Lessons Learned:

Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy

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A report prepared by the
Council of State Governments Justice Center

for the

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Executive Summary

Law enforcement officers across the country report that they repeatedly encounter and arrest the same individuals in their jurisdictions. In many areas, recidivism rates remain stubbornly high—with more than 60 percent of individuals leaving prison reincarcerated within a few years after their release. Although many police agencies already have the building blocks to help make prisoner reentry safer and more successful, law enforcement professionals often lack the practical guidance to implement a comprehensive and effective initiative.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center) joined with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) on a national project to learn in detail how agencies create a reentry strategy or enhance an existing effort. The project team selected four "learning sites" to receive technical assistance from national experts. In addition to receiving assistance, the sites would in turn inform project staff and other jurisdictions about elements of reentry for which they found solutions to common challenges. The lessons learned from that work and subsequent information-gathering efforts formed the foundation for this report.

The four law enforcement agencies selected as learning sites—the Las Vegas (Nevada) Metropolitan Police Department, Metropolitan (District of Columbia) Police Department, Muskegon County (Michigan) Sheriff's Department, and White Plains (New York) Police Department—each had reentry strategies that addressed key aspects of a successful reentry program. The project also benefitted from the work conducted on a previously published guide the Justice Center developed in partnership with the COPS Office and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) for law enforcement professionals and reentry partners. *Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy* was crafted to serve as a starting point for police officials to direct and assess progress on reentry.[1] That guide helped agencies identify areas of weakness or issues that created implementation challenges. The learning sites project was launched to take agencies to the next level by providing detailed recommendations for overcoming some of these commonly experienced obstacles to program implementation.

The rich information gleaned from practitioners' experiences at the learning sites (and beyond) is summarized in this report. The major challenges the agencies face can be grouped into three categories: collaboration, program terms, and data collection and analysis. In an effort to address these, this report provides information on the following recommendations, grounded in advice from law enforcement professionals and their partners on the front lines of reentry.

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[1] This report is available as a free download at: reentrypolicy.org/jc_publications/LE_toolkit_final; file and on the COPS website at: cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail. aspx?RID=461.

Collaboration: Coordination and Partnerships

1. Inventory potential partners to gain a thorough understanding of available resources, and be creative when exploring partnership opportunities.

2. Leverage existing relationships with local partners.

3. Engage leaders from reentry stakeholder organizations.

4. Make certain partners understand and can support the program's mission and goals.

5. Define "success" for program participants and communicate it clearly to partners.

6. Develop a mutual understanding with partners about what information to share.

7. Create easy ways to share information among partners.

8. Engage reentry partners in regular meetings.

9. Forge ties with community members and develop their ongoing support for the initiative.

10. Work with neighboring communities to implement programs with a similar mission.

Program Terms: Activities and Scope

1. Define the priority population using available information and problem-oriented policing strategies.

2. Understand the sentencing structures for the initiative's population.

3. Decide whether to make the program voluntary or mandatory.

4. Consider existing resources when defining the project's scope.

5. Assign dedicated resources for the initiative.

6. Coordinate pre-release activities with correctional facility staff to aid reentry efforts.

7. Ensure program includes both "carrot" and "stick" components.

Data Collection & Analysis: Process and Outcomes

1. Identify critical measures and collection strategies.

2. Consider which program processes and outcomes to measure, and who should conduct this evaluation.

3. Revisit and reevaluate program practices and revise as needed.

These recommendations are meant to assist law enforcement agencies in preparing for the return of the more than 700,000 men and women leaving prisons and the millions leaving the nation's jails each year. Policing professionals increasingly recognize that helping these individuals to become law-abiding, contributing members of families and neighborhoods is not a job for service providers alone. Engaging law enforcement officers in a collaborative reentry strategy that can stop the cycle of reoffending is simply smart policing. Building on existing community policing relationships, law enforcement agencies are uniquely positioned to make prisoner reentry a successful public safety initiative.

Acknowledgments

This report could not have been written without the leadership of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS), particularly from Director Bernard Melekian, former Director Carl Peed, Assistant Director Katherine McQuay, and Policy Analyst Tawana Waugh.

The law enforcement professionals involved in each of the site visits provided the content and "lessons learned" for this report. Any value this publication has for the field is due to their contributions. Their commitment to increasing public safety in their communities by improving outcomes for people returning from prisons and jails is tremendous. Their willingness to share their experiences and support the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center) project staff through a series of site visits and conference calls could not be more appreciated. Thanks are owed to all those who met and spoke with the project staff and who shared their expertise and insights (unfortunately too many to list here). Special thanks go to the representatives from each jurisdiction that helped coordinate their reentry initiatives:[2]

Las Vegas, Nevada

- Sheriff Douglas C. Gillespie, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- Retired Captain Dan Barry, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- Captain Chris Jones, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Muskegon, Michigan

- Sheriff Dean Roesler, Muskegon County Sheriff's Department
- Judy Kell, Grants Coordinator, Muskegon County Administration

Washington, D.C.

- Chief Cathy L. Lanier, Metropolitan Police Department
- Polly Hanson, Executive Director, Strategic Services Bureau, Metropolitan Police Department

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[2] All titles and agency affiliations for learning site representatives and advisory board members, listed here, reflect the positions they held at the time of their involvement in the project.

- Brenda Eich, Director, Research and Analysis Branch, Metropolitan Police Department

- Matthew Bromeland, Special Assistant, Executive Office of the Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department

- Daniel Hickson, Commander, Criminal Investigations Division, Metropolitan Police Department

White Plains, New York

- Former Commissioner Frank Straub, White Plains Police Department

- Assistant Chief Anne FitzSimmons, White Plains Police Department

- Sergeant James Spencer, White Plains Police Department

- Detective Lavalle Larrier, White Plains Police Department

The project advisory board members, listed alphabetically below, generously gave their time and expertise, especially during the learning site selection process. Their feedback helped project staff choose jurisdictions that could best address the needs of practitioners in the field.

- Sheriff Andrea Cabral, *Suffolk County (Massachusetts) Sheriff's Department*

- Former Tulsa (Arizona) Chief of Police Drew Diamond, *consultant for the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)*

- Stevyn Fogg, *Project Manager for Offender Reentry, International Association of Chiefs of Police*

- Justin Jones, *Director, Oklahoma Department of Corrections*

- Chief Stefan LoBuglio, *Pre-Release and Reentry Services, Montgomery County (Maryland) Department of Correction and Rehabilitation Pre-Release Center*

- Captain Felecia Norris, *Commander of the Training Bureau, Wichita (Kansas) Police Department*

- Lee Ragsdale, *Public Safety Initiative Coordinator, Knoxville (Tennessee) Police Department*

- Representative John Tholl, *New Hampshire House of Representatives*

Introduction

Law enforcement professionals across the nation face a common problem: significant numbers of people are returning from prisons and jails to their communities, often to neighborhoods already hit hard by crime, poverty, and fear of victimization. Approximately 720,000 people are released from state and federal prisons each year; while an estimated nine million are released from jails.[3] The reality is that the majority of people who leave correctional facilities fail to reintegrate with their communities successfully, but instead commit new crimes or violate the conditions of their release and are reincarcerated. More than two-thirds of state prisoners were rearrested within three years of their release, and almost half returned to prison for new crime or a technical violation of post-release supervision.[4]

Law enforcement officers—whether in small towns or large urban centers—repeatedly encounter and arrest the same individuals in their jurisdictions. Through community policing efforts, many law enforcement agencies develop partnerships with residents and community service agencies that can help address the needs of individuals who cycle through the criminal justice system.[5] These policing agencies may already have the foundation for conducting the kinds of interventions that could help reduce the commission of new crimes and hold offenders accountable. What many of these agencies require, however, is practical guidance for improving these efforts.

Recognizing that law enforcement professionals need this clear direction for addressing reentry issues, the CSG Justice Center, in partnership with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) developed a detailed guide and self-assessment toolkit for law enforcement professionals and reentry partners. *Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy* was crafted to serve as a starting point for police officials to direct and assess their progress on reentry and excerpts are included in this publication.[6]

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[3] The number of people released from state and federal prisons each year has been steadily increasing—from slightly more than 600,000 in 2000 to more than 720,000 in 2009, an increase of 20 percent. See William J. Sabol and Heather C. West, *Prisoners in 2009* (NCJ 231675) (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010), available at: bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p09.pdf. For statistics on releases from jail, see Allen J. Beck, "The Importance of Successful Reentry to Jail Population Growth," presentation at the Jail Reentry Roundtable of the Urban Institute, Washington June 27, 2006.

[4] Rearrest calculations are derived from a cohort of people released from 15 state prisons in 1994. P.A. Langan and D.J. Levin, *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994* (NCJ 193427) (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002).The return-to-prison estimate is based on cohorts of people released from prisons in 1999 and 2004 with return rates of 45.4 percent and 43.3 percent, respectively. Pew Center on the States, *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons* (Washington: The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2011).

[5] For a discussion of community policing activities that can be leveraged as part of a reentry initiative, see Nancy G. La Vigne, Amy L. Solomon, Karen A. Beckman, and Kelly Dedel, *Prisoner Reentry and Community Policing: Strategies for Enhancing Public Safety* (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2006).

[6] This report is available for free download at: reentrypolicy.org/jc_publications/LE_toolkit_final.

