



INTERIM REPORT ON  
PRISONER REENTRY

BY

Task Force on Prisoner Reentry  
Gary Maynard, Chair

During the 2009 Legislative session, HB 637 was passed and signed into law by Governor O'Malley. This bill established a Task Force on Prisoner Reentry, and the provisions of the law are codified in Correctional Services Article, § 2-501. The law provides for the membership, chairmanship, and staffing of the task force and requires that certain issues be studied over the course of two years. It further requires that the Governor and General Assembly receive two reports on the findings and recommendations of the task force: 1) An interim report by December 31, 2010, and 2) a final report by December 31, 2011. This interim report is being provided in conjunction with this requirement.

### Legal Mandate of the Task Force

The Task Force is responsible for performing the following six tasks:

- (1) Examine ways to pool resources and funding streams to promote lower recidivism rates for returning offenders and minimize the harmful effects of offenders' time in prison, jail, or a juvenile facility on families and communities of offenders by collecting data and best practices in offender reentry from demonstration grantees and other agencies and organizations;*
- (2) Analyze the statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and practice-based hurdles to reintegration of adult and juvenile offenders into the community;*
- (3) Investigate guidelines and criteria to track outcomes of inmate reentry program participation, including program approvals, day-to-day program participation, and program graduation and other types of program completion and noncompletions;*
- (4) Research longitudinal data tracking of the pre- and post-release impact of reentry programs;*
- (5) Investigate the number of idle inmates in each state correctional facility; and*
- (6) Develop a comprehensive strategic reentry plan as specified under the federal second chance act of 2007...*

### Membership

The membership initially consisted of the following individuals representing organizations from various jurisdictions across the State and certain ex-officio representatives in accordance with §2-501 of the Correctional Services Article:

Gerron S. Levi	House of Delegates
Jeffrey D. Waldstreicher	House of Delegates
Verna L. Jones	Senate
C. Anthony Muse	Senate
Jacqueline Robarge, Power Inside	Services to adults

Kelis R. Stewart, Sr	AFSCME
Stefan F. LoBuglio	Montgomery Co Reentry
Howard Wicker, Living Classrooms	Services to Juveniles
George R. Hardinger, MCAA President	Local Corrections
Jason Perkins-Cohen, Job Opportunities Task Force	Services to Adults
Edmund O'Leary, Case Manager, Division of Correction	AFSCME
Thomasina Hiers, Baltimore City Mayor's Office	Baltimore City Task Force
M.H. Jim Estopp	Employer organization
Donald W. DeVore Designee – Tammy Brown	Dept. of Juvenile Services
Nancy S. Grasmick Designee – Mark Mechlinski	State Dept. of Education
Brian Wilbon, Designee - Kevin M. McGuire	Dept. of Human Resources
John M. Colmers Designee – Susan Steinberg	Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene
Alexander M. Sanchez Designee – Jeff Beeson	Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation
J. Michael Stouffer, Commissioner	Division of Correction
John Kuo, Administrator Designee - Sean Adgerson	Motor Vehicle Administration
Lynn Reed, Deputy Director	Workforce Investment Board
Joanne M. Jester	Formerly incarcerated

Gregory H. Carpenter,  
Jericho Program

Baltimore City Reentry

Gary Maynard, Chair

Public Safety and Correctional  
Services

Philip Pie,  
Deputy Secretary

DPSCS

Bonita Cosgrove,  
Director of Re-Entry

Staff to Task Force - DPSCS

Three vacancies still exist: 1) a member of the public with relevant expertise in providing services to juvenile offenders; 2) a representative from Prince George's County local reentry task force or an individual who is reviewing policies and practices on employment of ex-offenders in that jurisdiction; 3) a member of the public who represents an employer organization.

