

GET A FRESH START: SECOND CHANCE ACT

If you have a criminal record that meets certain criteria, you may be able to have it expunged.

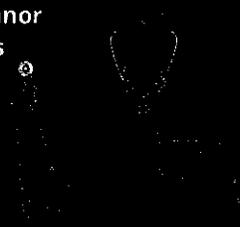
The Second Chance Act (SCA) means:

All charges resulting in a dismissal or finding of not guilty are eligible to be expunged.



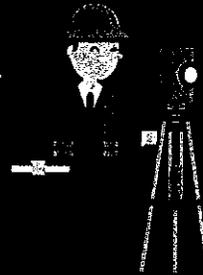
Beginning December 1, 2021, many of those expungements will be automatic.

A person or prosecutor can petition for expunction of most misdemeanor and Class H or I felony convictions that occurred when a person was 16 or 17 and as long as the offense occurred prior to December 1, 2019.



Generally, a person may petition for expunction of:

1. One nonviolent misdemeanor after 5 years of good behavior;
2. Multiple nonviolent misdemeanor convictions after 7 years of good behavior;
3. One nonviolent felony conviction after 10 years of good behavior, with some exceptions.



Contact the NC Second Chance Alliance at
<https://ncsecondchance.org/thesecondchanceact>

WORKING AFTER PRISON: GET A FRESH START

If you're searching for employment after leaving prison or jail, know your rights in North Carolina.

In North Carolina, many jobs require a professional license to operate, including barbers, plumbers, real estate agents, insurance agents, HVAC technicians, hygienists, and many more. You can find a full database of professions that require licensure at <https://www.ncbold.com/license>.

The Right to Work/Occupational Licensing Board Reform Law (S.L. 2019-91) means:

Licensing boards cannot automatically deny a license based on arrest records or criminal convictions, regardless if it is a felony or a misdemeanor.

Licensing boards can only deny a license if the criminal record is directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the job.

You can also petition a licensing board to determine whether your criminal history will disqualify you before you begin education and training requirements.



Explore your options by contacting your local NCWorks Career Center.
Find contact information at www.ncworks.gov

2020: Year in Review

Challenges and Triumphs

The Guilford County Reentry Program was one of the few Reentry Organizations in North Carolina that provided uninterrupted services during the trials of COVID-19 for the justice served residents of Guilford County. Reentry staff sought innovative ways of ensuring service to our clients. The following report represents a year in review for 2020.

Clients Served by GCRC in 2020

The Guilford County Reentry Program served 127 clients in 2020.

Gender

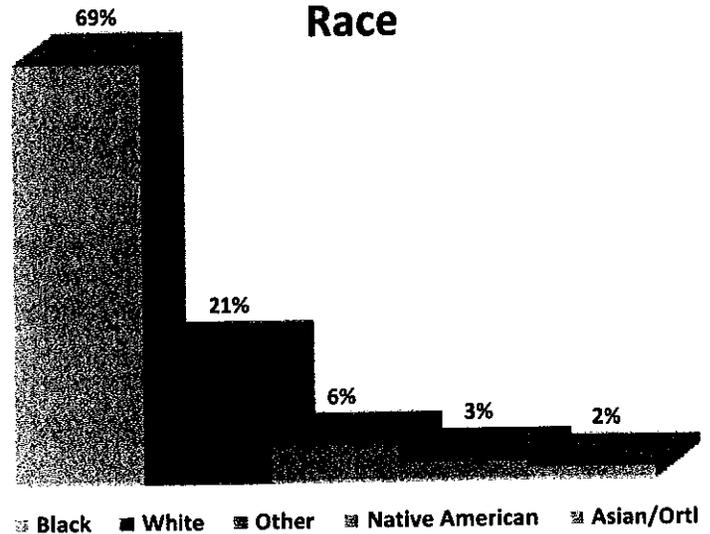


78% of clients served were MALE.

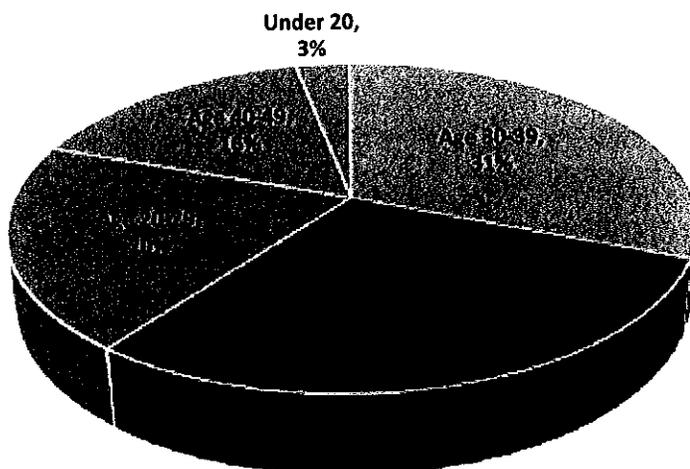
22% of clients served were FEMALE.



Race



Age Range at Enrollment



Enrollment into the Reentry Program was the greatest for individuals between 30 and 39. Men make up the majority of the clients served.