FROM THE TOOLKIT:
The Role of Law Enforcement in a Reentry Initiative

Law enforcement agencies are key partners in any reentry initiative. They can contribute through a wide range of activities, such as:

- Enhancing surveillance of recently released high-risk individuals;

- Providing incentives and supports for complying with conditions of release;

- Working with the community to prepare for people returning to vulnerable neighborhoods;

- Focusing law enforcement efforts and resources on particular places;

- Exchanging information and intelligence with public-safety partner agencies involved in reentry and community partners;

- Connecting returning individuals to supports and services.

Through these activities, law enforcement strengthens its relationships with community leaders and service providers while increasing information sharing between the law enforcement agency and other organizations. The resulting benefits accrue not only to the reentry initiative, but also to the entire law enforcement agency's crime prevention and public safety efforts—including bolstering the work of gang, domestic violence, and other departmental units.

To build on the guidance provided in the toolkit, the CSG Justice Center, in partnership with the COPS Office, implemented a follow-up project to focus on applying the information from the toolkit in four "learning sites." These sites represent a range of experience with reentry and are committed to moving their efforts forward. The solicitation for agencies to participate in this project was distributed nationally through criminal justice and reentry networks. Forty-one law enforcement agencies applied, and from this pool, project staff worked with the advisory board and the COPS Office to select four agencies:[7]

- Las Vegas (Nevada) Metropolitan Police Department
- Metropolitan (District of Columbia) Police Department
- Muskegon County (Michigan) Sheriff's Department
- White Plains (New York) Police Department

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[7] Project staff considered a number of criteria when selecting learning sites, including commitment to community policing, collaborative efforts involving local and state organizations, jurisdiction diversity, technical assistance needs that represent common challenges, dedication to data-driven reentry strategies, and leaders' commitment.

These agencies received on- and off-site assistance in implementing selected core strategies (such as enhancing information sharing and identifying a priority population for the reentry program). The CSG Justice Center project team had a unique opportunity to learn in detail how these agencies planned a reentry strategy or enhanced an existing effort. The lessons learned from that work and subsequent information-gathering efforts formed the foundation for this report. That rich information and practitioners' insights are meant to guide other professionals interested in addressing the kinds of challenges that many law enforcement agencies encounter when trying to implement reentry strategies.

About This Report

The goals of the learning site project were not to identify a gold standard or the most comprehensive law enforcement-driven reentry program in the nation, but rather to report how diverse agencies implemented strategies in key areas of reentry that many professionals on the front lines of this work face. Although the intended audience is primarily practitioners who have been charged with developing a reentry strategy for their agencies, it is also meant to have value for those individuals and agencies that partner with or hope to partner with law enforcement agencies to ensure that more individuals reenter communities safely and successfully.

There are several resources that summarize the role of law enforcement agencies in comprehensive reentry strategies.[8] The purpose of this report is to build on these efforts, and provide practical guidance to best meet the needs of individual jurisdictions. During the technical assistance process, three problem areas were identified: collaboration, program terms, and data collection and analysis.

For each of the three problem areas, there is a set of recommendations derived from an analysis of the learning sites' experiences and from other agencies doing this work. Each recommendation is followed by a narrative that includes relevant examples from law enforcement agencies. The program examples are primarily taken from the four learning sites (an overview of each site is included in Appendixes A through D), but are supplemented by other examples from learning site applications and the toolkit.

Lists of recommendations can make planning and implementing a reentry strategy sound like easy work. But any agency that has tried to initiate or improve an initiative can attest that the details of implementation still present significant challenges. This report is meant to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and ensure that successes—and not setbacks—are what are being replicated across the country.

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[8] For example, see: The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) reentry resources, supported by the COPS Office and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of the Justice such as the 2006 National Policy Summit on Offender Re-Entry, *Building an Offender Reentry Program: A Guide for Law Enforcement 2007*, and *Offender Reentry: A Police Perspective 2006*. IACP's reentry resources are available at: theiacp.org.

Section 1

Collaboration: Coordination and Partnerships

Coordinating multiple agencies is a common challenge for many comprehensive reentry initiatives, but is necessary for success. The diverse group of stakeholders needed for a collaborative reentry strategy will inevitably come to the table with different and sometimes conflicting missions and priorities. They may find themselves at odds when asked to share information or to prioritize activities. The recommendations that follow focus on how to improve collaboration—from choosing the right partners to maintaining strong relationships despite staff turnover or other agency changes.

> ### ➢ Recommendation 1:
> **Inventory potential partners to gain a thorough understanding of available resources, and be creative when exploring partnership opportunities.**

Before designing an initiative, it is important to know which providers or agencies in the jurisdiction have similar missions and what resources and services they could offer to potential program participants. These possible partners should be engaged at the outset. In some instances, this initial inventory may help coordinators determine the initiative's terms, priority population, and which service providers are committed to helping this population. Another outcome of identifying possible partners and service providers is that program coordinators will better understand existing service gaps and can identify other agencies in the community they might engage to help fill them.[9]

When getting started, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) recognized the need for community engagement to leverage existing opportunities. They gathered a wide range of possible partners to learn about current community efforts and resources. Prior to this initial meeting, many of the attendees were unfamiliar with one another's work, even though they served overlapping populations—namely people returning from prison or jail to the Las Vegas area. Not all agencies that participated in the initial meeting ultimately became involved, but this meeting served as a valuable learning opportunity for all. One of the greatest benefits was that program coordinators determined which services they could provide to the program participants through these new partnerships.

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[9] For a list of potential partner agencies, see: Council of State Governments Justice Center, *Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy* (New York: Council on State Governments Justice Center, 2008), 21.

When inviting agencies to participate, learning site personnel stressed the need to be creative and open-minded in thinking about who the community providers are and what the reentry population might need to be successful upon return. For example, coordinators for the White Plains Reentry Initiative reached out to staff from the public library and asked if they would be willing to assist program participants without Internet access to search for employment using the library computers and other resources. Although unconventional, this partnership has been very effective. The staff volunteered their time to the program because this work is consistent with the library's mission, resulting in a valuable service that did not require additional funding from the reentry initiative.

➢ ## Recommendation 2:
Leverage existing relationships with local partners.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to identifying reliable partners for a reentry strategy: law enforcement professionals should first consider those agencies that have proven to be supportive in the past. The Sheriff in Muskegon County actively participates in the county's Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC), which is tasked with reviewing and recommending changes to the criminal justice system to improve public safety and ensure fiscal accountability. The CJCC provided an easy and natural connection to representatives from other agencies that could support the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department's (MCSD) reentry efforts. In addition, MCSD has a long-standing relationship with the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC), both through the work on the CJCC and through other initiatives. Because of their history of strong collaboration, the MCSD and CMHC staff served as excellent committed partners on this project. Also through the CJCC and other interactions, MCSD has connected with the Chief of the Muskegon Police Department to support joint home visits and other reentry-related practices.

> "We first partnered with Community Mental Health as a result of a grant we received from the Michigan Department of Community Health. We continue to work together and collaborate, though, because it's just good business."
>
> **–Sheriff Dean Roesler** Muskegon County Sheriff's Department

In Las Vegas, the Homeless Liaison is a key civilian staff member of the LVMPD whose job responsibilities include developing, coordinating, and implementing homeless programs; providing information, referrals, and services to the homeless; acting as a liaison between the homeless population and department personnel; and facilitating alternatives to incarceration, including admission to a medical facility for psychiatric evaluation and follow up. Because of her unique role and ties to the community, the liaison was able to call on housing and community-based service providers with which she had previously developed strong working relationships. She put these skills and relationships to work for individuals reentering the community from prison or jail and without a place to live. In addition, because LVMPD has custodial

responsibilities, both the correctional staff and the reentry coordinators are under the same agency umbrella. Working with known entities allowed a quick boost to the program because partners already had the requisite trust and respect for one another. This core group can also facilitate reaching out to new partners and networks.

➢ **Recommendation 3:**
   Engage leaders from reentry stakeholder organizations.

Agency executives set the tone for staff and personnel. In order for any initiative to be effective, agency leaders must be invested in the mission of the program and pledge their support. This is true for any agency involved in a reentry initiative, regardless of whether the agency is the lead coordinator or a peripheral partner. When committing to a collaborative effort, strong leadership is indispensable.

Executives at the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in Washington, D.C., chose to develop a program on violent crime reduction, including those crimes committed by people returning to the District from correctional facilities in other cities and states. From the start of the planning process, this meant engaging neighboring law enforcement jurisdictions, including local- and state-level agencies in both Maryland and Virginia, as well as the U.S. Attorney's Office and Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia (CSOSA).[10] With so many agencies with different jurisdictions and missions, it was critical to get commitment and buy-in from the executives of the partner organizations.

In Cleveland, Ohio, it was the Mayor's Office that decided to make reentry a priority initiative. The Mayor's staff went to great lengths to engage a variety of different agencies and community members from the start. With funding from the George Gund Foundation and assistance from the Partnership for a Safer Cleveland, initiative leaders developed and coordinated a community-based strategic planning process. Members of several planning committees worked diligently over nine months to engage the larger community to identify the primary barriers to successful reentry and to develop a strategy for addressing them. Although not the lead agency, law enforcement played an instrumental role from the start.

The Cleveland experience underscored the critical role that local politicians and administrators can play in making or breaking a reentry effort. In many cities, law enforcement chief executives report directly to the city leaders. As a result, when a law enforcement agency spearheads a reentry strategy, its leaders should engage local government administrators at the outset. Law enforcement officials have found it best to emphasize that reentry can have a positive impact on public safety and reduce corrections costs. Program coordinators should also be prepared to present the reentry and recidivism statistics for their own jurisdictions to make a strong case.

