you to find work and to have financial independence, so any education or vocational training, new skills like math, etc.
- Describe any rehabilitation or decrease in substance dependency
- Show you are healing and if you have post-trauma recovery
- Show your resilience
- Show you are expanding your horizons: list any goals, planning for the future, and your motivation for rebuilding a healthy life
- Describe any steps you are taking to address the reasons that led you to being in prison
- Show how you are setting yourself up to succeed



What are the steps?

How can I build a positive record?

STEP 1

Double and triple check all of your paperwork and make sure any and all mistakes are corrected ASAP.



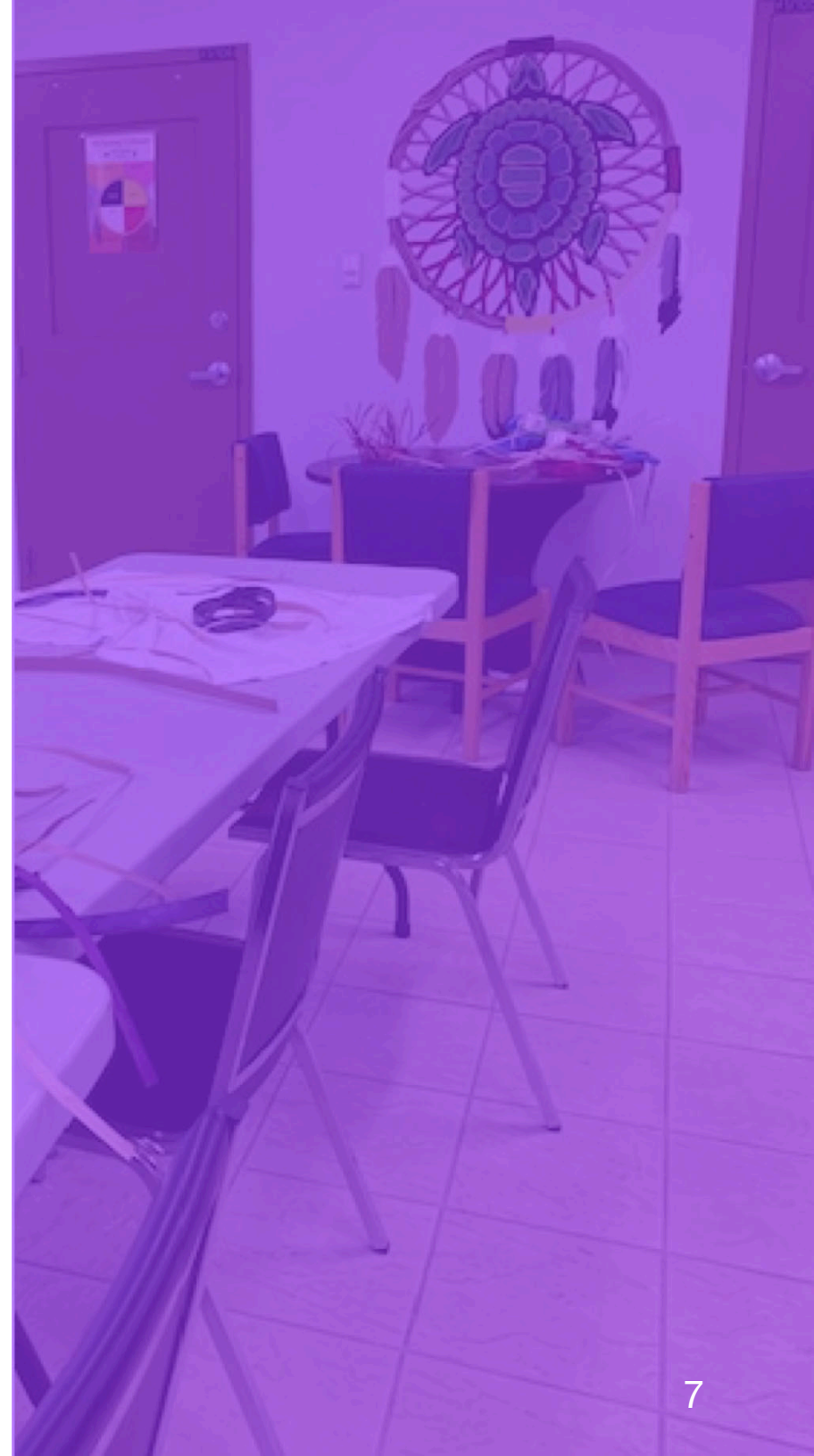
Start paying attention and noticing all the good that you do. This includes:

