

Texas Reentry Center
Probation & Parole Survival Guide
What To Do, What NOT To Do, and How To Stay Compliant in Texas

INTRO

This guide keeps you from getting violated for things nobody bothered to explain.

Texas supervision rules change by county, by officer, and by case.

These steps cover the **unwritten rules**, the **real expectations**, and the **simple habits** that keep you compliant.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. First 48 Hours Checklist
2. Understanding Your Conditions
3. Reporting Basics
4. Drug Testing Survival
5. Fees, Fines & Payments
6. Housing & Address Rules
7. Employment Requirements
8. Travel Restrictions
9. Common Violations
10. How to Talk to Your PO
11. What To Do If You're Falling Behind
12. Transfer Requests
13. Early Release Options
14. Scams to Avoid
15. When To Use the Chatbot
16. Important Links

FIRST 48 HOURS CHECKLIST

- Call your PO immediately
- Confirm your first report date
- Gather paperwork (release papers, ID, address info)
- Write down PO's name + phone + office
- Get transportation plan for reporting
- Read your conditions line by line
- Set phone reminders for all appointments

TIP: If you can't reach your PO, **leave a voicemail** and keep a log.

2. UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONDITIONS

Common supervision conditions include:

- Reporting schedule
- Drug testing
- Travel restrictions
- Curfews
- Class/program requirements
- No-contact orders
- Fees/fines/restitution
- Employment requirements
- Electronic monitoring
- Restrictions on alcohol

You *must* read your conditions. Don't rely on memory.

REPORTING BASICS

- Show up early
- Bring all paperwork
- Bring pay stubs if employed
- Call ahead if running late
- If sick, get doctor's note
- Save every appointment slip
- Document every contact with your PO

Never miss a report date. That's the fastest way to violate.

4. DRUG TESTING SURVIVAL

You may be tested:

- randomly
- weekly
- monthly
- after holidays
- after missed calls
- after suspicious behavior

Tips:

- Drink water but don't overdo it
- Keep track of testing times
- Never skip a test
- If you take prescribed meds, bring documentation

FEES, FINES & PAYMENTS

You may have:

- court fines
- supervision fees
- restitution
- UA fees
- class/program fees

If you can't afford payments:

- Ask for a hardship plan
- Request reduced payments
- Ask for community service credit (some counties allow it)

Never ignore fees. Communicate early.

HOUSING & ADDRESS RULES

- You must report any move **before** relocating
- Some offenses restrict where you can live
- Get PO approval for transitional housing, sober living, etc.
- Keep proof of address (lease, shelter letter, residency letter)

If homeless:

- Report shelter name
- Report cross streets where sleeping
- Update PO if location changes

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Most supervision requires:

- working
- seeking work
- attending workforce programs

Approved jobs include:

- warehouse
- food service
- landscaping
- construction
- cleaning
- manufacturing

Jobs that may be restricted:

- rideshare
- childcare
- overnight hotel
- security guard
- home entry jobs

(Depends on offense)

Bring pay stubs + work schedule to PO every month.

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No leaving county without permission
- No overnight trips without written approval
- High-risk cases: daily call-ins
- Some counties require travel request forms

If emergency travel is needed:

Call PO and voicemail the request with details.

COMMON VIOLATIONS

- Missed report date
- Missed drug test
- Dirty UA
- Not updating address
- Unemployment without job search
- Missed classes
- Not paying fees
- Leaving county
- New charges

Violations compound quickly.
Communicate **before** you fail something.

10. HOW TO TALK TO YOUR PO

This is survival, not friendship.
Use short, clear sentences.

Use this script:

“I want to stay compliant. What is the best way for you to communicate with me about reporting, testing, or paperwork?”

Good habits:

- Be respectful but firm
 - Don't overshare
 - Always document conversations
 - Follow up with texts/emails if allowed
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11. WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE FALLING BEHIND

- Missing classes? Call the provider + PO
 - Can't pay fees? Request hardship plan
 - Transportation issues? Ask for bus passes or reporting adjustments
 - Lost job? Start job search immediately + document applications
 - Relapse? Tell PO you want treatment before they find out
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12. TRANSFER REQUESTS

You can request to transfer:

- to another county
- for work
- to live with family
- for stability

Steps:

1. Ask PO for transfer request form
 2. Provide new address + support person
 3. Provide proof of income or job offer
 4. Wait for approval from receiving county
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13. EARLY RELEASE OPTIONS

Possible (not guaranteed) if:

- all fees paid
- stable housing
- stable employment
- no violations
- completed all classes
- supervisor approval

Ask:

“What are the requirements for early termination in this county?”

14. SCAMS THAT TARGET PEOPLE ON SUPERVISION

Avoid these:

- ✗ Fake “warrant recall” calls
- ✗ Fake “missed court payment” texts
- ✗ Fake probation officer messages
- ✗ Private “alternatives to probation” services
- ✗ Anyone charging money to “erase your PO file”

Probation NEVER asks for money by CashApp, Venmo, Zelle, gift cards.

15. WHEN TO USE THE CHATBOT

Ask it for:

- drug test schedules
 - reporting instructions
 - how to request transfer
 - probation vs parole rules
 - class requirements
 - address change steps
 - violation prevention tips
 - scripts for talking to your PO
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16. IMPORTANT LINKS

Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Parole

<https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/divisions/pd/index.html>

Texas Probation Directory (CSCD)

https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/divisions/cjad/community_corrections_locator.html

Texas Court Case Search

<https://www.txcourts.gov/judicial-directory/>