The second largest population served is 50 and over. Understanding the needs of an older justice served population is critical when assisting with services such as housing, health care and employment.

Stakeholder Partnerships

While many of our stakeholders had significant challenges during the pandemic, several stakeholders enhanced services to our clients.

Strengthened alliances with stakeholders assisted numerous clients who were granted expedited release from State prison.

The Guilford County Health Department was instrumental in providing temporary housing to prevent homelessness for many recently released.

Further, the NC Fit program provided much needed medical assistance to ensure those requiring medication and subsequent medical assistance were served.

Other stakeholder services included:

- Welfare Reform
- NexGen
- NC-Works
- Monarch
- Salvation Army
- Partners Ending Homelessness
- Drug Court
- Friends of Bill
- Path of Hope
- NC Probation

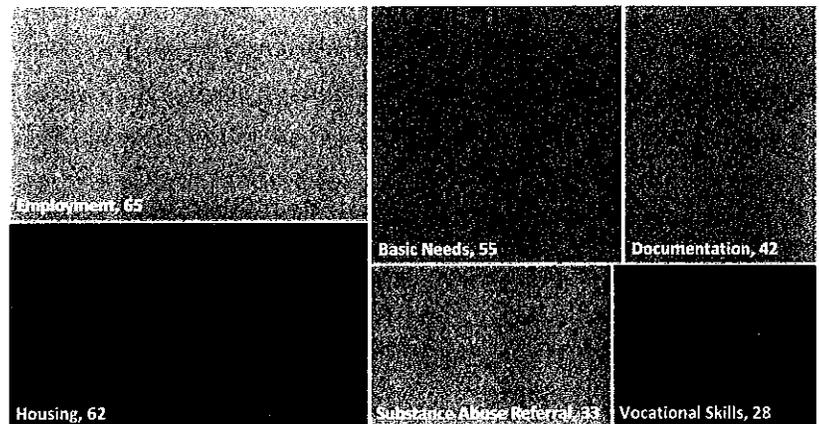
Most Frequent Services Completed

GCRC, in conjunction with our local partners, provides clients with access to one-time, short-term and long-term supportive services. Clients can receive more than one service.

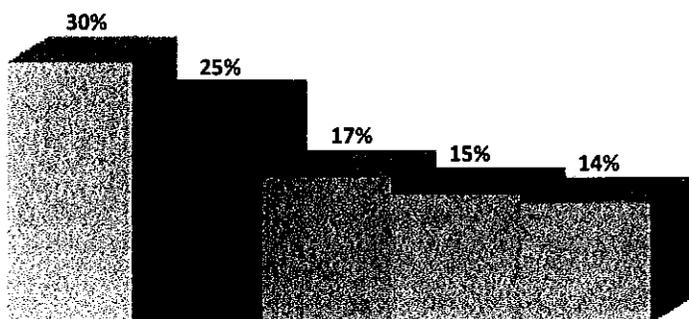
Employment and housing were the most requested services from participants.

Unemployment and under-employment are chronic issues of returning citizens.

The Guilford County Reentry Council has staff dedicated solely to assisting clients applying at local employers.

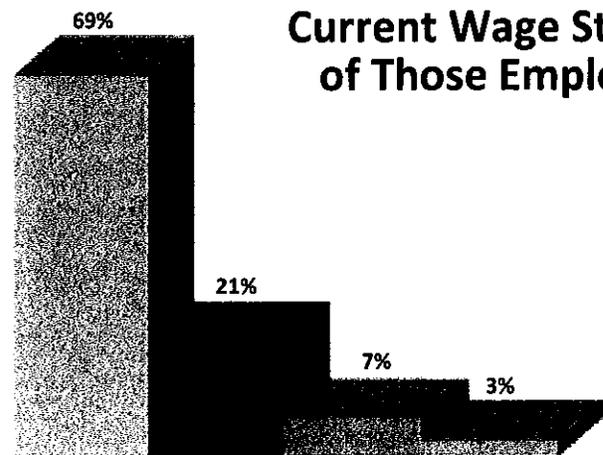


How Clients Were Referred to Our Services



- NC Community Corrections
- Self Referral
- NC Jail
- NC Prison

Current Wage Status of Those Employed



- Unemployed
- Over \$10.00
- Between \$9.00 and \$10.00
- Between Minimum & \$9.00

2020 Community Outreach Initiatives

GCRC Hosts First Food Drive



On December 12, 2020, the Guilford County Reentry Council hosted the first food drive titled "Feeding One Family at a Time." GCRC provided food boxes and supplied an array of meats, canned goods, pasta, etc. This also provided an excellent opportunity for local churches, groups, retailers, and others to partner with us to combat hunger in our community. The Council had the privilege to serve over two hundred families, and all food boxes were given away.

Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree

Incarceration can strain family ties to the breaking point. Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree program helps to strengthen family bonds by delivering personalized gifts to the children on behalf of their incarcerated parents at Christmas. This year, instead of home deliveries, we did curbside pickup from December 17th thru the 19th and served 125 children and their families. Thanks to Mt. Pisgah United Methodist Church (our host), Pay Tel Communications, and the Reentry Team for purchasing gifts and serving as helpers at the curbside pickup.





