

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
REENTRY POLICY

103 DOC 493

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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION	DIVISION: DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF CLASSIFICATION, PROGRAMS AND REENTRY
TITLE: REENTRY POLICY	NUMBER: 103 DOC 493

PURPOSE: The Department of Correction (Department) strives to provide assessment driven, evidence based programming, discharge planning services, and release preparation, to inmates prior to their release from incarceration. These services are designed to facilitate and promote an inmate's successful reintegration into the community.

REFERENCES: M.G.L., c. 124, § 1 (e).
M.G.L., c. 111, § 71.

APPLICABILITY: 103 DOC 493 is applicable to all Department employees, contract services providers, volunteers, and all inmates serving a criminal sentence of at least twelve (12) months duration and releasing to the community from a Department facility.

PUBLIC ACCESS: Yes.

LOCATION: Department's Central Policy File;
Each Institution's Policy File;
Each Inmate Library.

RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF POLICY:

- Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services and Reentry;
- Superintendents;
- Deputy Superintendents;
- Director of Reentry Services Division.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 08/29/2016

CANCELLATION: 103 DOC 493 cancels all previous Departmental and institutional policy statements, bulletins, directives orders, notices, and rules and regulations regarding reentry

and release preparation, which are not consistent with this policy.

SEVERABILITY CLAUSE: If any part of 103 DOC 493 is, for any reason, held to be in excess of the authority of the Commissioner, such decision shall not affect any other part of this policy.

493.01 Definitions:

At risk for Homelessness: Any inmate who reports that he/she was homeless at admission, or reports a lack of support/resources for housing upon release, or refuses to provide a release address during the discharge planning process.

Case Management: A range of services and a process of accountability provided by correctional staff to define risks and needs for the development and monitoring of the inmate's program plan in an effort to promote successful offender reentry.

Certificate of Discharge/Certificate of Release (COD/COR): The releasing document for an inmate's final release/discharge.

Correction Program Officer (CPO): The staff person at a correctional facility who, when assigned classification duties, collects information obtained through inmate interviews and available casework records, and who prepares a summary of this information for classification. A CPO is also responsible for monitoring an inmate's participation and compliance with a personalized program plan or program recommendations and facilitates reentry preparation.

Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA): A six to eight month skill-based program that targets substance abuse, anger management, criminal thinking and relapse prevention. The goal of the CRA is to reduce chronic recidivism and substance abuse by utilizing a curriculum supported by principles of cognitive behavioral theory.

Forensic Transition Team: A regionally based Department of Mental Health clinical team that identifies inmates eligible for Department of Mental Health (DMH) aftercare services by meeting with the inmate three months prior to

release and following him/her three months post release to oversee the transition and to facilitate continuity of care.

Health Services Administrator (HSA): The individual designated by the contractual medical provider, or, if no contractual medical provider, by the Department, to oversee and manage one or more institutional Health Services units and associated treatment areas.

Homeless Inmates: Inmates who do not have a housing plan six months prior to release, or who refuse to disclose their housing plans.

Housing Search Specialist (HSS): A trained and certified staff person at each correctional facility assigned to assist releasing inmates identified as at risk for homelessness with securing suitable housing.

Housing Search Specialist Program: This program combines the use of technology, partnerships with the community, and a network of highly trained and motivated staff, to singularly focus on securing suitable housing for releasing inmates who have been identified as at risk for homelessness. The goal of the program is to prevent homelessness and promote public safety.

Identification Documents: Birth Certificate, Driver's License, State ID, Social Security Card, Passport, Veterans DD-214 form, Alien Registration Card (Green Card), Marriage Certificate, MassHealth Card and/or Military ID.

Individual Reentry Plan (IRP): A report consisting of the inmate's name, gender, date of birth, final release address, MassHealth information (if applicable), Regional Reentry Center locations and contact information, JobQuest profile ID and password (if applicable), and One-Stop Career Center contact information.

Inmate Management System (IMS): The Department's automated information system that provides processing, storage and retrieval of inmate-related information needed by Department personnel and other authorized users within the criminal justice system.