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[10] CSOSA is a federal agency that provides supervision of adults on probation, parole, and supervised release in the District of Columbia. Because of Washington, D.C.'s unique situation of falling under federal control, federal agencies, such as CSOSA, partner with local and state agencies toward impacting the same overlapping population. More information is available at: csosa.gov.

➢ **Recommendation 4:**
   Make certain partners understand and can support the program's mission and goals.

The landscape of active partnerships is likely to shift over time. Partners that collaborated at the beginning of an initiative may need to withdraw later as a result of changes in resources, staff turnover, or shifts in an agency's mission or priorities. Other stakeholders that were unable to engage at the initial planning and/or implementation stages may be able to contribute if the priority population or types of needs shift, or if their funding situation changes. Program planners and coordinators should expect this, but remain clear about the current mission and goals of the initiative while leaving the door open for changing partnerships.[11]

The White Plains Reentry Initiative (WPRI) held its first meeting in December 2004. Throughout its existence, program coordinators have found that they have needed to revisit and revise the composition of the team of partner agencies to ensure program goals could be met. The reentry team routinely evaluates each partner's contribution to determine how well the services provided meet the needs of program participants. In some cases, the services may no longer meet the program's needs. In other cases, the agency may either not be able to provide or be interested in providing the services they originally promised. When appropriate, the team worked together to transition providers out of the network, while ensuring no lapses in service to program participants, and to identify new partners that better fit the program's needs. This review and assessment process was driven by WPRI and the police department coordinator's keen awareness that for clients to engage in the program, the partners had to be able to deliver on the promises they were making at the reentry strategy meetings taking place within correctional facilities (in-reach meetings) each month. Rather than risk the credibility of the program, the coordinators would exclude from the initiative's service provider network those partners that could not provide the services to which they had initially committed.

Early in the planning process, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) team learned how critical it can be to set clear program goals when engaging partners. Because the team was developing a completely new reentry initiative in their jurisdiction, it chose to start small and focus on a narrow priority population—one returning to the community from the LVMPD-managed Clark County Detention Center and with a specific need: housing. Although many stakeholders expressed initial interest in partnering with LVMPD, as the planning process evolved, several agencies chose not to participate for one of two reasons: 1) The agency's mission did not match the defined population (i.e. people with mental illnesses experiencing homelessness); 2) The agency would have needed to raise additional funding to participate in the

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[11] This is not to suggest that the specific goals of a program should remain static over time. In fact, program coordinators are encouraged to revisit and reevaluate program objectives in coordination with partner agencies on a regular basis. Over the life of the program, the demographics and needs of the reentry population may change as well as the availability of community resources. For a more detailed discussion, see: Section 3, Recommendation 3 on page 34.

program. The nonparticipation of these agencies, however, was not viewed as a misstep in any way. Because LVMPD engaged such a wide range of potential partner agencies at the start, program coordinators will be able to draw from these agencies' resources and reengage them in the initiative if priorities shift, new resources become available, or different services are needed.

➢ ## Recommendation 5:
Define "success" for program participants and communicate it clearly to partners.

"Success" can have different meanings among program partners. Whereas most law enforcement agencies would define a program's success in terms of reduced reoffense or recidivism rates, service providers and other reentry partner organizations may consider connection to treatment or other measures as indicators of success. Mental health treatment providers often define an individual's achievement in treatment as improved functioning. Other partners may focus exclusively on the attainment of housing or sustained employment as key measures of success for program participants. Program coordinators need to be clear about priorities from the start and identify data that will capture the measures of "success" associated with those priorities, and when possible include measures related to the goals of partner agencies.[12]

The White Plains reentry work was focused from the start on improving public safety. Success was defined by reducing arrests among program participants. To measure this, program coordinators decided to run criminal history checks on program participants every quarter. Not only do they check the White Plains Police Department arrest database, they also cross-check with state and national databases to ensure they capture the full impact of their participants' behavior.

"All of the partners in WPRI want the program participants to safely return to the community and become contributing members of society. We realize that it takes a range of resources to make that happen, and we all work together for the common goal of supporting all White Plains citizens to lead safe and productive lives."

-Assistant Chief
Anne FitzSimmons

➢ ## Recommendation 6:
Develop a mutual understanding with partners about what information to share.

Learning site representatives acknowledged that reentry program partners should determine what information to share, with whom, and how (see Recommendation 7 on privacy protocols). There is sometimes a tendency to provide a "data dump" in which information can be overwhelming to recipients in the way it is presented.

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[12] Collecting and analyzing data is discussed in more detail on page 31.

Law enforcement agencies in jurisdictions with large numbers of people returning from prisons and jails may be inundated by the information included on a complete list of returning individuals, resulting in the information going unused. To overcome this problem, learning site personnel suggested that law enforcement agencies should work with their corrections partners to develop a shared understanding of what information is most useful to their reentry efforts. For example, law enforcement may want only information released about individuals returning to a certain ZIP code or neighborhood, sentenced for a particular set of crimes, and/or determined to be at high risk of reoffending based on assessments done by corrections personnel.

The information that is shared should be directly relevant to the program's goals and target population. Eligibility requirements for the LVMPD reentry initiative restrict participation to people who were arrested in or are returning to a specific area, who are homeless, and who have a mental health disorder. Program coordinators do not use a complete list of everyone returning from the detention center to Las Vegas, but they do receive and benefit from the information provided by jail staff about individuals who have been deemed eligible to participate in the initiative based on those criteria.

In contrast to LVMPD's program, coordinators in White Plains opened participation to any individuals returning to the White Plains area from the county correctional facility. Once program participants are released into the community, the reentry partners use an online database to share information about these individuals between monthly meetings. Partner agencies with sensitive health information, which is protected by federal and state legislation,[13] agreed to note when they had contact with a program

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[13] Federal confidentiality laws, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), regulate the use and release of medical records and individually identifiable health data. Under HIPAA, patients must be informed as to how personal information regarding their mental health may be used and must provide permission for certain disclosures of their personal information. Similarly, individuals in substance abuse treatment are protected from disclosure of "patient-identifying" information without informed patient consent by federal rules on substance abuse patient records (42 CFR). Additional state regulations and professional ethical obligations—including a different set of regulations set by tribal governments—sometimes limit health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment

participant, but would not disclose diagnosis or treatment information. Creating clear rules for implementing a shared database allowed all partner agencies to take part in the effort without concern for breaking ethical and legal guidelines.

➢ **Recommendation 7:**
Create easy ways to share information among partners.

Although agencies concur that sharing information among partners is critical for effective reentry collaboration, how to implement a shared system remains a common challenge. For example, law enforcement officers and service providers may work different hours and different shifts. They often use different software and experience other technological barriers. Some misunderstand privacy mandates and others are simply not aware of what security procedures are needed. As always, few agencies have the financial resources and in-house expertise to create a specialized information-sharing portal or other mechanism for data exchanges.

The learning sites identified several solutions for overcoming these barriers. As mentioned in Recommendation 6, the coordinators of the White Plains initiative created a web-based tool to share information among partners at no cost. The White Plains Police Department personnel created a password-protected spreadsheet that each partner could access and update. Each program participant was listed in the spreadsheet, and service providers could track progress and provide updates. Although all partners were able to attend monthly face-to-face meetings, this database helped keep one another abreast of progress and changes during the interim periods.

The Muskegon County Sheriff's Department (MCSD) had an existing system to share inmate release information. MCSD staff compiles three lists daily: the booking list, the release list, and the current custody list. This system is automated to send these lists to designated contacts in Michigan's parole and probation departments, the district court, the circuit court, county community health service providers, and the county prosecutor's office. MCSD included a designated police agency contact to the list of recipients when that partnership was forged. This important information about who is being released and when allowed the sheriffs' department and the police agency to strengthen their coordinated reentry efforts.

In Las Vegas, the reentry coordinators, police, jail personnel, and the homeless liaison are all under the same agency umbrella—the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department—which facilitated information sharing among them in the City's reentry initiative. Information-sharing practices are easier to develop when the partners have the same leadership and are all governed by the same agency protocols, although there still may be challenges in sharing across different units or divisions. In Las Vegas, the

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providers' ability to share clinical information without consent. Some reentry programs will ask participants to sign disclosure agreements as part of the terms of participation and others simply do not share protected information and only release more general information. For more information on federal information-sharing laws, see: John Petrila and Hallie Fader-Towe, *Information Sharing in Criminal Justice-Mental Health Collaborations,* (New York: Council of State Governments Justice Center, October 2010), available at: consensusproject.org/jc_publications/info-sharing.

police department has one central database used by both patrol and custodial staff, and an officer's access depends on his or her duties. In addition to this shared database, the collaboration was further facilitated by the fact that the homeless liaison previously worked as the mental health supervisor at the Clark County Detention Center, where she had established strong working relationships with jail staff.

➢ Recommendation 8:
Engage reentry partners in regular meetings.

With cell phones, e-mail, texting, Internet message boards, and web-based video-conferencing and other communications tools, there is no shortage of ways to stay in touch with program partners. Yet for many agencies, coordinators have found that regularly scheduled face-to-face meetings are still the best way to maintain partnerships. Attendees can discuss and monitor ongoing program goals and objectives, which helps ensure sustained engagement. In-person meetings are particularly well suited for case management activities as well. Agency representatives can discuss what is or is not working for a participant's service plan and troubleshoot as a team. In addition, scheduled in-person meetings can serve as an accountability mechanism, by obliging partners to present routine progress updates. Partners' attendance (or absence) may also reflect their level of commitment to the program, and instigate outreach from others in the initiative if that dedication appears to be wavering.