OFFICE OF GUILFORD COUNTY REENTRY COUNCIL



On behalf of the Guilford County Sheriff's Office and Reentry Council, I want to personally thank you for attending our Open House for the Reentry Center. In order for any program to be successful, there has to be many ideas, many hands and most importantly *many hearts* working in concert.

Mother Teresa said it best, *"None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things with great love, and together we can do something wonderful."*

Thank you for not only being a part of the Guilford County Reentry Center's Open House-but a part of the core mission to assist the transition of our justice served citizens. Please know your commitment to these men and women touch lives, families, and our community as a whole.

God bless you!

Edward E. Williams (Chap)

Reentry Director
Guilford County Sheriff's Office

Reaching One Family At A Time

505 E GREEN DRIVE | ROOM 132 (COURTHOUSE) | HIGH POINT, NC 27260 | Tel: 336-641-4074



**HAVE
QUESTIONS?
REACH OUT
TO US.**



336-641-3809



guilfordcountyreentry.com



GCRC@guilfordcountync.gov

Are you leaving jail, prison, or community supervision and need help moving back into society? The **Guilford County Reentry Council** helps connect you to essential resources like substance abuse treatment and housing assistance so you don't have to put your life back together on your own.

OUR SERVICES



Want a GED, degree, or certification? Ask us about our partnership with GTCC.



Need an address and place to lay your head? Ask us about housing programs and shelters.



Worried about your next meal? Let us direct you to some local pantries and food programs.



Do you need help caring for a little one or other loved one? Let's see how we can help.



Need mental health or substance treatment? We can help you find a program fit for you.



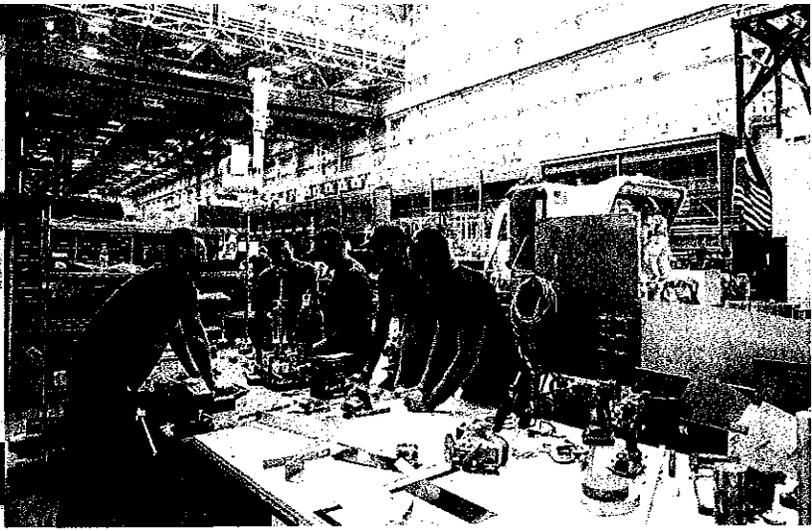
Need a job? Want to pick up some new skills? We can help.



Guilford County Courthouse
505 East Green Dr. (Room 132)
High Point, NC 27262

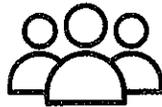


@gcreentry



REACHING ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

The **Guilford County Reentry Council's** goal is assisting people who have been to jail or prison, as well as their families, in order to create a successful transition from incarceration back into Guilford County.



OUR TEAM

Edward "Chap" Williams
Reentry Director

Sharon Harrison-Pope
Reentry Coordinator

KJ Adams
Reentry Case Manager

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Am I eligible for the program?

Any individual returning to Guilford County from a local jail, state or federal prison, or community corrections (probation/parole) is eligible.

I was released from jail/prison a while ago. Am I still eligible?

No matter how long ago your release was you are eligible.

Does it cost anything?

The program is free.

How do I get help while in jail or prison?

If you are inside the

Guilford County Jails, send a message to "Reentry" on the kiosk in your housing unit. If you are in NC Prison, contact your Program Manager. If you have been released, use the contact information on the front page.

Guilford County Sheriff's Office
The Guilford County Reentry Council is managed by the Guilford County Sheriff's Office.



Guilford County Reentry Council Referral Form

*All fields with a * are required to be filled out.*

*Date:		*Referred By:	
*Name:			
*DOB:		*Gender:	*OPUS ID#:
*Address:	City: <input type="checkbox"/> High Point <input type="checkbox"/> Greensboro State: NC Zip code:		
*Phone Number:		Email:	

Please check the services that you're in need of:

_____ Housing Assistance

_____ Family Support Services

_____ Food

_____ Clothing

_____ Employment Assistance

_____ State ID Card / Driver's License / SSN

_____ Substance Abuse Treatment Services

_____ Education

_____ Mental Health Treatment Services

_____ Vocational Training

_____ Medical Services

Comments:	
-----------	--

What does *Reentry* mean to North Carolina Employers?

Every year in North Carolina, about 25,000 people are released from the state's correctional facilities. In fact, more than 90 percent of individuals who spend time in our state's correctional facilities will eventually be released.