Institution Reentry Committee (IRC): The inter-agency, multi-disciplinary, facility based committee established

within each institution, chaired by the Reentry Liaison, which meets monthly to develop an Individual Reentry Plan for each inmate prior to release to the community. The role of the IRC is to review the following needs as they pertain to each offender: housing, medical & mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, education and employment/job development, and transportation arrangements. The IRC meeting attendees shall include at a minimum: Records Manager, Department contracted medical staff (HSA or designee), Department contracted mental health provider staff, and assigned CPOs. A representative from the Forensic Transition Team, the Institutional Parole Officer (IPO), Reentry and Employment Planner and Reintegration Counselor may also attend as needed.

Institutional Parole Officer (IPO): A Parole Board staff member who works within a Department facility to compile information and conduct pre-parole interviews and investigations on inmates with parole eligibility for presentation at Parole Board hearings.

MassHealth: The medical and mental health care insurance program available to inmates upon release.

Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS): An electronic system available to providers participating in MassHealth that provides the most current MassHealth information, including, but not limited to, eligibility status, coverage type and additional benefit information.

Medical/Mental Health Discharge Planner: A contracted staff member responsible for the scheduling of appointments with community providers to include care for chronic illnesses, prenatal services, mental health and substance abuse services and victims of sexually abusive behavior.

One-Stop Career Center: Career centers across Massachusetts form the foundation of the state's delivery system for employment and training services for job seekers, employers and their workers. Some of the free services offered at the career centers may include, but are not limited to: access to skills training, career counseling, coaching on job search skills, workshops on a variety of job search strategies, networking groups, job fairs, unemployment insurance walk in service, access to computers and the internet, and resume' building.

Parole/Parole Reserve: The procedure for the release of an inmate prior to the expiration of sentence, permitting him/her to serve the remainder of his/her sentence in the community under supervision and in compliance with specified conditions. The term "Reserve" in a Parole Board vote means that a certificate of release will be issued on or any time after the date indicated in the vote provided that certain conditions are satisfied. These conditions will be indicated in the vote or required by Massachusetts General Laws, Parole Board regulations or Parole Board policy.

Probation: Probation is a court-ordered sanction placed on a person convicted of a crime. The offender is allowed to remain in the community under the strict supervision of a probation officer.

Reentry Liaison: The Superintendent's director level designee responsible for oversight of the reentry planning process.

Reentry Planner: The individual responsible for facilitating a 10 day Reentry and Employment Readiness Workshop resulting in the development of an employment and release portfolio submitted as a release document for each completing inmate. The Reentry Planner also makes referrals to One Stop Career Centers and related agencies as appropriate.

Reentry Presentations: Informational sessions provided for inmates who are within six months of their anticipated COD/COR and/or parole reserve date designed to promote linkages with community based service providers and other agencies prior to release.

Reentry and Employment Readiness Workshop: A 10 day workshop, offered to inmates within eighteen (18) months of a defined release date, which assists in the development of an employment portfolio and addresses other general reentry related topics.

Release and Employment Portfolio: A release and employment portfolio is generated for inmates who have completed the Reentry and Employment Readiness Workshop. Contents shall include, but not be limited to: identification, resume' (hard and electronic copy), cover letter, Practice Job

application, Work Opportunity Tax Credit Conditional Certification form, Federal bonding material, MassCor work verification, transcripts, certificates and licenses.

Regional Reentry Centers (RRC): The Parole Board's Regional Reentry Centers are a component of the regional Parole offices and are primarily responsible for processing releases and providing services for paroled/discharged inmates.

493.02 Philosophy & Reentry Mission Statement:

- A. To develop, implement, coordinate and monitor a comprehensive, collaborative, and seamless reentry strategy which promotes successful transition of the inmate population into the community which, in turn, promotes public safety and reduces recidivism by collaborating with county, state, community and faith-based agencies in areas including, but not limited to, housing, employment, medical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, education and related transition programming.
- B. The reentry process is a sequence of events beginning with an inmate's commitment to the Department and continues until he or she is successfully discharged from supervision into the community. A seamless continuum of services shall be in place for every inmate serving a sentence of at least twelve (12) months to reduce the risk of future criminal behavior and promote the successful return of the offender to the community.