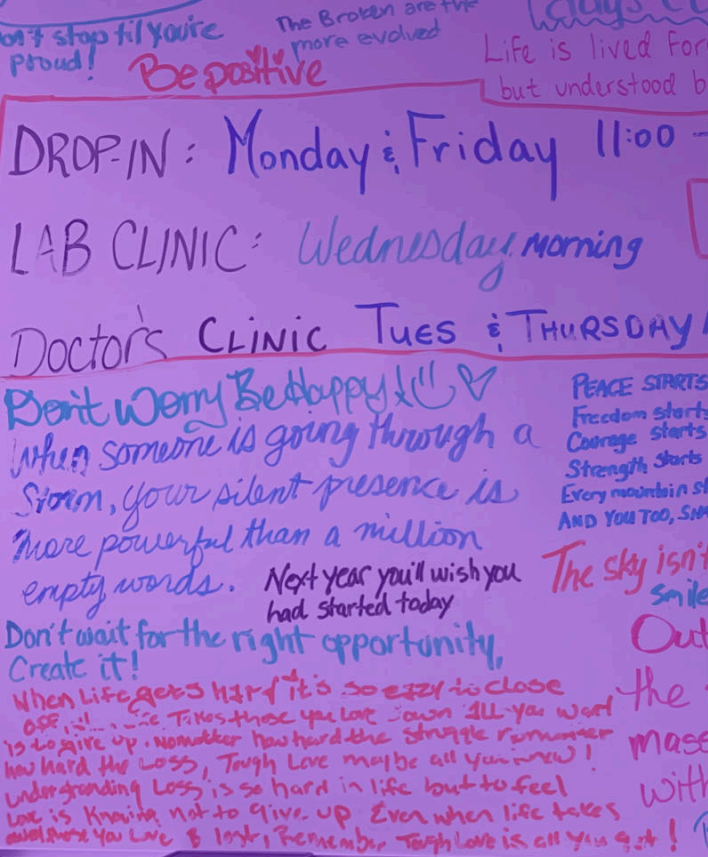
- Standing up for someone else
- Helping another prisoner to learn
- Random acts of kindness
- Giving back to the community
- Taking care of your own physical and mental wellness

STEP 2

Document, document, document:
start recording all requests, et cetera.

- **Keep your notes in a safe place.**
- **Write down all the positive things you do each day. Record the date.**
- **Keep copies of any certificates you obtain from work or education and any letters of recommendation from teachers, employers, Elders, wardens, community groups, etc.**





What else can I include in my positive record?

Focus on all your achievements and meaningful contributions, no matter how big or small. It all counts.

Programming

- Any workshops you have attended
- Any education you have received
- Any computer skills gained
- Volunteering in the library
- Any tutoring or mentorship you have provided to others
- Faith-based activities
- Repair jobs
- Facility cleaning and maintenance

Care activities

- Giving birth, nursing
- Childcare
- Helping your children with school, reading to them, healthy meal preparation, any of the ways that you help them when you have visitations or leave to go to the community
- Helping and caring for Elders, whether in prison or in the community
- Caring for other vulnerable people
- Being good to animals
- Cultivating plants, vegetables, environmentalism

Work

- Occupational training
- New work skills you have developed or learned
- Business or math skills
- Skills for financial independence
- Goal-setting
- Taking initiative
- Motivation and hard work
- Food production, preparation of traditional foods