NORTH CAROLINA
SRCC
STATE REENTRY COUNCIL COLLABORATIVE

These individuals are returning to their communities and represent *an under-utilized, skilled workforce that is prepared to contribute to the success of your business.*

Many of these individuals have participated in programs to prepare them for the workforce, including:

- work release in the community during incarceration;
- basic education classes;
- vocational training;
- post-secondary academic programs; and
- employment readiness classes.

In addition, through Correction Enterprises, more than 2,000 incarcerated people learn job skills by producing certain goods and services for the Department of Public Safety and other tax-supported entities. The valuable skills that these individuals have gained help them transition to employment upon release.

Data analysis shows that participation in these workforce development programs is associated with improved employment outcomes. Hiring from this population not only can help meet employers' needs for skilled workers, but also may include financial incentives, through the **Federal Bonding** program (\$5,000 in coverage per fidelity bond, free of charge) and the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** (up to a \$2,400 tax credit for each eligible employee under the ex-felon category).

More than 2,000 North Carolina employers are using these services and shoring up their workforce with reliable and loyal employees. In addition, a recent reform to North Carolina law on occupational licensing (House Bill 770) helps both jobseekers and employers. The new law clarifies qualifications for licensure and removes automatic disqualification based on criminal history, so that more people can become licensed to work in a number of fields.

Removing barriers to employment is a "win-win-win" - for workers, for businesses, and for safer communities.

To learn more about how you can benefit from this under-utilized talent pool, please contact your local NCWorks Career Center, which can be found by visiting www.ncworks.gov.

For more information on North Carolina Reentry efforts, please visit www.ncdps.gov/reentry



NCWORKS.GOV

A proud partner of the American Job Center network

Addressing Common Employer Concerns about Hiring Justice-involved Workers

1: Individuals coming out of prison are not untrained or uneducated.

People who are incarcerated have access to educational and vocational opportunities prior to release. Some earn certifications in Food Service, Construction, Welding, HVAC and more. Many participate in work assignments where they gain useful skills and learn to use specialized equipment. From 2015-2019, 29,986 incarcerated people in N.C. completed a vocational program, and 4,178 completed their High School Equivalency.

2: Theft by employees is not

common, and insurance is available. The Federal Bonding Program was created to alleviate this concern by providing *FREE* bonding to guarantee job honesty when hiring "at risk" applicants.

3: "Negligent hiring" lawsuits are not a major concern. Lawsuits based on unfair or discriminatory hiring practices are actually more common than those based on negligent hiring. Following the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidance when considering applicants with criminal records (www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/arrest_conviction.cfm) will tend to decrease the likelihood of a lawsuit.

4: Risk associated with hiring someone with a criminal record is low. Employers take a risk on each individual they hire, whether or not they have a criminal record. The risk of someone convicted of a crime committing a *new* crime declines over time, eventually becoming essentially the same low level of risk as the general population. Obtaining stable employment dramatically *reduces* that risk. Also, if you must terminate a new employee within the first 100 days because they are unable to do the work, your Unemployment Insurance account will not be charged. Contact the N.C. Division of Employment Security at des.nc.gov/employers for details.

Know the Difference: Expungement vs. Certificates of Relief

Expungements (a.k.a. expunctions) are issued by a judge, removing a conviction from the public record. A Certificate of Relief (COR) is a document issued by a judge certifying that a person is rehabilitated, making him/her/them more employable and giving employers more reassurance that the individual is low-risk. Employers are generally protected from being sued for negligent hiring when they hire someone with a COR.

The NC Department of Commerce Reentry Initiative provides resources that help job seekers with criminal records to overcome barriers to employment. The initiative supports NCWorks Career Centers, which provide direct employment & training services. Individuals who need additional assistance may be referred to their Regional Reentry Specialist. For general questions or concerns, email the Program Coordinator at DWS_Re-Entry@nccommerce.com.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) provides tax incentives for employers who hire individuals from certain target groups, including recipients of certain types of public assistance, certain veterans and people who have felony convictions. The tax credit for each group varies, but the total for an individual with a felony conviction may be as much as \$2,400. Contact your local **NCWorks Career Center** for more information or visit www.nccommerce.com.

Federal Bonding

The Federal Bonding Program provides **free** insurance to employers who hire "at risk" workers, including individuals with a history of arrest or conviction, bad credit, poor work history, history of substance abuse, or dishonorable discharge from the military. The employer is eligible for \$5,000 of coverage for the first six months of employment. Contact an **NCWorks Career Center** or the State Bonding Coordinator at N.C. Commerce to take advantage of the program. More information: www.bonds4jobs.com.



April 2021

Dear Colleague –

In connection to reentry efforts and in recognition of Second Chance Month, we want to ensure your awareness of statutory changes regarding occupational licensing that impact your agency work.

The State Reentry Council Collaborative ([SRCC](#)) includes representatives from state agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, non-profits, faith- and community-based organizations and works to help justice-involved individuals successfully return to their communities and rebuild their lives after incarceration. One of the SRCC's main recommendations in 2019 was for all licensing boards to remove ambiguous and subjective terms, such as "moral turpitude," from regulations related to occupational licensing or certification.¹

In response to the SRCC and other stakeholders' recommendations on this issue, the General Assembly enacted H.B. 770, the Freedom to Work/Occupational Licensing Board Reform bill ([S.L. 2019-91](#)) which became effective on October 1, 2019. If you are not familiar with this legislation, you can learn more about how this law changes occupational licensing practices on the next page.