The Superintendents of MCI Framingham, MCI Cedar Junction and the Deputy Superintendent of South Middlesex Correctional Center shall develop specialized procedures to provide appropriate reentry plans for inmates who are serving a sentence of less than twelve (12) months upon commitment or return on parole violation, probation violation or escape.

- C. In addition to case management, assessments and motivation, all Department staff contribute to the reentry process by collecting and documenting information in the Inmate Management System (IMS). This continuum includes, but is not limited to:

1. Booking and admission activities;
2. Conducting risk/needs and educational/vocational assessments;
3. Providing medical/mental health intakes;
4. Developing personalized program plans;
5. Rendering final classification decisions;
6. Encouraging inmate program participation;
7. Providing reentry and job readiness workshops;
8. Tracking program participation;
9. Making law enforcement/victim notifications;
10. Conducting release planning meetings;
11. Developing an individual reentry plan which includes, but is not limited to, providing relevant community resources;
12. Processing the final release of inmates into the community.

493.03 **Guiding Principles of Reentry:**

- A. The guiding principles and goals of the Department's reentry planning process include:
 1. Reentry begins on the first day of an inmate's incarceration in the Department.
 2. Individual plans based on comprehensive assessments which identify each inmate's strengths, deficits, and program needs, shall be developed.
 3. An offender will progress through custody levels based on behavior and program needs. Every effort will be made to release inmates from the lowest possible security level.

4. Evidenced based programs and services will be prioritized in the individual plan and delivered at the most effective point during the inmate case management period.
5. Evidenced based programs and services will be offered agency-wide and include plans for continuation as inmates transition to the community.
6. Decisions regarding the management of inmate cases will be made with one overarching goal: enhancing public safety by maximizing the successful reentry of inmates into society.
7. Decreasing recidivism and preventing homelessness by assisting inmates at risk for homelessness with housing search services.

493.04 Institutional Release Planning:

- A. Each institution shall convene a monthly Institution Reentry Committee (IRC) meeting to review the Individual Reentry Plan (IRP) for every inmate who is within six (6) months of an anticipated COD/COR release date and/or Parole Reserve Date.
- B. The IRC meeting shall normally be chaired by the Reentry Liaison. The Reentry Liaison shall at a minimum:
 1. Ensure staff are appropriately trained in all aspects of reentry and ensure that each institution has a certified HSS;
 2. Schedule and chair the IRC meetings and ensure that assigned staff are in attendance and appropriate external stakeholders invited;
 3. Ensure the list of inmates has been distributed to IRC members at least five business days prior to the meeting;
 4. Ensure that the IMS reentry planning screens are entered and updated and a progression of comprehensive case management notes are

completed from the initial meeting to the final note on the day of release.

- C. The IRC meeting attendees shall include, at a minimum: Records Manager, contracted medical staff (HSA or designee), contracted mental health staff (MH Director or designee), and assigned CPOs. A Forensic Transition Team representative, IPO and any other internal stakeholder may attend as needed. The Reentry Liaison shall utilize the Institution Reentry Committee Application to document IRC meeting attendance.
- D. Prior to each monthly IRC meeting, the assigned CPO shall review reentry related information including, but not limited to, IMS assessments and the six-part folder to assist in the development of the inmate's Individual Reentry Plan (IRP). The assigned CPO shall meet with the inmate within six months, and then at three month, two month, and one month intervals, prior to the anticipated COD/COR release date or the Parole Reserve date. The assigned CPO shall document each meeting or document the inmate's failure to appear.
- E. Inmates, at a minimum, shall have an opportunity to address their reentry needs during their interview with the assigned CPO.
 - 1. Inmates are responsible for working with the CPO and other correctional staff to develop an IRP.
 - 2. The inmate is provided an opportunity for input into the services he/she believes are needed to promote successful reentry.
- F. At each IRC meeting, the assigned CPO shall present information about the needs of each inmate to the Committee members who shall work to identify programs/linkages to address the identified need areas in the Individual Reentry Plan.
- G. One hundred and twenty (120) days prior to release or placement at a pre-release facility, any inmate who previously had a Social Security Card shall complete an application for a replacement Social Security Card in preparation for his/her successful reentry.

