

{Your address}
{City, State, Zip}

{Date}

{Recipient}
{Recipient's address}
{City, State, Zip}

Your Honor:

I am writing to urge leniency in the sentencing of my friend _____.

I have known _____ for more than 10 years, since we were in junior high together. He and I are both aware of the gravity of the crime he was convicted of, but it is still hard for me to wrap my head around. This is not the man I know, and I'd like to give you a perspective that shows that he is more than the sum of his actions on the day he committed the crime.

_____ has always been there for me and my family, willing to lend a hand with everything from fixing a car to studying for a tests. I honestly don't think I would have gotten through school without him.

_____ is the first to admit that he has a quick temper, but he has been getting counseling for this, without being directed to by any court. He just wants to become a better person. I am very familiar with the circumstances he grew up in, including an abusive father. It was a horrible environment for any child, and _____ is amazingly resilient to have even survived it. To this day, _____ continues to do all that is in his power to become more self-aware and in control of his actions and reactions.

As you know, this is not only _____'s first conviction, but his first offense. Given his otherwise clean record, as well as his close ties to the community, I strongly believe that a lesser sentence is most appropriate in this situation.

Sincerely,

{Name}