Consideration was given to what other stakeholders in the reentry discussion should be part of the Task Force. As a result, invitations were extended to additional organizations and individuals who were considered important in the reentry of offenders. Representatives from the following additional organizations were invited to join the group, and others are still under consideration:

Linda Raines, Director, Mental Health Association of Md

Emory Plitt, Esquire, Judiciary

Kevin Malachi, Senior Vice President, Prince George's County  
Economic Development Corporation

Raymond Skinner, Secretary  
Housing and Community Development

Christian Johansson, Secretary  
Business and Economic Development

### Proceedings

The Task Force met for the first time on July 23, 2010. After hearing background information about the legislation, reviewing the duties of the workgroup, and obtaining information about DPSCS' re-entry blueprint and action plan, the workgroup agreed that formulating smaller workgroups was the most efficient way to accomplish the tasks assigned. Consequently, the following 5 subcommittees were formed: 1) Research and Performance Outcomes; 2) Idleness and Programming; 3) Barriers and Practice Hurdles; 4) Resources and

funding streams; and 5) Comprehensive Re-entry Plan. Members were asked to choose on which subcommittee(s) they wished to serve, and chairpersons were chosen for each group.

The second meeting of the full task force was held on October 25, 2010. Since the initial meeting on July 23, three of the five subcommittees had met several times. During the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Idleness and Programming; Barriers and Process Hurdles; and Research and Performance Outcomes subcommittees reported on their progress. A summary of the information provided by each subcommittee follows.

### *Idleness and Programming*

The subcommittee gathered data on the number of inmates engaged in programming in each institution based on institutional assignment records. The data shows that most inmates are enrolled in some program activity such as education classes, treatment programming, institutional work assignments, and correctional industries. However, the subcommittee needs to better understand how fully these activities engage inmates in order to ascertain the extent of an “inmate idleness” problem within the Division of Correction. Many of the correctional institutions appear to have significant program opportunities for their inmates, but more research is required to assess the quality and type of programming, and its conformance to evidence-based principles of program effectiveness. There is also the larger challenge to determine whether institutions have the capacity in terms of space and program and security staff to expand program offerings. On the space issue, it appears that there are opportunities to add programming during evening hours.

### *Barriers and Process Hurdles*

The subcommittee developed a list of barriers to successful prisoner re-entry outcomes. A number of barriers stand out as areas where immediate work should start for resolution. 1) Availability of affordable housing for newly released offenders is a major barrier. 2) Child support arrearages create numerous problems for the recently released offender. Aside from the obvious economic difficulties they present, failure to pay prevents an offender from obtaining any license which restricts employment opportunities. 3) Obtaining entitlement benefits to sustain and maintain good health after release is also very difficult for released offenders. Suspension of benefits rather than termination upon incarceration would reduce the impact of this barrier. 4) Failure to register for selective service also creates difficulties in obtaining financial aid for education. Providing opportunity to register prior to release would remove this barrier.

### *Performance and Research Outcomes*

The subcommittee, composed of Taskforce members joined by individuals with expertise in this area<sup>1</sup>, met on September 8, 2010, and adopted a three-fold methodology to discover best practices in reentry outcome research. The first

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix for members of each sub-committee.

strategy involves reviewing the literature on reentry outcomes from academic, practitioner, government, and policy organizational sources. The second strategy involves surveying how reentry programs in Maryland currently collect and use reentry outcome data. Finally, the third strategy involves determining what administrative records currently exist on reentry outcomes across agencies and organizations by reviewing the files of a small number of randomly selected individuals who were incarcerated and were released by the Maryland Division of Correction from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The subcommittee is using a graduate student at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government to assist with this research agenda.

Preliminarily, the research literature indicates that the better methodology for measuring reentry program outcomes is to look at six different treatment domains: mental and physical health; alcohol and drug abuse; employment and education; housing; pro-social activities; and financial status. These domains of treatment have been found by researchers as addressing "dynamic" criminogenic factors that have the potential to impact future recidivism rates. While there is a frequent interest by policy makers and laypersons to identify recidivism as the exclusive outcome of importance, researchers are increasingly recognizing that this proves to be a poor indicator of performance for reentry programs. Recidivism is most directly affected by: the "risk" of the population served by a program (i.e. risk includes criminal history, socio-economic background, mental and physical health, work and education background, substance abuse background, housing stability, and family/social support); specific policies and practices of stakeholders within the criminal justice system including police, probation and parole, prosecutors, judges, and the legislature that are outside the span of control of corrections (i.e. probationary revocation policies); and, the quality of the evaluation study and the availability of data. Good indicators of performance, by contrast, are linked directly to the specific activities, resources, and services provided by a program.