493.05 Reentry Presentations:

- A. The Reentry Liaison at each facility shall coordinate Reentry Presentations for inmates who are six months within their anticipated COD/COR release date and/or parole reserve date.
- B. These presentations shall be held at a minimum of every six months and include the following topics:
 - 1. Housing Search Services;
 - 2. MassHealth;
 - 3. Employment/One Stop Career Centers;
 - 4. Parole's Regional Reentry Centers;
 - 5. Veterans Services;
 - 6. Linkages to Community Based Resources;
 - 7. Parole and or probation information.

493.06 Notification to Probation:

The Reentry Services Division shall distribute the Community Round Table Report to Chief Probation officers by the 5th day of each month. This report will capture the next six months of releases by Superior Court.

493.07 Housing and Homelessness:

- A. Six (6) months prior to the inmate's anticipated COD/COR release date and/or parole reserve date, the assigned CPO shall assess the inmate's housing plans to assist and direct the inmate in his/her search for housing placement options that are appropriate, using any and all available resources for the particular needs and strengths assessed. The outcome of this initial meeting shall be documented in the IMS reentry case management notes.
 - 1. The feasibility, safety, and appropriateness of an offender's housing plan shall be discussed with the inmate first. All issues related to familial relationships, public and personal safety as well as any medical, mental health or substance problems, will be addressed at this time.

2. The assigned CPO shall make every effort to confirm the home address, phone number, and the name of the person or persons with whom the inmate will be residing. The CPO may confirm information in accordance with 103 DOC 153, CORI Regulations. All outreach attempts and contacts shall be documented in the reentry case management notes of IMS.
 3. If any victim issues or concerns are identified, the Victim Services Unit (VSU) shall be notified by the institution. The VSU shall contact all certified individuals regarding the offenders return to the community in accordance with 103 DOC 407, Certification and Notification Policy. If issues are identified, the Reentry Liaison shall be notified as appropriate by the VSU.
 4. If the assigned CPO is unable to confirm the housing plan, other suitable housing options shall be explored, confirmed and documented.
- B. Inmates who do not have a defined housing plan, or who refuse to disclose their housing plan, shall be considered at risk for homelessness and shall be referred to the available certified HSS.
- C. Housing and homelessness status shall be reported at the IRC as stated in 103 DOC 493.04.
- D. Staff and vendors shall inform relevant inmates in accordance with M.G.L., c. 111, § 71, that no sex offender, classified as a Level 3 offender, shall knowingly and willingly establish living conditions within, move to, or transfer to, any convalescent or nursing home, infirmary maintained in a town, rest home, charitable home for the aged, or intermediate care facility for the intellectually disabled.
- E. In accordance with 103 DOC 447, Sex Offender Identification, the Superintendent's reentry designee will notify the institutional records managers of a verified release address 8 days prior to a confirmed release date.

493.08 **Medical, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment**

- A. Six (6) months prior to the inmate's anticipated COD/COR release date and/or parole reserve date, the medical/mental health discharge planner shall document whether the inmate has substance abuse issues in IMS.
- B. Once the housing plan has been identified, the medical/mental health discharge planner shall schedule appointments with community providers and document the appointments in IMS.
- C. Thirty (30) days prior to an inmate's anticipated COD/COR and/or parole reserve date, the assigned CPO shall conduct a Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) check on each inmate to determine whether a Mass Health application needs to be completed. If applicable, the assigned CPO shall complete the MassHealth application in accordance with the Reentry Services Operations Manual and document this in the Reentry Mass Health/Medical screen in IMS. Five business days prior to the inmate's approved release, the Reentry Liaison or Designee shall conduct a final MMIS check on each inmate to determine whether the Mass Health application is approved, and document this in the Reentry Mass Health/Medical screen in IMS.
- D. The Medical/Mental Health Discharge Planner shall identify inmates with medical and/or mental health illnesses who would qualify for MassHealth disability and complete the Disability Supplement Application.
- E. Inmates shall receive Medical/Mental Health reentry planning in accordance with 103 DOC 630, Medical Services.
- F. Offenders that self-disclose eligibility for SSDI and or SSI will have an application completed in compliance with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and DOC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

