



Reentry in Ohio

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

Ted Strickland, Governor

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SECOND CHANCE ACT: HR 1593

On April 9th, 2008 President Bush signed into law HR 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007 (SCA). This legislation will give offenders across America a second chance for a better life. This legislation is about renewal and hope. The goal of this legislation is to expand job training and placement services, improve the ability of offenders to find transitional housing, and assist newly released offenders in getting mentoring services. The bill will provide funds to state and local governments to provide adult and juvenile offenders with comprehensive reentry programs such as substance abuse treatment, health, education, and job training. In addition, funds will be made available to develop drug treatment programs as alternatives to prison. The criminal charges against participants in these programs will be dismissed if they successfully complete the program.

Another program will fund state and local governments for the implementation of family based treatment and family-based drug treatment for offenders as an alternative to incarceration. Funds will also be given to states to establish programs to train offenders in the three years before their release for technology-based jobs and careers. Finally, federally funded mentoring grants will be made available to non-profit organizations under this legislation to assist offenders with reintegrating back into the community. As a condition for receiving financial assistance, the SCA requires that the applicant have established a Reentry Task Force, or "other relevant convening authority."

Key Provisions of the Second Chance Act

Demonstration Grants. Provides grants to states and local governments that may be used to promote the safe and successful reintegration into the community of individuals who have been incarcerated. Allowable uses of funds include employment services, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victims services, and methods to improve release and revocation decisions using risk-assessment tools.

Mentoring Grants. Provides grants to nonprofit organizations that may be used for mentoring adult offenders or offering transitional services for reintegration into the community.

Offender Reentry Substance Abuse Treatment. Creates grants to improve the availability of drug treatment to offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities.

Family Drug Treatment Programs. Authorizes grants to states, local governments, and Native American tribes to develop and implement family-based treatment programs for incarcerated parents who have minor children.

Federal Reentry Initiative. Provides guidance to the Bureau of Prisons for enhanced reentry planning procedures. Specific information on health, employment, personal finance, release requirements and community resources shall be provided to each inmate released. (This does not apply to state correctional systems.)

Reentry Research. Authorizes the U.S. Justice Department's National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics to conduct reentry-related research.

National Adult and Juvenile Offender Reentry Resource Center. Establishes a national resource center to collect and disseminate best practices and to provide training and support for reentry efforts.

September 2008



Partnership

Highlights

Joint Committee on Child Support

This collaborative effort began in 2007 between the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services-Office of Child Support Enforcement. The partnership was formed to develop specific initiatives and recommendations designed to empower and assist offenders who are parents with removing barriers to the payment of child support. The committee is tasked with developing innovative and effective ways of encouraging parents to become active and financially responsible in their children's lives.

In fiscal year 2007, nearly 800 offenders were committed to Ohio prisons for Failure to Pay Child Support. The department identified the counties which commit the most Non-support offenders to prison. A total of \$500,000 of CCA funding was made available in the

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last half of FY07 to those counties to set up non-support programs to divert offenders from prison. Each county developed their own program based upon local needs and resources. These counties are: Butler, Clermont, Delaware, Franklin, Hamilton, Lorain and Lucas. The committee will be proposing recommended changes to current legislation that will benefit the child, obligor, obligee, and Ohio's communities as a whole.

Incarcerated Veteran's Program

ODRC, the Governor's Office of Veteran's Affairs, Veteran's Administration, the Department of Job and Family Services, the Department of Veteran's Affairs, and the Buckeye Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans joined to form a collaboration to provide pre- and post-release assistance to incarcerated veterans. Through this partnership offenders are being linked to qualifying services while they are incarcerated prior to release.

In September 2007, the Veteran's Administration appointed a Veteran's Reentry Specialist to assist veterans being released to assist them in obtaining necessary documentation, filing for an upgrade in their Discharge Status, finding housing, and linking to treatment. In addition, offenders exiting prison are more readily connected with the appropriate agencies that provide services to veterans and obtaining their guaranteed benefits.

Transitional Educational Program


TEPS offers a collaboration with ODRC, the Central Ohio School System, and Community Connections, a local community partner, which affords offenders being released the opportunity to focus on pro-social skills, employment opportunities, and life skills. Curricula and training are provided through real and virtual case management. TEPS incorporates the use of assisted video conferencing, a web-based research design and individualized CD-based instruction to provide transitional post-release case management services.

Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing

The Governor's Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing includes members from key state and community agencies, including DRC. The Department participates on the Chronic Homelessness Work Group, and the Systems Transitions and Discharge Work Group. The Chronic Homeless Work Group hopes to increase and systematize the development of housing and service opportunities for Ohioans experiencing long-term homelessness. The Systems Transitions and Discharge Protocol Work Group seeks to assist public and private institutions in the development of protocols that identify the homeless, create linkages to community service agencies, and promote individual self sufficiency.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Offenders with Disabilities

In 2006, a partnership began between ODRC and the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) to share expertise in placing people with disabilities into competitive employment. Since most of the vital information that could be used to determine an offender's eligibility is collected and maintained during their incarceration, DRC and RSC staff determined the most appropriate solution was to assign a RSC Counselor to an institution to collect the documentation prior to release.



Thus far, over 400 offenders have been referred for screening and assessment.

These counselors evaluate an offender's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services as prescribed by Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Guidelines. After eligibility has been established, the counselors develop an Individualized Plan for Employment and begin coordinating the provision of vocational rehabilitation services during incarceration and after the offender re-enters society. The three-phased pilot project began in January 2007 and now includes fourteen institutions and three parole regions.

Community Advocacy Program (CAP)

The Community Advocacy Program (CAP) was established in 2006 to advocate on behalf of people whose health and health care are challenged by social and environmental factors. Funded by the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Local Funding Partnerships*, CAP brings together health care professionals and attorneys to ensure that patients receive the care and benefits to which they are entitled. The program encompasses a spectrum of vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, recent immigrants *and* individuals recently released from incarceration.

CAP programs can make a dramatic difference. For example, they can help clients avoid evictions to prevent homelessness, challenge denials of public benefits, facilitate access to special education programs, improve living conditions that would otherwise exacerbate chronic diseases, and obtain protective orders for victims of domestic violence.

A dynamic state-wide task force of medical-legal partnerships was spearheaded by CAP and includes representatives from organizations in Cleveland, Akron, Southeast Ohio, Cincinnati, Toledo, Columbus and Dayton. The task force has quarterly meetings and plans to identify a statewide advocacy agenda to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable children and their families. Funding to support coordination, participation and statewide evaluation has been requested from the Medical-Legal Partnership Funding Program with matching funds from The George Gund Foundation. Addressing the medical and legal concerns of Cuyahoga County's returning citizens, the Cleveland Reentry Clinic opened in March 2007, four-months ahead of schedule. The staff have provided appropriate services for over 100 ex-offenders.





Therapeutic Communities

Therapeutic Communities represent a longstanding collaboration between ODRC and the Ohio Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction Services providing a comprehensive continuum of alcohol and drug treatment services for incarcerated offenders. The two TC's involved in this collaboration are located at the Ohio Reformatory for Women and the Pickaway Correctional Institution. Therapeutic Communities are intensive programs with treatment stages that reflect increased levels of personal and social responsibility. Treatment in a TC can last between 9 and 12 months. The Tapestry Program at ORW has a program capacity of 89. The OASIS Program at PCI has a program capacity of 145. Research shows that the continuity of care is essential for drug impacted offenders returning to the community. Without continuity the treatment gains in prison can be lost. The on-going challenge for Recovery Services is to create effective pathways to reentry for those offenders who have completed AOD programs.

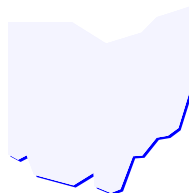
Allen County Sex Offender Risk Reduction Court

The Allen County Sex Offender Risk Reduction Court, or *ASORRC* for short, addresses the highest priorities of sex offender management: *public safety, offender accountability, and victim protection*. ASORRC emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary collaboration and accountability between ODRC, the court, and the public. The court is the central hub to which all stakeholders are connected, thus ensuring that the shared agenda of public safety and victim protection is addressed. ASORRC further provides for a system of intensive supervision, using specialized supervision plans, surveillance, unannounced home visits, electronic monitoring, and drug testing. This system of supervision is designed to detect behaviors that may precede sex offending allowing supervision agents to intervene before an incident occurs. Since its inception, over 90 offenders have been through the court.

Reentry Means "Going Home to Stay"

For more information about the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and Offender Reentry, please visit our website at <http://www.drc.state.oh.us>

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