Building healthy relationships

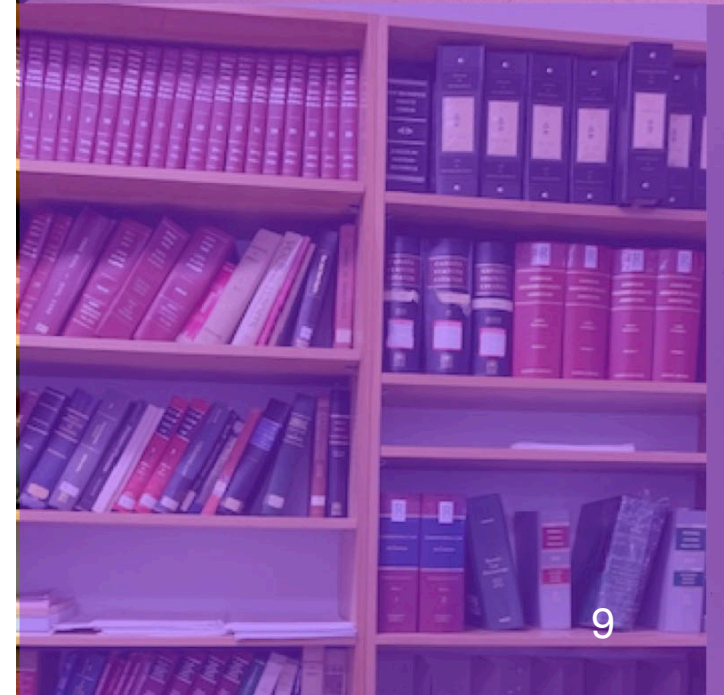
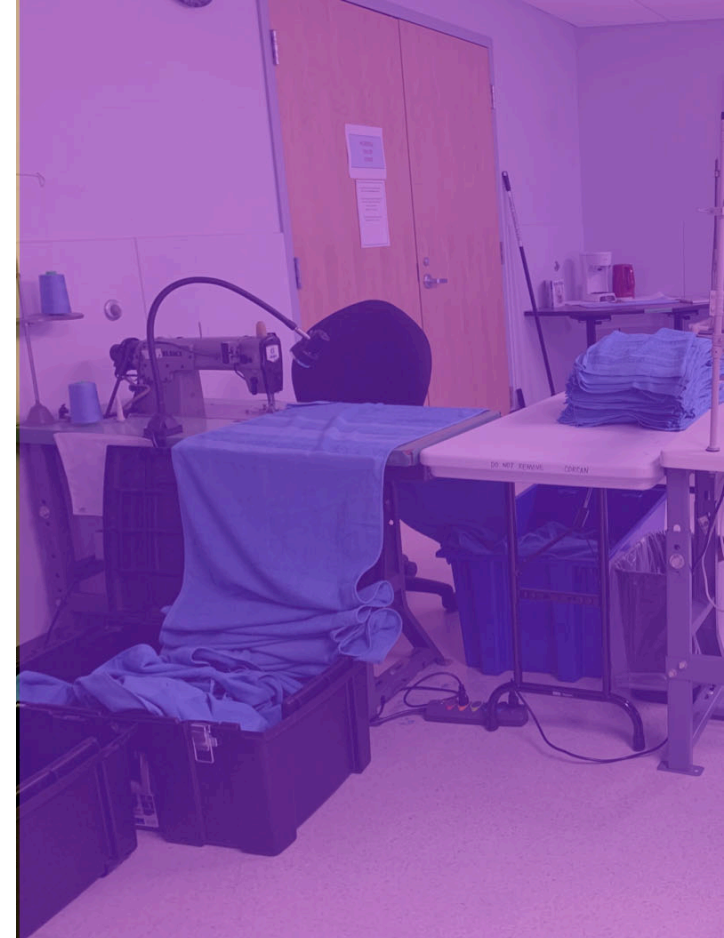
- Good relationships with other prisoners or with CSC staff
- Caretaking responsibilities for others outside prison in community
- Rebuilding relationships
- Contributions to the community or others
- Conflict resolution skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Trust-building
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Friendships you develop
- Being a role model for others
- Any other meaningful interactions with others

Creativity

- Artwork, Music, Crafts, Poetry
- Theatre arts
- Beading
- Story-telling

Taking care of your health

- Counselling or therapy sessions attended
- Emotional regulation
- Coping and resilience skills
- Anger management sessions
- Substance use disorder treatment and help
- Helping others who are dealing with substance use disorders or other mental health struggles
- Trauma-care
- Exercise
- Sports and participation on sport teams
- Time spent at healing ceremonies or other processes
- Any other forms of psychosocial support or self-care





How do I know what is in CSC's Record on me?

You, your lawyer, or anyone who has been given your authorized permission, can file a written Access to Information and Privacy Request by writing to the following address:

**Access to Information and Privacy Division
Policy Sector
Correctional Service Canada
340 Laurier Ave. W.
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0P9**