Research demonstrates that increasing employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals decreases recidivism and, in turn, makes our communities safer. However, in North Carolina, more than 400 occupations require some form of licensure. When that is coupled with the fact that an estimated 2 million North Carolinians have criminal records, and criminal records are routinely used to deny people occupational licenses, it is no wonder that employment rates are lower among justice-involved individuals, resulting in a loss of state tax revenue. The COVID-19 pandemic has only compounded the difficulties that jobseekers with criminal records face.

Everyone plays a role in making our communities safer. We know that when justice-involved individuals are able to take advantage of opportunities to lead meaningful, productive lives, they are less likely to recommit criminal offenses. Please work within your organization to ensure that these changes are taking effect. Boards have been authorized to adopt any necessary rules to implement these changes. If you have any questions regarding these new requirements, feel free to contact Assistant Attorney General Mercedes Restucha-Klem at arestuchaklem@ncdoj.gov or 919-716-6783.

Sincerely –

Erik A. Hooks
Secretary of Public Safety

Josh Stein
Attorney General

¹ [State Reentry Council Collaborative 2018 Recommendations Final Report, pp. 29-30](#)

Freedom to Work/Occupational Licensing Board Reform

Session Law 2019-91 established the following, effective October 1, 2019:

- i. A requirement that all administrative agencies “shall consider a Certificate of Relief favorably in determining whether a conviction would result in a disqualification.” NCGS 15A-173.2(d).
- ii. A definition for “state agency licensing board,” including a non-exclusive list of those boards. NCGS 93B-1 (3).
- iii. *An annual report filed by each occupational licensing board and each state agency licensing board, no later than October 31 of each year to the Secretary of State, Attorney General, and Joint Legislative Administrative Procedure Oversight Committee on:*
 - “the number of applicants for a license, and of that number, the number granted a license.
 - the number of applicants with a conviction record and, of that number, the number granted a license, denied a license for any reason, and denied a license because of a conviction.” NCGS 93B-2(a) and (e).
- iv. Boards may *only* deny an applicant on the basis of a conviction if the board makes specific findings, based on a list of factors, that the applicant's history is directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the licensed job or the conviction is for a crime that is violent or sexual in nature. “. . . [N]o board may deny an applicant a license based on a determination that a conviction is for a crime of moral turpitude.” NCGS 93B-8.1(b) and (b1).
- v. If a board denies a license, it must 1) make specific written findings based on factors enumerated in the statute, explaining the reason for the denial and signed by the board's presiding officer; 2) provide the written findings to the applicant within 60 days of the denial and include information on an appeal process; and 3) retain a signed copy of the denials for no less than five years. NCGS 93B-8.1(b2) and (b5).
- vi. All board licensure applications and websites shall include information on whether an applicant is required to consent to a criminal history record check, the factors the board considers when making a licensure determination, and the appeal process if a license is denied because of a criminal conviction. NCGS 93B-8.1(b3)
- vii. If a board uses a third-party provider for criminal history records, it must ensure that the applicant has access to the record or is otherwise delivered a copy of their record. NCGS 93B-8.1(b4).
- viii. If an applicant's criminal record will or may prevent a board from issuing a license, the board shall notify the applicant and provide at least 30 days for the applicant to provide additional documentation for consideration. This documentation may include a correction of an inaccuracy in their criminal history or evidence of mitigation or rehabilitation. NCGS 93B-8.1(b4).
- ix. No board shall restrict an applicant from reapplying for a license for more than two years from the date of their most recent application. NCGS 93B-8.1(b5).
- x. All boards shall allow individuals to petition for a predetermination of whether their criminal history is likely to disqualify them from obtaining a license. Boards shall provide responses to these petitions within 45 days. NCGS 93B-8.1(b6).



NCFIT

FORMERLY INCARCERATED
TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

OUR MISSION:

Improve the well-being and health of people who have been recently released and improve their chances of successful reentry into the community

OUR GOALS:

