

COVER LETTER ELEMENTS

ELEMENT	DETAILS
Name and Contact Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make this match the name and contact information section on your resume.
Heading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dated on the day you submit your letter.• Address the letter to the hiring manager.• If you don't know their name, you can write "Dear Hiring Manager,"
Opening Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include your name, the position title you're interested in, and the organization name.• If you were referred by someone in the organization or connected to someone at the organization, you can name them.• Discuss your interest in the role:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Do you resonate with the organization's mission?○ Are you passionate about the type of work being asked of the role?• Name the unique skills/experiences that you bring to this role<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bonus: Treat this like your "thesis" sentence. Name skills/experiences you will expand on later in your cover letter.
Middle Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Typically 1-2 paragraphs.• Use specific examples or stories of times you successfully demonstrated your ability to perform a skill/experience.• Mirror the language used in the job description.• Use the STAR method (see below.)
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reiterate your interests + what you have to offer.• Thank them for reviewing your materials.• Optional: Include salary requirements.• If you included your contact information in your header, you don't need to include it again.

COVER LETTER WRITING

Formatting

1. Use the same formatting (ex: font, spacing, etc.) as your resume.
2. Margins: No less than 0.5 inch.
3. Single spaced.
4. One page.
5. Use paragraphs.

Cover Letter Writing Steps

1. Research the organization.
2. Read the job description.
3. Highlight key experiences, skills, knowledge areas, and competencies in the job description.
4. Identify your matching experiences, skills, knowledge areas, and competencies.
5. Use the STAR Method to tell your stories.

Using the STAR Method

S: Situation – What was the context?

T: Task – What was the task you did (at a broad level?)

A: Action – What were the individual actions you took to complete that task?

R: Result/Relevancy – What was the result of that task? And/or how is what you learned from this task relevant to the job position you're applying for?

Example

Situation:

As a Care Coordinator at Communities in Schools, I collaborated with families from underserved backgrounds to plan and implement wraparound support for families and their students. While working with families on obtaining housing resources, I realized that a lot of the language and jargon that housing applications use were confusing.

Task:

In response, I put together a single page guide that...

Action:

...broke down complex terms into simple language. Families were able to use the guide to quickly reference and understand unfamiliar terms. Additionally, I worked with other staff members to translate the guides into different languages.

Result:

As a result, families reported back that they were able to navigate housing applications with more confidence.

Relevancy:

By putting together this guide, I gained skills in collaboration, knowledge in housing terminology, and experience in recognizing and meeting my client's unique needs.

COVER LETTER SAMPLE #1

Antonio Lopez

Austin TX | alopez@gmail.com | (512) 345 - 1234 | [linkedin.com/alopez](https://www.linkedin.com/company/alopez)

November 17, 20XX

Dear Brandie Williams,

I am a first generation student who is passionate about education for underserved communities. My motivation to support students in their educational journey is why I am applying for the Program Assistant role at Breakthrough Central Texas. My background in Social Work, direct service experience, and organizational skills would make me successful in the role.

As a Care Coordinator at Communities in Schools, I collaborated with families from underserved backgrounds to plan and implement wraparound support for families and their students. While working with families on obtaining housing resources, I realized that a lot of the language and jargon that housing applications use were confusing. In response, I put together a single page guide that broke down complex terms into simple language. Families were able to use the guide to quickly reference and understand unfamiliar terms. Additionally, I worked with other staff members to translate the guides into different languages. As a result, families reported back that they were able to navigate housing applications with more confidence.

For the past semester, I worked as an Office Assistant at the DiNitto Career Center. I provided administrative support for the career center's events, student appointments, and office communications. I managed both our physical and digital files and even introduced a new system to keep the files organized. I also frequently answered questions from students and staff members about the career center's services. Working at the career center taught me how to provide excellent customer service and operational support to a team.

My experiences in working with diverse communities and working in teams would help me to excel in providing administrative support would be greatly helpful in the Program Assistant role. I would be honored to play a role in ensuring students receive the best services at Breakthrough Central Texas. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Antonio Lopez

COVER LETTER SAMPLE #2

Jessica Ngo, LMSW

Jngo@gmail.com

(512) 555-1234

November 17, 20XX

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am a graduate student at The University of Texas at Austin, and I will be graduating in May 20XX with a Master of Science in Social Work. During my time as a student, my focus has been researching and working with individuals who have substance use disorders. I am interested in the Case Worker position at Oak Springs Treatment Center. I am confident that my education and counseling experience make me an excellent candidate for this job.

For the past year, I have been providing counseling services to individuals with substance use disorders as a Counseling Intern at South Austin Hospital. I worked on a multi-disciplinary team that guided patients through a successful transition from the hospital setting to outpatient treatment centers. My responsibilities included conducting psychosocial evaluations and assessments and making referrals to psychiatric facilities, and chemical dependency outpatient and support groups. My time working with clients, staff, and partners at South Austin Hospital would make me successful working on Oak Springs Treatment Center's counseling team.

Additionally, I have taken part in several research studies on substance use disorders. My latest project, "Substance Use Disorder in Underserved Communities," is set to be published in September 20XX. In my work, I conduct studies on the best prevention and treatment methods for substance use disorder. My experience as a researcher has given me increase familiarity with the topic of substance use disorder, and I would be interested in applying what I've learned to introduce new treatment strategies to clients.

I am passionate about working with the clients at Oak Springs Treatment Center are familiar to me, and it would be an honor to work at a client-centered facility. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jessica Ngo, LMSW