Even reentry teams within a single agency found meetings useful. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department reentry team—reentry coordinators, jail personnel, and the homeless liaison—are all police department employees. Yet regular check-ins among the team members facilitated the regular exchange of information about the program's design and implementation progress. These meetings allowed stakeholders to update other project partners about their contributions to the program, and they were able to discuss as a team whether changes should be made to the program design.

Although the White Plains initiative had existed for several years, the coordinators started holding monthly case conferencing meetings as part of an enhancement program aimed at encouraging partners to discuss and solve individual problems. These meetings allowed partners to determine whether program participants were either getting duplicate services or not following through on their service plans. Alternative plans could then be designed to meet any changing needs or circumstances. Also, the continued involvement of partners who were regularly absent from the meetings could be reevaluated.

"Case conferencing has been critical to enhancing our reentry efforts. Meeting face-to-face with partners keeps everyone accountable, forcing everyone to come prepared to discuss their contributions with the team. It also allows us to connect the dots on participants, which has been crucial for some of the more complicated cases."

–Sergeant James Spencer White Plains Police Department

➤ Recommendation 9:
Forge ties with community members to develop ongoing support for the initiative.

Developing and maintaining community support for a reentry initiative is critical to its viability and long-term success. Developing community ties should be a priority in the planning process, and these ties need to be maintained throughout the initiative for it to be successful.

One way to engage the community in a meaningful way is through citizen academies. The Redlands (CA) Police Department holds several citizen information academies each year to educate the public about the department's efforts. Each academy class has a three-hour session on prisoner reentry taught by the police chief and the Police and Corrections Team (PACT), which includes a police officer and a parole agent. In addition, the Redlands Police Department holds a six-week Citizen's Reentry Academy on a semi-annual basis to educate the public about prisoner reentry strategies. The attendees interact with a panel of parolees and their family members to hear firsthand about the challenges prisoners face when reentering society.

Many agencies are also exploring ways to use social and new media in their work. Law enforcement agencies are increasingly using interactive web applications, Twitter, Facebook, and other networking sites to share success stories. Webinars and other online forums—even YouTube videos—can be used for educational purposes. These and other technologies can also be used to inform and engage the public about reentry programs. For example, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), one of MPD's partners in Washington, D.C., regularly contributes to programming on D.C. public radio and television shows, including segments on reentry and other justice-related topics.[14]

➤ Recommendation 10:
Work with neighboring communities to implement programs with a similar mission.

As law enforcement professionals know, there are no jurisdictional boundaries for criminal activities. Although a person may return from prison and reside in one municipality, he or she may work or frequent another nearby area and commit an offense there. Law enforcement agency representatives stressed the benefits of partnering with neighboring communities to develop reentry programs with similar missions to improve efforts regionally.

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[14] "CSOSA is committed to providing easy access to the news and information that emerges from our daily activities." More information about CSOSA's media activities is available at: csosa.gov/media_resources.aspx and media.csosa.gov.

Law enforcement and its partners should explore and engage in a wide variety of methods for proactively explaining to community members the value of the reentry initiative and the benefits of participating in it. Examples of community outreach mechanisms include the following:

Work with the media

- Write Op-Eds or meet with editorial board members about the public safety aspects of the reentry initiative and its successes
- Participate in interviews with local media
- Hold press conferences
- Print features about reentry efforts in neighborhood newsletters

Tap agency resources

- Post updates on the agency's web site
- Create a promotional video
- Print features about reentry efforts in agency newsletters
- Use agency cable-access television shows

Perform community outreach

- Cover reentry issues and seek feedback in community meetings
- Present to schools, neighborhood groups, business associations, and faith-based organizations, using talking points tailored to the interests and concerns of each group
- Have initiative participants share their success stories at community meetings and other events
- Include information about the reentry initiative in a citizens academy or develop a specific Reentry Citizens Academy

For example, the White Plains Police Department (WPPD) was the first to create a reentry program in partnership with the Westchester County Department of Correction (WCDOC). After observing some of the reentry partner and case management meetings, several other municipal police departments in the county have since contacted the WCDOC to expand on the White Plains experience. Representatives from the police departments in Mount Vernon, Yonkers, New Rochelle, and Peekskill have initiated similar reentry programs in their jurisdictions. The expansion of reentry law enforcement programs across jurisdictions with a common corrections partner promotes a clear and consistent message and approach for all individuals serving a sentence in the WCDOC who will be released in Westchester County.

Broadening the program can facilitate more efficient sharing of agency and community resources. There are also force multiplier effects when agency staff can cooperate on tracking and assisting individuals. These efforts often result from the success of a pilot program. There are distinct advantages to turning small wins into a larger, more coordinated endeavor. Lessons learned from partnering with a local social service provider on a specific target population in one district can lead to improvements in neighboring districts. Agencies that begin their initiative with a discrete geographic focus may consider expanding these efforts to incorporate other catchment zones. Whether expansion efforts happen within a city or the larger region, careful expansion can infuse new enthusiasm and resources into an effort and have a positive impact on sustainability.

Section 2

Program Terms: Activities and Scope

Once partner agencies are identified and have committed to participating in the reentry effort, coordinators must determine the terms of the initiative—that is, what to do and for whom. There is no single path to sorting out these details. Some agencies identify a priority population first, and then match services and terms accordingly, whereas other agencies determine what services are available, and then decide what population would most benefit. Feedback from the law enforcement learning sites and other policing agencies that shared their reentry experiences as well as current research informed the following recommendations:

> ➢ **Recommendation 1:**
> **Define the priority population using available information and problem-oriented policing strategies.**

Reentry program planners, under ideal circumstances, would conduct a thorough, data-driven analysis to identify a local target population. Methods can range from a simple review of crime data to determine trends (such as which locations, types of offenses, and types of offenders are most common) to a complex forecast analysis.[15] The effort invested in the target population could not be more important; the results can shape the overall reentry strategy, determine which partners to involve, influence which measures to use in evaluating success, and many other critical elements of an initiative. Although many agencies lack the resources for a sophisticated and detailed analysis, it is important to be thoughtful when selecting a priority population regardless of available research staff and statistical analytic capabilities.[16]

The Muskegon County's Sheriff's Department did have the capacity to use trend data on the jail population to guide program development. The sheriff's team was able to draw from jail inmate statistics to help determine their program's priority population. The Muskegon County Jail has been operating at nearly twice its intended capacity. According to jail data, much of this overcrowding is due to an influx of people who have not been previously incarcerated and are serving short sentences. The reentry

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[15] Forecasting future events can be completed either by using statistical tools to "fit" historical data and extrapolate forward or by developing a mathematical model that takes into account causal mechanisms. Both require a sophisticated understanding of statistics and the substantive issues (e.g., crime trends). Richard Berk and Peter Rossi write: "For the kinds of projections developed from multiple-equation computer models, examining the assumptions may require the skills of an advanced programmer, several scientists with the relevant substantive knowledge, and a sophisticated statistician. Beyond the substantive assumptions, there are often a host of mathematical and algorithmic issues…" Richard A. Berk and Peter H. Rossi. *Thinking about Program Evaluation 2* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999), 51.

[16] Law enforcement agencies should consider consulting with partners at correction facilities, mental health service providers, or other agencies that may already have collected data that could be useful in determining a priority population.

team determined that this population should be the focus of their effort. By addressing this group of individuals, the sheriff's department hopes to improve public safety and increase the likelihood of participants' success, while also reducing the jail population.

The program planners in Las Vegas used arrest and release data to determine how their reentry initiative could make a meaningful impact. Recognizing that a large percentage of the people arrested in the city were homeless and then returning to a single district, the program coordinators decided to add geographic boundaries to focus their efforts. To be eligible to participate in their reentry initiative, an individual must be arrested in or returning to specified police districts. This allowed the police department to prioritize those people who were continuously cycling through the system, at considerable costs to taxpayers without positive outcomes for the individual or the community.

Problem-oriented policing has become standard practice in agencies across the country. According to Professor Herman Goldstein, who first articulated the concept and term:

> [P]roblem-oriented policing requires identifying [community] problems in more precise terms, researching each problem, documenting the nature of the current police response, assessing its adequacy and the adequacy of existing authority and resources, engaging in a broad exploration of alternatives to present responses, weighing the merits of these alternatives, and choosing from among them.[17]

The Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) identified violent crime as a priority concern and chose to address this problem with a multi-prong

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FROM THE TOOLKIT:
Why Focus on a Subgroup?

Men and women leaving prison and jail have complex needs that can far exceed available services—both in the correctional facility and in the communities to which they return. For example, one study in California found significant gaps between the needs of parolees and available services: only 200 shelter beds were available for more than 10,000 homeless parolees, four mental health clinics for 18,000 psychiatric cases, and 750 treatment beds for 85,000 released individuals with substance abuse problems.[18] To ensure the best use of agency resources and tax dollars, law enforcement and its partners should identify where its resources can be allocated most effectively.

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[17] Herman Goldstein, "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach," *Crime and Delinquency* 25 (1979): 236–58.

[18] Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon, and Michele Waul, From Prison to Home: *The Dimensions and Consequences of Prisoner Reentry* (Washington: Urban Institute, 2001).

approach. After researching the problem and documenting the nature of the current police response, agency leaders determined GunStat—a collaborative effort among the police department, prosecutors, and court officials—would focus on those individuals with a history of violent offenses as its priority population. The criteria included multiple offenses (five or more)—of which some were the most serious violent crimes (such as robbery, shootings, homicide, and serious assaults)—at least one firearms charge, positive drug test(s), and/or several violations of community monitoring. A review of the data on violent crime in the City indicated that these criteria were strong indicators of "high impact" criminal offenders. GunStat was one of many elements of MPD's efforts to reduce violent crime in the city. Although it does not focus exclusively on people reentering the community, it does prioritize a population involving people who were known to corrections and court staff. (Additional components of MPD's efforts, including those more closely related to reentry, are described at later points throughout the document as well as in the MPD Snapshot in appendix C.)