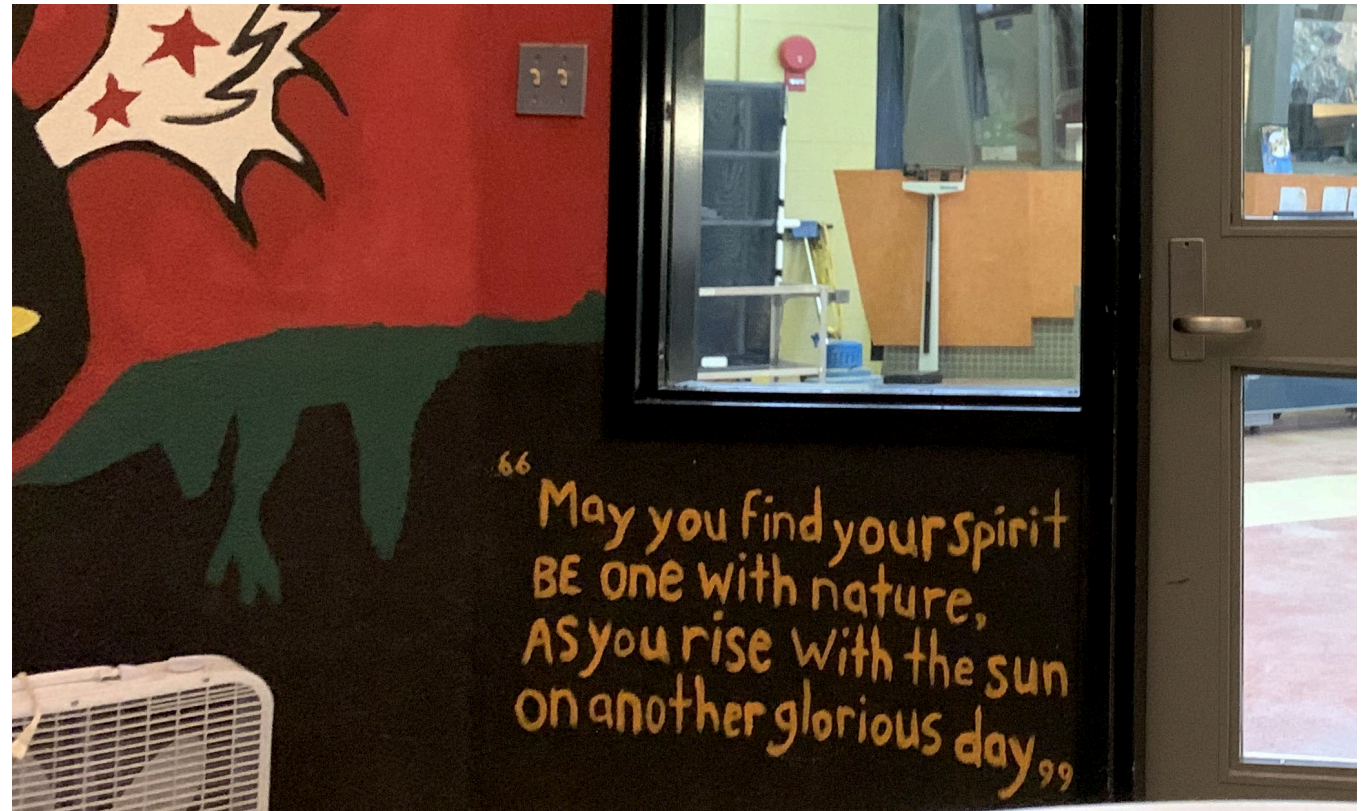
Or by facsimile: 613-995-4412

The request can be through a form available from CSC or simply be a letter specifying that this is a request for personal information under the Privacy Act.

Note: there is no fee for personal information requests.

While you cannot control a great deal about what happens in prison, there are concrete and practical ways that you can work to ensure you can build a record; and, if necessary, counter a negative portrayal of you by others.

Building a positive record can help you to build a legal case that you can use in court or in parole hearings to defend your rights, and get back into the community sooner.



*There are all sorts of ways to build a positive record.
Think of ways you would like to contribute to your family and the community.*

Action!



You are in the director's seat in the movie that is your life.

A positive record is you telling your story. It is a counter-story to the one that CSC tells about you. It's the story of your life, in your own words.

Where can I get additional help?

Office of the Correctional Investigator (OCI)

P. O. Box 3421, Station "D"
Ottawa, ON
K1P 6L4
Toll-free: 1-877-885-8848

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies

190 Bronson Ave.
Ottawa, ON
K1R 6H4
T: 613-238-2422
Toll-free: 1-800-637-4606

John Howard Society of Canada

809 Blackburn Mews
Kingston, ON
K7P 2N6
T: 613-384-6272



Contact/copy your M.P. or Senator:

[Add your MP's name here]
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

[Add Senator's name here]
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A4