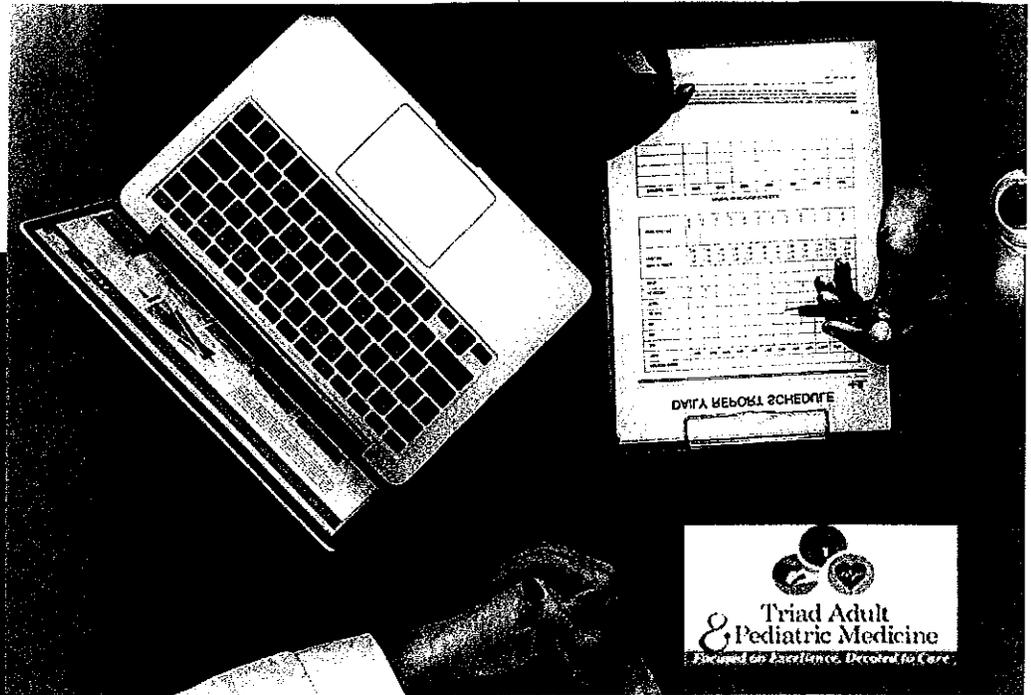
Connect people being released from incarceration with needed health services; to include physical health, mental health and substance use disorder treatment. Assist FIT Program clients with all aspects of reentry; to include housing, job training, legal needs, education, transportation and life skills.

IN GREENSBORO CONTACT:

Eugene Wilson (336) 279-4259
ewilson@tapmedicine.com
1002S. Eugene Street Greensboro, NC 27406

IN HIGH POINT CONTACT:

Greg Liggs (336) 840-9621
gliggs@tapmedicine.com
400 E Commerce Ave, High Point, NC 27260



Incarcerated people experience increased rates of mental illness, substance abuse, and chronic and infectious disease. These populations also frequently are adversely affected by socioeconomic risk factors for poor health, including lower educational attainment and higher rates of poverty. Given this risk, such populations are in clear need of significant health services. Particularly upon release from an institution or correctional facility, former inmates may require substantial assistance in securing health care benefits and access. Without Medicaid or other programs, however, many individuals do not have access to appropriate care.

Intended Outcomes Among FIT Program Clients:

- Improved utilization of primary care medical services, mental health services and substance use disorder treatment
- Reduced hospitalization and emergency room use
- Reduced recidivism and re-arrest
- Increased access to needed reentry services and client satisfaction
- CHWs build a unique trust with their clients resulting in enhanced primary care engagement and reduced Emergency Department utilization
- The NC FIT Program provides vouchers for our clients, who are eligible, to primary care services and to cover costs for their medications.

THE FIT PROGRAM IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN: UNC Family Medicine, the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (which administers the state prisons), The North Carolina Community Health Center Association, Federally Qualified Health Centers (TAPM), County Departments of Public Health, community-based reentry organizations and local reentry councils (GCRC).

PAY TEL CLIENT UPDATE

PATHWAY TO ACHIEVE™

First Anniversary



IMPORTANT UPDATES

Year In-Review - 2
Pathway to Achieve
In The News - 3

CONTACT US

Megan Hurley
Regional Account
Manager
mhurley@paytel.com
336-963-2406

Shermikia Lemon
Training Specialist
slemon@paytel.com
336-579-6077

OUR FIRST YEAR

When Pay Tel launched Pathway to Achieve in June 2020, we had big expectations.

It was our goal:

- To provide incarcerated individuals with an educational solution that helped them improve their lives.
- To provide evidence-based courses that are tailored to the specific needs, learning abilities, and goals of inmates.
- To provide a personal learning path that allowed inmates to learn new skills and empowering them to make better decisions in the future.

Thanks to your partnership Pathway to Achieve has exceeded all expectations.

Year In-Review

22,860

INMATE LEARNERS

400,323

LEARNING HOURS

3,551,138

COURSE COMPLETED

727,729
GED COURSES COMPLETED

688,391
ADDICTION RECOVERY
COURSES COMPLETED

241,095
JOB SKILLS COURSES
COMPLETED

150,783
PARENTING COURSES
COMPLETED

141 NEW COURSES ADDED THIS YEAR

- Addiction/Substance Use - 51
- Reading/Literacy - 14
- Changing Your Thinking - 4
- Financial Literacy - 5
- Relationships - 3
- Job Skills - 2
- Parenting - 2
- Life Skills - 9
- Religious/Spiritual - 20
- Discovery - 30
- Self-Control - 1