> **Recommendation 2:**
> **Understand the sentencing structures for the initiative's priority population.**

Sentencing patterns vary widely among states.[19] Whereas some state prison systems release the majority of people to parole supervision, others require offenders to serve the complete sentence in a correctional facility. Many jurisdictions commonly use split sentencing models, resulting in part of the sentence served in custody and part under community supervision. Whether or not reentry program participants will be under criminal justice supervision in the community is a key consideration in understanding transition planning. When a person is under corrections supervision upon release, reentry program coordinators may be able to negotiate mandatory participation, but this differs from state to state and even within states.

In White Plains, very few reentry participants are under any sort of supervision because they have completed their sentence while at the WCDOC. This means that the programs' success largely hinges on the individuals' willingness to participate after release. Without probation or parole authority over these individuals, there is no recourse if they choose to ignore the services offered. Transition planning in this case depends on the cooperation and support of the correctional facility.

"The key to reducing violent crime is to get all of the partner agencies together to focus on the most violent, repeat offenders."

–Chief Cathy Lanier
Metropolitan Police Department

"Most of our guys, about 90 percent, are low-level drug offenders, and they are typically released after serving their maximum sentence in the facility. Because of this, we have to be mindful of how we engage them as law enforcement, and how we connect them to community service providers."

–Det. Lavalle Larrier
White Plains Police Department

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[19] National Center for State Courts, *Assessing Consistency and Fairness in Sentencing: A Comparative Study in Three States* (Washington: The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2008).

A key aspect of the initiative in Washington, D.C., was to ensure its reentry focus on violent crime complemented the work of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), which supervises adults on probation, parole, and supervised release in the District. As a result of this critical partnership, police department personnel were well aware of the supervision status and sentencing structure for the initiative's participants.

Sentencing patterns may also impact the release dates and any transition planning that the facility provides. If parole is a common option or if inmates have the opportunity to earn good time credits, an early release date may be set, or the date may change. This should be taken into account when scheduling reentry strategies within correctional facilities (in-reach) and when planning community-based orientation meetings. For this reason, among others, many reentry program coordinators try to plan in-reach activities early in an individual's sentence.

➢ **Recommendation 3:**
  **Decide whether to make the program voluntary
  or mandatory.**

The decision of whether or not reentry program participation is mandated for eligible individuals will vary from one jurisdiction to another, and will be dictated by the program model, the goals and objectives of the initiative, the population being served, whether the individual is subject to community supervision, and other factors. Often, participant involvement can be either voluntary or mandatory, depending on the preferences of the partners and the program design. Each has its advantages. Voluntary participation may be the best option when a reentry effort is focused primarily on treatment or services that are most effective when accompanied by an individual's commitment to change. Moreover, if services in the community are limited, they may be prioritized to those people who voluntarily engage. For example, participation in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's initiative is completely voluntary.

Conversely, if a reentry program's main emphasis is on addressing individuals at a high risk of reoffending, then mandatory participation in some program components may be most effective. Some reentry initiatives—such as in Boston—require mandatory attendance at the in-reach panel meeting for those individuals who meet the program criteria. But additional support and services are voluntary on their return to the community. This allows program coordinators to make it clear that law enforcement knows of their return to the community and that the resources to support a law-abiding, successful lifestyle are available.

The White Plains initiative has adopted the same approach as Boston, a hybrid of mandatory and voluntary components, requiring individuals targeted for the program to attend the panel meeting while they are still in the correctional facility, but making services upon release voluntary. When the initiative started, attendance at the in-reach

panel was voluntary, but as the program demonstrated its impact and success, program coordinators decided to mandate that everyone returning to the White Plains area from the WCDOC attend one of the panels before release.

In both Boston and White Plains, most of the participants are released without any community corrections supervision, such as probation or parole, so program coordinators do not have leverage to mandate involvement. Both programs are able to be effective using this hybrid model because when engagement is no longer mandatory, the opportunities provided upon release incentivize participants to stay involved. When an individual is ready for change, he will engage and stay motivated by the services and resources afforded to him.

When eligible participants are identified and first engaged may also impact whether involvement is mandatory. While a person is incarcerated, jail or prison officials may have the authority to mandate program involvement within the facility. If someone is identified as a participant in a specialized court program, such as a reentry court, he or she may also be mandated to participate based on judicial orders. [20]

➢ ## Recommendation 4:
Consider existing resources when defining the project's scope.

Many law enforcement agencies are tasked with implementing a reentry strategy without additional funding or resources. Therefore, it may be necessary for program coordinators to identify existing resources and define the project's scope based on those parameters. Increased coordination and prioritization of existing services may be sufficient to operate the program successfully.

When planning the White Plains Reentry Initiative, program coordinators reviewed the number of offenders returning to the area each month; this turned out to be one of the key decision points in determining the eligibility criteria for the initiative. Coordinators considered the average number of monthly releases to White Plains, bearing in mind the City's demographics—a city with a population of approximately 60,000—and the context of the initiative's available resources. With this information, the program team determined that the target population could be very inclusive; every person serving time in WCDOC with a known connection to the White Plains area could attend the initial in-reach efforts. Setting a wide scope of participation was feasible with the available resources. And because the program has existed for more than five years, coordinators have been able to build on past successes to justify continued broad engagement.

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[20] According to the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, a reentry court "is a court that manages the return to the community of individuals being released from prison, using the authority of the court to apply graduated sanctions and positive reinforcement and to marshal resources to support the prisoner's reintegration, much as drug courts do, to promote positive behavior by the returning prisoner. The expectation is that the focus on reentry issues in the courts will help reduce the recidivism rate of returning prisoners and will encourage a broad-based coalition to support the successful reintegration of those offenders." Office of Justice Programs, *Reentry Courts: Managing the Transition from Prison to Community* (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, 1999), 2, available at: ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojp/sl000389.pdf.

White Plains' reentry coordinators manage this caseload without a budget dedicated to reentry activities. Partners have agreed to participate in monthly reentry meetings at the WCDOC and monthly case conferencing meetings. Because of their commitment to the reentry initiative, service provider agencies have chosen to prioritize this particular population within their mission to serve the community.

In contrast to White Plains, Las Vegas limited its priority population based on specific eligibility criteria. LVMPD chose to start small with a program that could be run with existing resources. When the reentry coordinators were inventorying resources and analyzing the problems in their community, they concluded that housing resources could be better utilized to assist the large numbers of individuals coming out of prisons and jails without stable living situations. Knowing that research has demonstrated that housing is critical to successful reintegration into the community and to maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle, the coordinators made it the focus of their reentry initiative. The homeless liaison—a civilian employee who had cultivated strong relationships with local housing providers and homeless advocates throughout the City—offered to support the LVMPD reentry initiative by partnering with providers to prioritize housing placements for program participants.

> "We were able to start a new reentry initiative without any additional funding by tapping into existing resources within the department."
>
> **–Captain Chris Jones**
> Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

➢ **Recommendation 5:**
   Assign dedicated resources for the initiative.

From the start of the planning process, there is a constant challenge to identify needed resources and develop strategies for securing them. As demonstrated by the examples in this guide, "securing resources" does not necessarily refer to finding new dollars to support an effort but rather reengineering existing resources to ensure a program's sustainability. Necessary resources may range from half of a community policing officer's time, to allocation of a patrol car for officers conducting joint home visits, to technical assistance in tailoring a database program or other information-sharing mechanism.[21]

Staffing: As discussed in Recommendation 1, leadership buy-in is critical to the success of a reentry initiative. Agency executives can ensure that a staff member (or a team of agency personnel) will accept ownership of the program's operation. Any staff member whose position entails forging and maintaining cross-agency

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[21] Grants may not be required in order to initiate and/or sustain a reentry effort, but the federal government has recognized this as a national issue, illustrated through the authorization of the Second Chance Act. See the relevant sidebar on page 24 for more information.

relationships is often a good fit, but not all agencies approach staffing in a uniform way. It is important that each agency involved in the reentry effort assigns a representative who is committed to reentry and has the desired skill set and authority to coordinate the initiative. Agency leaders should consider that finding the right *person* to lead the initiative may be more important than matching the initiative to the correct *unit* within the department. This is especially true when planning and first implementing an effort because this is often the most difficult and time-consuming part.

The reentry program in Las Vegas, spearheaded by a lieutenant in the training division, drew from personnel throughout the department. Although the training division may not be the unit most suited to coordinating a reentry effort, the lieutenant was dedicated to the issue and had the experience and expertise to take the lead. The homeless liaison participated in all the planning and coordinating efforts, and assumed a leadership role in maintaining the initiative's focus on housing.

Once a program is up and running, the agency leaders should work to embed the reentry work within a specified unit or division. The unit or division personnel should be given clear written protocols to carry out the initiative's tasks. There must also be a clear succession plan if the lead representative for the agency is unavailable for long periods or leaves the position. This ensures that staff turnover or absences will not disrupt the initiative because there will be a supportive agency culture and framework to continue the work.

In many jurisdictions, reentry efforts are integrated into the community policing unit. In White Plains, for example, the detective that coordinates the reentry program is part of the Community Service Unit, which is in the department's Support Services Division. Because reentry is an extension of community policing activities, this is a clear fit. The reentry activities closely align with those already occurring in this unit, and no matter which staff member leads the initiative, the remaining personnel will have the necessary knowledge to support the effort.