493.09 Referral to Regional Reentry Center (RRC):

- A. Inmates with no condition of post release supervision (Parole and/or Probation) are eligible for Parole's Regional Reentry Centers.
- B. Sixty (60) days prior to the inmate's anticipated COD/COR release date, the assigned CPO shall complete a referral in IMS to the Parole Regional Reentry Center (RRC) outlined in the RRC Listing.
- C. In the event that the inmate refuses, the designated staff person shall meet with the inmate to encourage him/her to take the State provided transportation, meet with the RRC staff and take advantage of the community services available at the RRC. If an inmate refuses to be transported to the RRC prior to or on the day of release, the release coordinator shall notify the respective RRC of refusal via telephone. The IMS reentry planning screen shall be updated to reflect the inmate's refusal.
- D. The Department shall coordinate the transportation of state inmates with no condition of post release supervision (Parole and/or Probation) to Parole's RRC in accordance with 103 DOC 530 Inmate Transportation and 103 DOC 404 Inmate Release Policy.

493.10 Employment:

- A. Eligible inmates shall be notified to attend the Reentry and Employment Readiness Workshop when they are within eighteen (18) months of their earliest release date (ERD).
- B. Inmates who have satisfactorily completed the Reentry and Employment Readiness Workshop shall have a Release and Employment Readiness Portfolio compiled with documents to prepare them for employment in the community. This portfolio shall be stored as outlined in the facilities procedure until the day of discharge.
- C. In preparation for successful reentry into the community, inmates who have previously been issued a Social Security Card, at 120 days to transferring to a

pre-release institution, or to a confirmed release date, shall be eligible for application for a new replacement social security card.

- D. No later than thirty (30) days prior to the inmate's anticipated COD/COR and/or parole reserve date, the assigned CPO shall document the inmate's employment plan and One Stop Career Center region in IMS.
- E. No later than fifteen (15) days prior to the inmate's anticipated COD/COR and/or parole reserve date, contact information for the One Stop Career Centers shall be provided to the inmate as part of the IRP report as outlined in 103 DOC 493.12.

493.11 **Final Release Plan:**

- A. Fifteen (15) days prior to the inmate's COD/COR and/or parole reserve date, the assigned CPO shall provide a copy of the inmate's IRP report for the inmate to verify and sign. The assigned CPO shall update IMS accordingly. The purpose of this final review is to ensure that each inmate has the appropriate referrals, placement, identification documents, community linkages and transportation upon release.

493.12 **Performance Measures:**

- A. The Reentry Services Division, in conjunction with the Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Research, tracks Performance Measures from releasing facilities to assess and improve implementation, efficiency, and effectiveness of release planning.
- B. By the fifth of each month, the Reentry Liaison shall ensure that outcome, pertaining to housing, MassHealth coverage, and RRC transportation, in accordance with the Reentry Manual, are entered into IMS for all inmates released the prior month.
- C. The Reentry Services Division shall forward performance measurement documentation to the Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services and Reentry, the Director of Performance Measures,

and the Superintendents, by the fifteenth (15th) of every month.

493.13 **Emergencies:**

Whenever in the opinion of the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services and Reentry, an emergency exists which requires suspension of all or part of 103 DOC 493, he/she may order such suspension, provided that any such suspension ordered by the Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services and Reentry lasting beyond forty-eight (48) hours is authorized by the Commissioner.