**Pathway to Achieve
In The News**

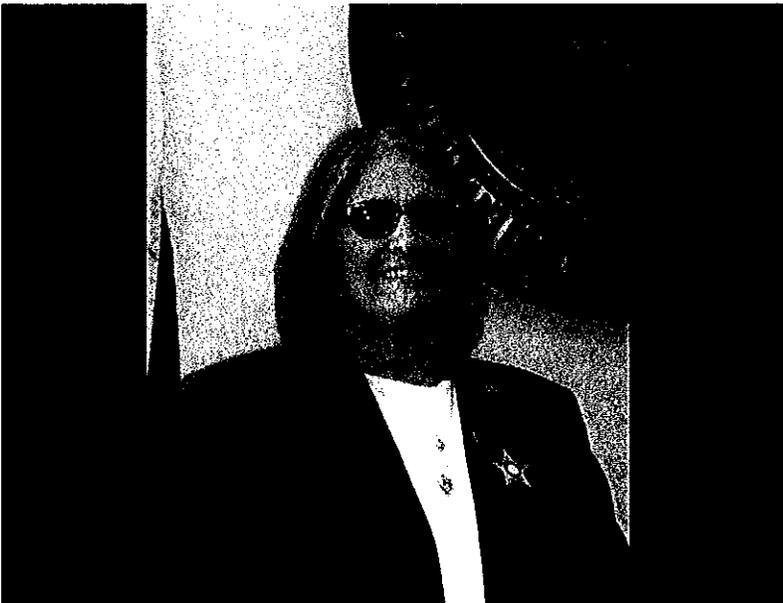
**DORCHESTER COUNTY INMATES ARE
USING TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER THEIR
LIVES WHILE INCARCERATED**



by: Raymond Owens
Posted: May 26, 2021

www.counton2.com

**JACKSON COUNTY JAIL INMATES THRIVE
WITH USE OF EDUCATIONAL TABLETS**



By B.J. Williams
Assistant News Director

accesswdun.com

Jackson County Sheriff Janis Mangum

The 4 Biggest Challenges Facing Those Newly Released From Prison



The day when a person is released from prison is often one of great happiness for them. A return to loved ones and to the free world can be downright euphoric.

But to think that the process of integrating back into society will be smooth sailing is naive. There are major problems ex-inmates face as they seek to rebuild their lives. This is particularly true of parolees that served a very long prison sentence.

Let's explore four challenges to prisoner reentry and potential solutions to each problem.

Challenge #1: Not Knowing Where to Begin

There are many moving parts to prisoner reentry – reconnecting with friends and family, finding a place to live, and finding work, to name but a few. It can be an overwhelming process to navigate.

This is especially true of ex-offenders who went to prison in their youth. Adult offenders at least have some measure of life experience on which to rely. But parolees that have spent their entire adult lives in prison might find themselves totally lost as an adult in the “real world.”

Regardless of age, simply not knowing where to begin to rebuild one's life is a significant challenge for ex-offenders.

The key to overcoming this challenge is to provide parolees with the resources they need to be successful. This might include reentry training and education while incarcerated, supervision after release, and providing resources to find housing and employment. These are called “institutional and community anchors” by Valera, Brotzman, Wilson, and Reid (2017), and have been identified as a significant component of successful reentry programs.

In many jurisdictions, these kinds of support systems are already in place. The key is to educate offenders about these programs and the process of reentry, that way they know what to expect and who to ask for help.

Challenge #2: Family Strain

As Naser and Visher (2006) note, many parolees rely heavily on their family for support and assistance as they transition back to free life. And by and large, family members step up in a big way to help make that transition as smooth as possible.

But as Naser and Visher also discuss, that support comes at a cost. Financial strain is named as one of the primary difficulties for families as they seek to support their recently released loved one. But finances are just the start. Often, family members struggle to understand the “rules” their loved one must live under. Likewise, they can experience higher levels of stress if their loved one has trouble finding a job, struggles with addiction, or has mental health issues.

These and other factors can lead to stress in the family relationship, which can, in turn, cause relationships to fracture over time.

To combat this, states can improve the communication with family members, that way they know what to expect when their loved one comes home. This might include meeting with the parole board or post-release supervisors to get a better understanding of what is expected of them and their loved one.

Likewise, having access to support programs – contact information for the local workforce office, for example – can help alleviate some of the feelings of being in this on their own, and give family members resources to help their loved one transition back to normal life as easily as possible.

Challenge #3: Finding Employment

One of the major problems ex-inmates face is finding employment.

Though getting a job is often a requirement for parolees, it's not as simple as walking into an establishment and applying. Instead, ex-offenders often must explain the gap in their work experience by delving into why they were incarcerated. Hiring someone with a criminal record can cause some employers to pause.

An additional challenge in finding employment is a lack of social capital.

As Ray, Grommon, and Rydberg (2016) point out, many parolees have lost connections in the community, if they had any to begin with. And since about half of job-seekers find a job thanks to someone they know, it paints a difficult picture for recently-released offenders who have few, if any, connections.

This makes it even more critical that parolees leave prison with employment resources. Whether this takes the form of education and training while in prison, arranged employment through supervised release, employment

assistance through Wyoming Workforce, or some combination thereof, the key to negating this problem is to plan ahead and help ex-offenders make connections with people in the employment community.

Challenge #4: Mental Health Issues

The process of prisoner reentry is hard enough as it is, but for ex-inmates with mental health issues, it can be a far greater challenge.

As Reardon discusses, some ex-inmates don't get the mental health treatment they need while incarcerated. And for those that do, sometimes the underlying issues that caused their mental health difficulties were not adequately addressed during their stay in prison.