> "Sometimes, there's a person in the department who just stands out for their 'go for it' attitude. These are the people who, as a department executive, you want to tap to take the lead in new initiatives because you know they will put in 110 percent of their energy and passion. It doesn't matter if the person is in patrol or a specialized unit. What matters is the individual drive to make things happen."
>
> **–Assistant Chief Anne FitzSimmons**
> White Plains Police Department

Agency leaders may need to be creative when thinking about where to "house" the initiative, particularly if the community policing function is decentralized or the unit is unable to perform the work; units that regularly communicate with outside agencies would be prime candidates. For the Metropolitan Police Department's initiative, department executives tapped the Director of the Criminal Intelligence Branch, Homeland Security Bureau, to coordinate the regional violence prevention efforts. Given the frequency with which the Criminal Intelligence Branch already communicated with other agencies in the area, this was a natural fit.

Funding: Although new funding is not always necessary or required to support a new or expanding reentry initiative, the federal government has recently demonstrated that this is a national priority by authorizing funds to support local and state reentry initiatives through the Second Chance Act. Coordinators should also consider any local and state resources available to support these efforts. Muskegon County has the benefit of being a selected site for the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI), which is a statewide strategic approach to create safer neighborhoods and better citizens by improving the likelihood of individuals' successful reentry from prison and jail.[22] This overlap in resources allowed the sheriff and his team to leverage state funding to address the shared goal of reducing crime.

FROM THE TOOLKIT:
Second Chance Act

Signed into law on April 9, 2008, the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199) was designed to improve outcomes for people returning to communities from prisons and jails. This inaugural legislation authorizes federal grants to government agencies and nonprofit organizations to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victim support, and other services that can help reduce recidivism.

Since 2009, Second Chance Act grants have been awarded in the following categories: Recidivism Reduction; Smart Probation; Adult Demonstration–Planning; Adult Demonstration–Implementation; Juvenile Demonstration–Planning; Juvenile Demonstration–Implementation; Family-Based Substance Abuse Treatment; Technology Career Training Demonstration; Co-Occurring Disorder Treatment; Reentry Court; Adult Mentoring, including both general adult mentoring as well as programs focused specifically on parenting and family reunification; and Juvenile Mentoring.

To learn more about the Second Chance Act, see: nationalreentryresourcecenter. org/about/second-chance-act.

In-kind contributions from the law enforcement agency are as important, if not more so, than grants and other outside resources. Initiative partners should try to identify ways to support the effort from within their operating budget to ensure sustainability. Even grant funding is limited in its scope and duration, so all involved agencies need to find ways to sustain the effort long term. Allocating staff time and other in-house

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[22] To learn more about the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative, visit: michpri.com.

resources reflects a steadfast commitment to the initiative and encourages personnel to have a stake in its success.

Agency leaders are adept at cost shifting or re-allocating funds. For example, in Redlands, California, the police chief assigned an officer to serve as a business liaison and homeless liaison officer to coordinate work with Police and Corrections Team (PACT, discussed on page 13) and the drug court personnel. This re-assignment was instrumental in sustaining these collaborative efforts.

Program coordinators should think broadly and imaginatively about sources for supporting everyday needs. For example, White Plains Reentry Initiative coordinators indicated that a major challenge was staying in contact with program participants who did not have cell phones. They decided to explore opportunities for grant funding that would allow them to obtain low-cost, disposable cell phones to provide to participants.

FROM THE TOOLKIT:

To the extent possible, the criminal justice agencies leading the initiative, including law enforcement, should try to cover their own staff salaries within their existing budgets. Partners should consider sharing certain resources, such as an administrative staff person, or pooling resources toward a collective end (such as renting a common space for storing and securing confidential records).

➢ ## Recommendation 6:
Coordinate pre-release activities with correctional facility staff to aid reentry efforts.

"Reentry" is not synonymous with "release;" successful reentry doesn't just happen, but requires careful planning and integrated support services. Program coordinators must engage correctional facility staff at the start of the planning process for a reentry initiative. Although there are many ways corrections staff can contribute to a community-based program, two common contributions that help law enforcement and their partners overcome key challenges are: 1) coordinating in-reach meetings for program partners to get started while individuals are still in prison or jail and 2) sharing information on release dates, program participation, anticipated living situations, and other essential reentry issues.

In-reach meetings: In some instances, it might be appropriate for the law enforcement agency to coordinate or participate in meetings at the correctional facility to begin relationships with people returning to the community before they are released so that it can continue seamlessly upon their return. For the White Plains Reentry Initiative, in-reach meetings are a key component of their program. Each month, reentry team members meet with people who are scheduled to return to the White Plains area in the next 30 to 60 days. Corrections staff members facilitate these meetings in several ways. First, they identify eligible candidates for the reentry program and invite them to the meetings. The complete list of invited inmates is provided to the reentry team. Second, they provide reentry team members access to the facility, clearing them to enter and providing them a space to meet with eligible participants. The trust and strong communication between law enforcement and corrections staff has to be cultivated from the start of the program, and is crucial to its success.

LVMPD has both patrol and custodial responsibilities, which is similar to many sheriffs' departments throughout the country. This provided an easy nexus between staff at Clark County Detention Center (CCDC) and the reentry planning team. When the reentry team decided to prioritize people who were homeless, they coordinated directly with the booking staff at CCDC to add a question on the intake forms that captured whether stable housing would be an issue. Because the agency leadership was the same, they were able to avoid a separate approval process at the jail.

Information sharing: Law enforcement agencies should work to develop strong relationships with their local and/or state correctional departments so that information about a person's release is shared in advance, which does not happen in many agencies across the country.[23] In areas where most people are returning from correctional facilities outside the jurisdiction, law enforcement agencies should consider other ways to share information with the corrections department to plan for people's transition.

As mentioned earlier, one common way of addressing the need to know who is returning to the community is for local law enforcement agencies in the reentry initiative to request a weekly release list from the correctional facility, which provides information about who will be discharged in the upcoming week. In some jurisdictions, such as Muskegon County, the Sheriff's Deputy at the county jail emails the discharge list on a weekly basis to local law enforcement in the area.[24] This allows the police departments to identify high-impact players with whom they are familiar, and create strategies to respond to the person's return—such as a home visit or an invitation to an orientation meeting—that can increase public safety and support the

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[23] Many jurisdictions have mandated victim notification practices when a person convicted of a violent offense is scheduled to be released. These practices can be instructive when expanding notification policies to include those between law enforcement in receiving communities and corrections departments.

[24] This exchange of information does not include any HIPPA-protected information; it is simply a complete list of people who are returning back to the jurisdiction.

individual's need for services. In jurisdictions such as Westchester County, the jail staff reviews the roster and pre-screens those people who have ties to the White Plains area, and then emails the abbreviated list to the White Plains Police Department.

> ### ➢ Recommendation 7:
> **Ensure that programmatic components have both "carrots" and "sticks."**

Law enforcement agencies can serve a variety of roles in a comprehensive reentry strategy, including participating in home visits to provide support and engaging in enhanced supervision strategies to increase public safety. In order for a reentry initiative to be effective, programmatic components must include both a "carrot" (a benefit for participation) and a "stick" (certain punishment for non-compliance).

"Home visits," "enhanced supervision," and "focused deterrence" are all commonly used phrases to describe program activities, and more than one of these activities may be included in a comprehensive reentry program. Both "home visits" and "enhanced supervision" efforts can serve different purposes. In some programs, these activities may be used as a "stick," as when law enforcement officers partner with community corrections agents to visit high-risk offenders as part of curfew checks to encourage accountability.[25] In other cases, they may be intended as a "carrot" by using a home visit to connect the individual to a community-based service provider or to provide encouragement for positive behaviors. "Enhanced supervision" might involve the coordination of service providers to hold a program participant accountable.

The Muskegon County Sheriff's Department had an existing relationship with the parole agency. Deputies partnered with parole agents to conduct "Nighthawk" visits to the homes of high-risk parolees.[26] As part of their enhanced commitment to reentry, the sheriff's department plans on applying this tactic to lower-risk offenders for a different purpose. Leaders hope to have the Muskegon Police Department conduct home visits to people recently released from the county jail who are first- or second-time offenders. Although still in the planning stages at this writing, the Sheriff hopes that by engaging these lower-level offenders at their release and providing them with information about community-based service providers, they may have a greater likelihood of being successful in the community. This bifurcated plan—separate home visit strategies for high-risk parolees and first- or second-time offenders—illustrates the range of roles that law enforcement can take depending on the initiative's goals.

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[25] Warrantless searches conducted jointly by police officers and probation or parole agents are a complicated matter, but often figure into the "stick" part of the enhanced supervision equation. Partners should discuss this tactic and come to an agreement about if and how to incorporate it into their larger reentry effort. For a more detailed description of the issue, see: Council on State Governments Justice Center, *Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy* (New York: Council on State Governments Justice Center, 2008), 92, available at: reentrypolicy.org/jc_publications/LE_toolkit_final.

[26] This program was pioneered by the Boston Police Department (BPD) and the Dorchester District Court Probation Department in the 1990s. BPD's Operation Night Light paired police officers with probation officers to conduct accountability visits to the homes of high-risk probationers. Since then, this model has been adopted in many other jurisdictions throughout the country.

