



Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## LEGAL VIDEO ADVOCACY: VIDEO ACTION PLAN

Use this form to help you strategically plan an advocacy video for clients seeking parole, clemency, sentencing mitigation, etc.

QUESTIONS	NOTES
<p><b>Advocacy Objective:</b> What is the specific outcome you are seeking and for whom? This will help determine your approach and audience. Be clear and concrete. e.g. Granting parole, clemency, garnering support from the victim's family or broader networks, fundraising support.</p>	
<p><b>Primary Audience:</b> Who has the power to make the change you seek? e.g. Parole board, clemency board, family of victims/victims, general public, etc. Get specific. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the audience already know about your client/case?</li> <li>• How have they responded previously to this case (in a public setting, media or previous hearing)?</li> <li>• What do they need to be persuaded of? e.g. Remorse, re-entry plan.</li> </ul> <p>Consider <b>secondary audiences</b> too. For example: other advocates, warden, counselor, families, etc. who can help pressure the primary audience.</p>	

<p><b>Messages:</b>          What do you need to communicate/get across about your client? i.e. there has been a transformation, remorse, growth, specific personality trait, like humor or kindness that you want to emphasize?</p> <p><b>*Remember you won't be able to communicate your client's whole story on video, rather use it as an opportunity to highlight a few key points.</b></p> <p>What does your audience need to be persuaded of? What are you asking them to do? What messages will resonate with your audience/s?</p>	
<p><b>Story Structure:</b>          What is the story structure that will best communicate your message? How will you communicate the client's transformation? Try to condense it down to a single sentence or two.</p> <p><i>Go to the end of the worksheet for examples and additional information about storytelling structure.</i></p>	
<p><b>Voices:</b>          What other voices will you include besides your client? Possible voices include: client's family, counselor, text (for context/background)</p>	
<p><b>Client Interview:</b>          What questions will you ask interviewees to best communicate your message? Are there prompts from the personal statement that could help prepare for the interview? Has your client been fully prepped on responding to the interview questions/panel's questions?</p>	

<p>Are there other examples of videos you can share with your client if access is possible?</p> <p>For pre sentencing videos, is there anything that your client cannot or should not say in the interview for legal purposes?</p>	
<p><b>Length / Languages:</b> Do you need different length videos for different audiences (3-5 minutes is suggested)? What languages must be included? Does it need captions or translation?</p>	
<p><b>Audio/Visual Elements:</b> What images and audio do you need to communicate your story? Develop a shot list. Of course access may be limited.</p> <p><b>Visuals:</b> Interviews, people doing things, b-roll (landscapes, important building, signs) observed conversations, still photos, childhood/family photos, documents, certificates, maps, graphics, title cards, subtitles, archival footage, stock footage</p> <p><b>Audio:</b> Testimony, narration, music, silence, sound effects</p>	
<p><b>Production considerations:</b> Who will be filming/in the room during filming? Will the interviewee be comfortable with them? Do they need translation? What day/time of the week is best for the interviewee?</p>	
<p><b>Ethical Representation &amp; Safety:</b> What are potential ethical challenges to producing the video? Is there a possibility of backlash? What are your solutions? Have you obtained informed consent from all interviewees?</p>	

**Timing and Sequencing of Distribution:**

- Is there a pivotal event you need this video to be done for? E.g. parole or clemency hearing.
- When is the best time to reach your primary audience? Your secondary audience?
- How will you get the video to your audience? DVD, zip drive, online? Keep in mind you may need to do some backend advocacy like emailing contacts in order to push people to watch the film
- Will there be a public screening component? What are the other venues/events that would be important screening occasions?
- What other organizations can support your campaign/work, help raise awareness, or potentially host screenings?

# Storytelling Structure

## Why plan your story structure?

Taking time to plan this in advance will help you be more strategic in drafting interview questions, determining what footage to capture, as well as streamline your editing and post-production process.

*In short, it will make the whole production process easier and likely result in a more impactful video.*

## How to plan?

To create a structure or narrative arc, you need to determine what elements of your client's story are most important to convey on video. Consider these elements like building blocks and mix and match the ones that will be most likely to compel or move your target audience (e.g. a board, judge, DA, etc.).

Once you've selected the key elements, prepare interview questions for the client, family or community members that will help elicit responses that speak to each element. Consider additional footage that could also help illustrate these points (photos of client with family or in community, childhood photos, letters, poems, artwork, awards or degrees). Everyone's story is different and the plan should be tailored to each individual.



*Remember, you can't include every element of the case or story in a video! Be strategic about what to include and what is better conveyed as supplemental information in a written packet.*

## Possible Elements of Story for Clemency, Parole or Sentencing Mitigation video:

- Transformation
- Remorse
- Background/Personal history
- Details of crime
- Reflection on victim's feelings
- Accepting responsibility
- Apology
- Childhood or previous trauma
- Who are they now
- Re-entry plan
- Accomplishments
- Contributions to community
- Life philosophies/introspection
- Role and value in the family/community
- Impact conviction has on client's family/community
- Mitigating issues
- Daily routines/Rituals
- Growth/Reflections/Insights
- Personality

## SAMPLE NARRATIVE ARC: Clemency



**PERSONAL  
HISTORY**

**DETAILS OF CRIME**

**REMORSE**

**POINT OF  
TRANSFORMATION**

**WHO ARE THEY  
NOW**

## SAMPLE NARRATIVE ARC: Pre-Sentencing



**PERSONAL HISTORY/  
CHILDHOOD  
TRAUMA**

**WHO THEY ARE  
NOW**

**REFLECTIONS/  
INSIGHTS ON THE  
CRIME**

**ROLE AND VALUE  
IN THE FAMILY/  
COMMUNITY**

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
/ HOPES FOR  
FUTURE**

# Sample Interview Questions & B-Roll: Clemency

STORY STRUCTURE					
	Personal History	Details of Crime	Remorse	Point of Transformation	Who Are They Now
<b>SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</b>	<p>Where did you grow up? What was it like?</p> <p>What was your family like?</p> <p>What did you want to be when you grew up? How did that change over time?</p>	<p>What happened the night of the crime?</p> <p>Why did you do it?</p> <p>What happens when you tell this story?</p>	<p>What have you learned/reflected on your actions?</p> <p>How has this changed relationships in your own life? With yourself?</p> <p>What would you say to the victim/family now?</p>	<p>Who has supported and believed in you?</p> <p>What did it mean to have that support?</p> <p>What's something you've accomplished that you're proud of?</p> <p>How has your work impacted others?</p>	<p>What are your hopes and dreams now?</p> <p>How do you see this work having an impact when you are on the outside?</p> <p>Tell us about some of the job offers you've received?</p>
<b>B-ROLL IDEAS</b>	Family photos, map or archival footage of area where grew up	Text card, newspaper clippings	Letters to family, poems, b-roll of client looking contemplative	Certificates, artwork, clips of them speaking/performing	Newer family photos, footage of children or family visiting