When an ex-inmate is suffering from anxiety, depression, psychosis, drug addiction, or other mental health issues, finding a safe place to live, a stable job, and otherwise reintegrating into society can feel like an impossible task. Therefore, as Wolff (2005) posits, there is a critical need for responding to the mental health needs of inmates before they are released, as well as having supports in place to continue monitoring and treating their mental health needs once they have re-entered society.

In the end, each challenge discussed here is not insurmountable, but it requires a broad-based approach, one that starts well before release and includes multiple modes of support for ex-inmates upon their release.

Sources

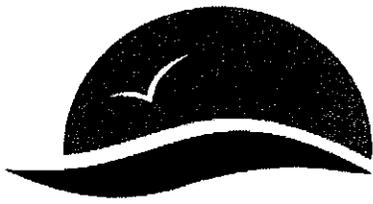
- Naser, R.L., & Visher, C.A. (2006). Family members' experience with incarceration and reentry. *Western Criminology Review*, 7(2), 18-29.
- Ray, B., Grommon, E., & Rydberg, J. (2016). Anticipated stigma and defensive individualism during postincarceration job searching. *Sociological Inquiry*, 86(3), 348-371. DOI: 10.1111/soin.12124
- Valera, P., Brotzman, L., Wilson, W., & Reid, A. (2017). It's hard to reenter when you've been locked out: Keys to offender reintegration. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 56(6), 412-431. DOI: 10.1080/10509674.2017.1339159
- Wolff, N. (2005). Community reintegration of prisoners with mental illness: A social investment perspective. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 28(1), 43-58. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijlp.2004.12.003

Sean Jackson April 2020

Master of Science in Counseling | University of Wyoming

Bachelor of Science in Information Technology | University of Massachusetts

Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies Education | University of Wyoming



Coastal Horizons

OUR CHILDREN'S PLACE

Our Children's Place of Coastal Horizons is a statewide program committed to the children of incarcerated and returning parents.

- Strives to be the leading North Carolina advocate and educational resource focused on these children and the need for a statewide response to ensure their well-being.
- Works to create a community where children of incarcerated parents are recognized, supported, and encouraged to share their stories.

What You Can Do

Share

- Invite us to speak to your faith, community, civic or other group.
- Invite us to write a guest column for your organization's newsletter or blog.
- Share the Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents (back) with your elected officials and community leaders.
- Join our mailing list at bit.ly/OCPList
- Follow us on Facebook & Twitter

 bit.ly/FacebookOCP

 bit.ly/TwitterOCP

Advocate

- Ask if professionals who work with children and families in your community have resources to support these children. If not, invite us to present a workshop.
- Use more inclusive language like mother, father, or parent instead of inmate, prisoner or convict.
- Ask faith leaders to consider a sermon on this topic, check your library to see if the collection includes books about children of incarcerated parents, encourage child care center staff to consider reading a book about a child with an incarcerated parent during story time.

Volunteer

- Ask us about Sesame Street, H.A.T.S., Parent Day, and Parenting Inside Out!
- Find new opportunities for H.A.T.S. (see right) or staff our table.

Donate

- Suggest *Our Children's Place* to your Giving Circle.
- Make a gift in honor or memory of a special person in your life.
- Support Parent Day by donating money, food or craft item.

1 in every 28 children in the United States has an incarcerated parent.



In NC, almost 17,000 children currently have a parent in prison.

Educate professionals, especially those working with children, about the impacts of parental incarceration and reentry. Last year we educated almost 1,200 professionals!

Support the relationship between children and their incarcerated parents by hosting Parent Days at prison and jail facilities.

Identify and promote policies, programs, and practices which improve the outcomes for these children.

Coordinate H.A.T.S. (Handcrafted And Totally Special), an important part of our community outreach and education work. Generous community members donate yarn; talented women at the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women (NCCIW) knit hats and other items; and shoppers donate in exchange for these handcrafted goods. We have an ongoing partnership with Mothers and Their Children (MATCH).

Learn more

OurChildrensPlace.com

MRadcliff@CoastalHorizons.org

 bit.ly/FacebookOCP  bit.ly/TwitterOCP

P.O. Box 13073

Durham, NC 27709

(919) 904-4286

Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents

San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership
<http://www.sfcipp.org/index.html>

1. I have the right **TO BE KEPT SAFE AND INFORMED AT THE TIME OF MY PARENT'S ARREST.**
2. I have the right **TO BE HEARD WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT ME.**
3. I have the right **TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT MY PARENT.**
4. I have the right **TO BE WELL CARED FOR IN MY PARENT'S ABSENCE.**
5. I have the right **TO SPEAK WITH, SEE, AND TOUCH MY PARENT.**
6. I have the right **TO SUPPORT AS I FACE MY PARENT'S INCARCERATION.**
7. I have the right **NOT TO BE JUDGED, BLAMED OR LABELED** because my parent is incarcerated.
8. I have the right **TO A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP WITH MY PARENT.**

Our Children's Place of Coastal Horizons is a statewide program committed to the children of incarcerated and returning parents. We strive to be the leading North Carolina advocate and educational resource focused on these children and the need for a statewide response to ensure their well-being.