In White Plains, the majority of people leaving prison have completed their sentence while incarcerated and are not under community corrections supervision upon their release. Without this supervisory component, reentry coordinators redefined "enhanced supervision" as a strong network of service providers engaging program participants to hold them accountable and encourage their success. By holding monthly case conferencing meetings, law enforcement and the service providers are able to strategize on how to best influence individual participants. As a result of the close partnerships among agencies, participants learned quickly that they could rely on service providers to hold them accountable for following through on referrals for job interviews, alternative education classes, and other support services, which were part of the reentry effort.

The Metropolitan Police Department (DC) incorporated two types of visits as part of their violence prevention reentry efforts. MPD officers partnered with CSOSA agents to conduct "accountability visits" to people under supervision who were identified as "high risk" by the two agencies.[27] Accountability visits are part of the supervision practices that CSOSA coordinates for their clients, and the person under supervision is required to comply. In contrast to accountability visits, "home visits" are conducted by MPD officers alone—independent of CSOSA—and for these types of visits, the individual has a choice whether to meet with the officers. Whereas accountability visits are enforcement related, home visits provide the opportunity for law enforcement to engage people in a positive, non-punitive way. The distinction between these two types of visits is important, and coordination between the agencies, defining their respective roles as it relates to the type of visit (accountability versus home visits), is critical for success. This type of transparency fosters trust among partners.

"Accountability tours are visits to the homes of high-risk offenders conducted jointly by a Community Supervision Officer and a Metropolitan Police Department Officer. Accountability tours can be announced or unannounced and serve to ensure that offenders are at home, working or otherwise engaged in appropriate activity. They also heighten the awareness of a law enforcement presence in the community among offenders and citizens. Accountability tours allow CSOs to collect valuable information and in some cases, MPD officers have seized weapons and drugs and made arrests."

–Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)

(For more information, see: csosa.gov/supervision/accountability/office_field_contacts.aspx.)

Regardless of whether the program coordinators implement these practices to serve as carrots, sticks, or some combination of the two, they should be clear with partner agencies and program participants about their purpose.

"Focused deterrence," as opposed to home visits and enhanced supervision, is only applied to the "stick " part of the equation. According to a recent report published by the Urban Institute:

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[27] For more information about CSOSA's offender accountability efforts, see: csosa.gov/supervision/accountability.aspx.

Focused deterrence is a crime control strategy that targets specific individuals and seeks to modify behavior by delivering sanctions for criminal activity or violations of supervision conditions with swiftness, certainty, and severity…The strategy requires a significant amount of resources to focus on the problem individuals, and it requires other agencies to become involved in the effort.[28]

MPD's GunStat initiative is a clear example of focused deterrence in practice as they coordinate with partner agencies to identify a short list of high-risk offenders in the community and collaborate to send this group a clear message from the enforcement community to forgo criminal behavior. Although the effectiveness of GunStat has not yet been quantitatively examined, research has shown that similar programs emphasizing "focused deterrence" are effective at reducing criminal behavior among the priority population.[29]

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[28] Jesse Jannetta and Pamela Lachman, *Promoting Partnerships between Police and Community Supervision Agencies: How Coordination Can Reduce Crime and Improve Public Safety* (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing, 2011).

[29] See, for example, Anthony A. Braga, David M. Kennedy, Elin J. Waring, and Anne M. Piehl, "Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 38 (2001): 195–226; and Angela Hawken and Mark Kleiman, *Managing Drug Involved Probationers with Swift and Certain Sanctions: Evaluating Hawaii's HOPE* (NCJ 229023) (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2009).

Section 3

Data Collection and Analysis: Process and Outcomes

Data collection is a key element in any reentry effort but is often an afterthought. Many program planners focus on implementing the initiative and think data collection can be delayed or integrated later. However delaying data collection only makes more difficult the process of gathering and analyzing the information they need to shape and assess the initiative. Data collection should be the starting point in trying to identify the priority crime and/or population for the reentry effort. Most agencies have information on what crimes are being committed, by what type of offender, in which areas, and against what kinds of victims. The level of detail, ease of access to the information, and the sophistication and expertise for analysis may differ, but all agencies should be able to perform basic analyses to guide and evaluate their efforts.

Planners should identify data elements and incorporate their collection early in the program design for two pivotal reasons: First, being thoughtful about data forces coordinators to develop program components, goals, and objectives that are responsive to the essential questions: What is the specific problem we trying to address, who is involved, and how are we going to address it? Second, program coordinators need to begin data collection when they first engage a potential client. If they do not track participants' involvement from the beginning, they cannot establish a baseline against which progress can be measured. If coordinators fail to identify measures that reflect program success (for example, rates of reoffending or conditions of release violations, housing placements, engagement in treatment services, steady employment, or child support payments), they will be unable to demonstrate their progress and the need to sustain the program. The recommendations that follow reflect learning site participants' experience and other practitioners' expertise on data issues related to reentry programs.

➤ **Recommendation 1:**
   Identify critical data measures and collection strategies.

It is easy to become overwhelmed with collecting all possible program measures. With limited resources and staffing, excessive data collection can be frustrating and inefficient when it exceeds an agency's capacity to analyze it and apply the findings. For some initiatives, data that are already captured through existing reporting processes may be sufficient. In other instances, it may be necessary to add questions to data collection instruments or fields to existing databases.

Critical data to collect include information that relates directly back to the goals and objectives of the project. If a program goal is to decrease the prison population, reincarceration will be an important measure of success. If the program is mainly focused on improving public safety, arrests for a new offense—as opposed to technical violations of terms of probation or parole—may be an appropriate measure. If the program is meant to reduce the number of individuals with mental illnesses in jails, then the numbers of participants who were successfully referred to behavioral health treatment and their arrest data may be essential measures.

Decreasing recidivism is a typical goal for reentry programs, but coordinators will need to be thoughtful in deciding how to define recidivism and then identify what information to collect that relates to that definition. The most common measures for recidivism include rearrest and reconviction. Others may include arrest for a certain type of offense (e.g., sexually based offenses), reincarceration, or self-reported offenses. How broadly or narrowly "recidivism rate" is defined will likely be reflected in the overall rates and should be clearly communicated in all findings.

The District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police Department has a strong research division that was already engaged in a variety of projects and other initiative analyses. Because of the existing demands on the research staff, program coordinators were determined not to overburden them by adding a lengthy list of additional data measures to collect and analyze. Instead, they planned to focus on a few select measures that program coordinators collected themselves.

Many agencies, facing the same challenges of already overstretched research units or little in-house capacity, have found it worthwhile to enlist the input of consultants or academic partners when getting started, for guidance on effective data collection strategies. For some departments, especially smaller agencies without research staff or the capacity to hire consultants, it may be helpful for program coordinators to talk with their counterparts in other law enforcement agencies with reentry initiatives and then tailor the approaches to their goals. Even a simple spreadsheet to track just a handful of measures that are most critical to the program (e.g., frequency of contact with participants and rearrests) will be critical to understanding its successes and failures.[30]

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[30] Existing research can inform the selection of appropriate measures. Anthony A. Braga, Anne M. Piehl, and David Hureau, "Controlling Violent Offenders Released to the Community: An Evaluation of the Boston Reentry Initiative," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 46(4) (2009), 411–36; Brenda J. Bond and Jody Hoffer Gittell, "Cross-agency Coordination of Offender Reentry: Testing Collaboration Outcomes," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38 (2010): 118–129.

➢ Recommendation 2:
Consider which program processes and outcomes to measure and who should do this evaluation.

Data collection and analysis should take into account both process and outcome measures. Evaluating a program's processes allows coordinators to assess whether the proposed activities are being carried out (for example, how many in-reach meetings were held, how many home visits were conducted, how many referrals were made to service providers, how many people in prison or jail were screened for the program, etc.). This information helps planners and coordinators revise the initiative's reach and day-to-day program functioning.

Outcome measures, in contrast, help capture whether the reentry strategy appears to be having an impact and whether it is achieving its goals. Program staff and funders want to know if specific efforts within the strategy are effective in changing participants' behaviors. It is critical that the evaluation determine whether the activities are having the intended outcome to assess true advances and secure funding and program support over time. In some instances, outputs from participants (e.g., how many have adhered to conditions of release and not been arrested, how many hold steady jobs or maintain stable housing, and how many have stayed engaged in substance abuse disorder treatment) serve as measures that demonstrate successes.

Collecting and analyzing information on both process and outcome measures are equally important. Process measures may be easier to collect and report because they focus on activities that the initiative's partners largely control. Outcome measures, on the other hand, focus on the clients' behaviors, attitudes, and actions after a specified amount of time. Program coordinators need to know: 1) Are we doing what we are supposed to? and 2) Are our actions having the intended impact on our priority population or problem?

In Muskegon County, the Sheriff's Department retained researchers from Western Michigan University to evaluate the screening and assessment process at the county jail as part of the reentry program. The original research design included: tracking the number of screens completed for the priority population; the number of contacts with service providers each individual made upon release; both process measures; and collected outcome information on clients' recidivism over 6, 12, and 36 months. These were ambitious plans. Tracking clients over three years can be challenging for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, client relocation, program staff turnover, and gaps in information systems (e.g., databases without a field to measure a key identifier needed to match clients across agencies). By contracting with a third-party academic partner, the reentry team was able to turn the evaluation over to a credible group with expertise in addressing these challenges.

Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) coordinators also enlisted the expertise of a third party to evaluate their program's effectiveness. BRI started collecting data on its participants from the start of the initiative, and identified early on the benefits of bringing in an academic partner to conduct the analysis and evaluation. Coordinators also recognized that academic partners can be particularly helpful in this role because they have both the skill set to conduct a sound analysis and the impartiality that lends credibility to their findings. To evaluate the reentry initiative, researchers examined the arrest data of participants and of a matched control group for up to three years immediately after release from jail. The study's results indicated that BRI participation was associated with a 30 percent reduction in the arrest rate.[31]

➢ ## Recommendation 3:
Revisit and reevaluate program practices and revise as needed.

Communities are in constant flux: specific types of crimes ebb and flow, community service providers come and go, and champions of the reentry initiative may change positions or retire. It is critical that program coordinators continue to revisit and reevaluate the program's practices to ensure they keep pace with these changes. They must revise activities to meet the community's changing needs and resources.

The White Plains Reentry Initiative's program coordinator has considered these types of changes. He continually assessed service providers, whether to keep them engaged, and what gaps might be filled by adding new providers. For instance, after successfully engaging the local library to participate in the initiative and offer Internet access to participants seeking work, he expanded the library's involvement to include resume and research skill development. This was in response to the gap in services the coordinator identified, realizing that clients did not have access to a reliable Internet connection to find and apply for jobs.

The White Plains reentry team has also developed and implemented news ways to strengthen the partnership among stakeholders, through case conferencing meetings and web-based information sharing, and it continues to be creative in finding ways to improve the program.

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[31] Anthony A. Braga, Anne M. Piehl, and David Hureau, "Controlling Violent Offenders Released to the Community: An Evaluation of the Boston Reentry Initiative," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 46 (4): 411–36, 2009.

Appendices

Appendix A

Las Vegas (Nevada) Metropolitan Police Department

In 2008, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) staff identified homelessness as a major issue in the community, and one for which resources were available but not coordinated. In response, police department personnel designed and implemented a reentry initiative that focuses on people booked into the county jail who have no home where they can return upon release.

Specific eligibility criteria for program participants include meeting all of the following:

- Experiencing homelessness
- Arrest within the boundaries of the Downtown Area Command (DTAC)
- Gross misdemeanor or felony arrest
- No prior history of sex offenses
- Willingness to participate
- Mental illness, but not to the extent that would prevent participation

The geographic region was selected due to a large homeless population in that area. The department also considered data on crimes related to the homeless population, particularly in that area, to better understand the scope of the problem they were facing.

To date, reentry staff have gathered and coordinated with relevant stakeholders, implemented a screening process during booking at the jail, and arranged a collaborative reentry process that places program participants in housing and connects them to necessary services.

The process begins once someone is booked into the Clark County Detention Center (CCDC). A short set of screening questions was added to the standard booking form to identify people who are homeless and meet the above criteria. If they are eligible, the booking officer asks if they would be interested in participating in the reentry program. If they are willing, the person is referred for a psychological services review and an in-depth needs assessment. While incarcerated at CCDC, the person is eligible for assistance programs such as job training and education. The results from the needs assessment are provided to the Homeless Liaison at LVMPD, who provides individualized assistance to each participant upon release, including connections to

housing providers, job skills training, and treatment providers for mental health and substance abuse disorders as needed.

LVMPD patrol officers conduct home visits to program participants to encourage accountability, and they communicate regularly with the Homeless Liaison.

LVMPD staff collects data on the following measures related to the program:

- Length of stay in jail

- Number of arrests/recidivism rate for participants

- Number of individuals receiving services

- Number of people who are homeless released back into DTAC area

This program has started as a small pilot with a narrow scope. If the coordinators are able to demonstrate success, in part through these quantitative measures, they will seek to expand the target population.

Appendix B

Muskegon County (Michigan) Sheriff's Department

As do many other areas throughout the country, Muskegon County struggles with jail overcrowding. Based on a review of jail population data, jail staff learned that a significant portion of the jail population is composed of people incarcerated for their first offense. To decrease the jail population and increase public safety, the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department (MCSD) staff decided to design a reentry program for first-time offenders, which limits the time served in the facility and connects them to community-based services upon release.

In a separate initiative, MCSD partners with the Michigan Department of Corrections Parole Authority for a program called "Night Hawk." This program pairs a sheriff's deputy with a parole agent to conduct home visits to people under parole supervision who are at high-risk of reoffending. Recognizing the benefits of this partnership, MCSD plans to create a similar model, which would focus on people who have served their complete sentence in the Muskegon County jail and return to the community unsupervised. The MCSD has met with the Muskegon Police Department (MPD) leadership to discuss partnering on this initiative, which would serve as a natural extension of MPD's existing community policing efforts. MCSD staff would provide the MPD with release information for people returning to the community, and in return, MPD neighborhood policing officers would conduct accountability checks at the individuals' homes. The goal would be to ensure continuity of services and enhance public safety in Muskegon County.

As part of developing a focus on a comprehensive reentry strategy, MCSD plans to improve coordination with mental health service providers to better integrate screening/assessment at intake to the jail and to improve reentry/discharge planning. One of MCSD's key partners has been the local Community Mental Health Center (CMHC). Incorporating CMHC into the reentry planning process has helped to formalize the relationship and leverage existing resources.

Appendix C

Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D.C.

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) leaders determined that violent crime reduction would be the goal and mission of the programs it developed and enhanced. Building on promising practices from within the department and from other public safety agencies, MPD sought to identify those people in the community most at risk of committing violent offenses and focused on this priority population.

Taking into account that crime and offenders do not adhere to geographic barriers, the MPD worked with public safety partners in the area to implement a regional information-sharing practice. Partner agencies, including Prince George's County (Maryland) Police Department, Montgomery County (Maryland) Police Department, U.S. Park Police, and the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO), agreed to share information about high-risk offenders with one another. Representatives from partner agencies participated in monthly task force-style meetings, which supported information sharing with the larger regional group. Meetings included sharing intelligence reports, holding crime briefings, and attending presentations by partner agencies. For those partners who were not able to access the JUSTIS system (the integrated database used by MPD and the USAO), MPD worked through a very deliberate process to develop "memoranda of understanding" to ensure that information would be shared for law enforcement purposes only.

Another critical component of MPD's violence reduction efforts is GunStat, which was implemented in 2008. This is a collaborative information-sharing process among local criminal justice agencies, including

MPD, USAO, the D.C. Superior Court, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), and D.C. Pretrial Services Agency.[32] GunStat tracks gun cases from arrest to prosecution, allowing criminal justice partners to identify repeat offenders, follow trends, and create law enforcement strategies to prevent gun-related crimes. GunStat is one of many elements of MPD's efforts to reduce violent crime in the City. Although it does not focus exclusively on people reentering the community, the priority population still involves people who are known to corrections and court staff.

As part of the District of Columbia's Reentry Plan developed in 2003, CSOSA partnered with MPD at the district level to improve successful ex-offender reintegration to the community.[33] Community Supervision Officers (CSOs) meet regularly with law enforcement partners to share information, visit ex-offenders in the

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[32] CSOSA is a federal agency that provides supervision of adults on probation, parole, and supervised release in the District of Columbia. Because of Washington, D.C.'s unique situation of falling under federal control, federal agencies, such as CSOSA, partner with local and state agencies toward impacting the same overlapping population. For more information, see: at csosa.gov.

[33] *Comprehensive Reentry Strategy for Adults in the District of Columbia: Action Plan,* 2003, available at http://www.csosa.gov/reentry/comp_reentry_action_plan.pdf.

community, and engage the community in providing support for people returning from correctional facilities. Building off of this partnership, MPD personnel strengthened further their relationship with CSOSA staff. MPD officers join CSOSA staff to conduct accountability visits to people identified as high-risk and under community supervision. In one particular district, MPD staff have enhanced an existing relationship with a local social service provider and leveraged this relationship to connect high-risk individuals to services. They also conduct home visits in this district, which differ from "accountability visits" in that support, not enforcement, is the main focus.

Appendix D

White Plains (New York) Police Department

The White Plains Police Department (WPPD) implemented its reentry initiative in 2004. This program focuses on people with ties to the White Plains area that are leaving the Westchester County Department of Correction facility. The initiative coordinates a team of partners—including the public school district, community mental health providers, and other service providers—to attend monthly panel meetings in the prison. Everyone in custody who has ties to White Plains and who is scheduled to be released within 30 to 60 days is invited to these monthly meetings.[34] Team members describe what services their agency can provide and a WPPD officer discusses possible repercussions for reoffending. Typically, people released from the correctional facility are not under community corrections supervision. As a result, this coordination of services is especially critical.

Building on this existing program, in 2008 WPPD began focusing on improving communication among stakeholders through two main components. First, partners hold monthly case conference meetings to discuss recently released program participants and resolve problems or look for ways to improve the individual's chance at success. Second, WPPD staff developed a secure web-based database of reentry participants and gave access to each of the partner agencies. This allows partners to record contact with participants in real time, and to review what other services a participant is receiving. These information-sharing efforts have helped provide continuity among the reentry team and reduce duplicative efforts.

WPPD has dedicated a single detective to oversee the reentry initiative. Although this detective has other duties, he is responsible for the program's day-to-day operation. This includes a semi-annual review of the arrest rates of participants, which allows him to track and report on the success of the initiative. This analysis illustrates a high level of success in the community, and supports the long-term sustainability of the program.

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[34] Approximately 5 percent of people invited to attend the panel meetings refuse. Anecdotally, White Plains Reentry Initiative team members have found that individuals who may not attend the first time they are invited may later choose to attend if they are rearrested and return to the penitentiary for another sentence.

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The Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center) is a national nonprofit organization serving policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels from all branches of government. The CSG Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and evidence-based, consensus-driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities. Read more at: csgjusticecenter.org.

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