

Family Support Letter Template

A simple structure for writing a supportive letter to an incarcerated loved one. Adapt it freely - the structure matters less than writing regularly.

Before you write - mail rules

- Address the envelope exactly as the facility requires, including the person's full name and ID number.
- Check the facility's mail rules first: many prohibit staples, stickers, glitter, perfume, polaroids or certain paper.
- Some facilities scan mail and deliver copies; originals may not arrive.

A letter structure that works

- **Opening:** a warm greeting and why you are thinking of them. [1-2 sentences]
- **News from home:** everyday life, family updates, children's milestones. [short paragraph]
- **Encouragement:** something specific you are proud of or hopeful about. [1-2 sentences]
- **Practical matters:** visits you plan, money sent, calls expected, items handled at home. [short list]
- **Questions:** ask about their days, classes, reading - questions make replies easier. [1-2 questions]
- **Closing:** when you will write next, and your sign-off.

Writing tip: keep a copy or a simple log of letters sent and received - it helps with planning calls and visits.

This is a general-purpose template provided by PrisonerRights.org for convenience. It is NOT an official government form and it is not legal advice. Policies, required forms and deadlines vary by state, agency and facility - always check the rules of the specific facility or agency first, use the official form where one exists, and consider consulting a qualified attorney. Replace every [bracketed] item with your own information before sending, and keep a copy of everything you submit.