Concerning the second strategy, the subcommittee and its researcher have begun administering a standardized telephone survey to representatives from County Correctional agencies, non-profit organizations, and individuals knowledgeable and committed to reentry programs. The survey will continue to be administered through January. On the final agenda item, the subcommittee did receive approval from DPSCS on its research application to carry out the file review research study. It is looking to receive data for analysis in January 2011.

### Next Steps

During the next year, the Task Force will continue to work on the tasks assigned. The two remaining subcommittees (Resources and Funding Streams, and Comprehensive Plan) will be convened. The subcommittees mentioned above will work on the following:

- Research and Performance Outcomes subcommittee will be gathering and evaluating the information received in order to make recommendations on measuring re-entry outcomes.

- The Barriers and Practice Hurdles committee will identify solutions to some of the barriers noted and work with correctional agencies to implement those solutions. They will also identify those barriers that require law or regulation changes and make recommendations for those changes.
- The Idleness and Programming subcommittee will work with local correctional facilities to determine how we might create efficiency through information sharing and make better use of existing resources resulting in possible creation of additional programming.

Additional members to the Task Force will be sought as well. As previously mentioned, there are important stakeholders in the re-entry success discussion that are not yet members. In order for this group to develop a truly comprehensive plan for improving re-entry outcomes, all stakeholders must be included.

The Task Force will meet on a quarterly basis. This allows the subcommittees to meet monthly and have progress to report to the full task force. The meetings are scheduled for: January 24, April 25, July 25, and October 24 of 2011.

## Appendix

### **Research and Performance Outcomes Subcommittee Members**

Stefan LoBuglio, Chair (Montgomery County)  
Tamera Bream (DPSCS)  
Karen Yoke (DHMH – ADAA)  
Chad Basham (DHMH – ADAA)  
Rebecca Gowen (DPSCS – Research)  
George Mitchell (DPSCS – Research)  
Marcy Plimack (DPSCS – DPP)  
Ernest Eley (DPSCS – DPP)  
Kenney Coleman (DPSCS – DPP)  
Martha Kumer (DPSCS—DPP)  
Caroline Bolas (DHMH Chrysalis House)  
Kendall Gifford (DPSCS – DOC)  
Heidi Fieselmann, Master’s Student (JFK School of Gov’t – Harvard)  
Darren McGregor (DHMH – Jail MH and Trauma)  
Tina Michaels (Montgomery County)  
Jacqueline Robarge (Power Inside)  
Bill Rusinkow (DHMH – ADAA)  
Susan Steinberg (DHMH)  
Bonita Cosgrove (DPSCS)  
Howard Wicker, Project Serve  
Kelis Stewart, Union Representative, AFSCME  
Jeff Waldstreicher, House Delegate

### **Barriers and Process Hurdles**

Jason Perkins-Cohen, Chair (Job Opportunities Task Force)  
Sean Adgerson (MVA)  
Kevin McGuire (DHR)  
Andree Duvall (DLLR)  
Gregory Carpenter (Jericho)  
Melissa Chalmers Broome (JOTF)  
Howard Wicker (Living Classrooms)  
Jeff Beeson (DLLR)  
Tamara Bream (DPSCS)  
Ann Ciekot (Maryland Advocacy – National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence)  
Jim Estep (Business Roundtable)

### **Idleness and Programming**

J. Michael Stouffer, Co-Chair (DPSCS – DOC)  
Jeff Beeson, Co-Chair (DLLR)  
Erin Julius (DPSCS – DOC)



Constance Parker (DLLR)  
Andree Duvall (DLLR)  
Gregory Carpenter (Jericho)  
Diana Bailey (MSDE)