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INTRODUCTION

The following information is recommended guidance in developing a Reentry Coalition within your community. The items in the guide will help you establish a plan of next steps as you proceed. Though all recommendations may not fit each county or organization, it should be said every county can develop a Reentry Coalition. Regardless of the county size, you have individuals coming back to your community. The overall goal in the development of any coalition is to reduce the recidivism and keep communities safe. The reduction of recidivism starts in communities.

- RH spent 17 years in prison- upon returning home she was so overwhelmed with all the changes that had happened and was feeling lost. She luckily returned to a county that has a coalition, she began to work with the coalition immediately and within a year she had an apartment, a good paying job she enjoys, strong family and community relationships and a vehicle.

Successful Reentry Coalitions give former offenders opportunities to support themselves through legitimate and productive work, reducing recidivism and improving public safety. Reentry Coalitions support the design to ensure that such people, like every other citizen, can find employment, access stable housing, support their kids and families, and become active contributors to their communities.

- Amy was in prison for 6 years and during that time she worked on getting her GED and eventually some certifications. Once she was released, she already had the confidence that she could continue her education and training. Amy worked with our reentry program through Ohio Means Jobs and was eligible for Workforce Investment funding to for additional schooling to secure better employment while she worked part time for a local food establishment. Amy completed her degree in heavy equipment operation and obtained her CDL’s. She was hired with a company right after her graduation making 3 times her salary from food service. She wrote a letter to the Reentry Coalition stating, “I wanted to thank everyone who was involved in my journey towards success” “I do not know where I would have ended up without the support from the Reentry program and other supportive community services”.

As you proceed through the recommendations, please reach out to the Ohio Association of Local Reentry Coalitions (OALARC) or the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) (contact information below) for any questions or guidance. We are all in this together to support our returning citizen and our communities.
The goals of the Office of Reentry are directly aligned to its mission of connecting individuals with communities, programs, and services. Communities play a great role in ensuring that the men and women we serve are successful when returning home.

Our goals acknowledge that strong partnerships with community providers, employers, the faith community, survivor’s, and others are necessary to effectively address recidivism. They also recognize that when it comes to reentry transition, being crime free is important, but it is not enough.

**Reentry Goals Include:**

- Developing a successful transition for those returning to the community from incarceration.
- Ensuring individuals are prepared to return home better equipped at the completion of reentry than at the time of their admission to the correctional system.
- Equipping individuals with marketable skills thereby enabling them to be productively employed.
- Assisting individuals in returning as responsible parents, supporting their children, families and, becoming better neighbors.
- Providing individuals with effective life coping skills for successful transition to the community.
- Enhancing awareness of the impact of their crime and providing them with opportunities to make amends for the harm caused.
WHAT IS A REENTRY COALITION?

- The overall mission of a reentry coalition is to promote successful
  reintegration of formerly incarcerated people, reduce recidivism, and increase public
  safety.

KEY FUNCTIONS OF A REENTRY COALITION

- Bring together community service providers, public safety agencies, businesses,
  nonprofits, and the faith community to address local reentry issues, assets, and
  barriers.
- Work together to engage the community in reentry related issues. They educate for
  community buy-in, identify community assets and service gaps, identify reentry
  resources and coordinate service delivery to promote public safety.
- Advocate for policy changes in their communities.
- Create a mission and vision.
- Focus on key areas for the success of reentry: employment, housing, health, mental
  health, identifying documents, family reunification, financial management, substance
  abuse, education, and transportation.
- Develop a strategic plan focused around the areas above.
- Develop by-laws for your Reentry Coalition.
- On-going search of opportunities for funding of federal, state, and/or local dollars
  through grant or local funding opportunities.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REENTRY COALITION

- Contact the Ohio Association of Local Reentry Coalitions (OALRC)
  - OALRC is a non-funded entity, which serves as the focal point for expanding and
    improving reentry efforts across state, local agencies, and communities.
  - We would like to see the OALRC be a centralized data warehouse where we can
    input data and extrapolate data that is relevant to reentry planning and reducing
    recidivism. OALRC would like to provide information to anyone looking to start,
    revitalize or just glean information about Ohio’s reentry programs.
    - Mission- The OALRC shall promote the creation, advancement, and
      communication of reentry coalitions, through comprehensive and cost-
      effective solutions to reduce recidivism and increase public safety.
    - Please go to https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
    - The Ohio Association of Local Reentry Coalitions (OALRC), ODRC – Office of
      Reentry at DRC.OfficeofReentry@odrc.state.oh.us
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REENTRY COALITION

- Determine the level of interest
  - Focus Groups
  - Surveys
    - Assess county practices
      - Data around recidivism
      - Are Reentry Services being provided? Duplication of services?
      - How are services being tracked?
      - Determine what collaboration looks like between courts, prisons, jails, probation/parole?
      - Determine who is doing preparation prior to release?
      - Determine continuum of care system for post release?
      - Determine who involved already? Who should be involved?

Adult Parole Authority
County Probation
Catholic Charities
Department of Youth Services
Extended Housing
Landlord Organizations
Local Police Department
Municipal Judges/Courts
Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
County Commissioners
Local Recovery Center
County Department of Job and Family Services
Juvenile Courts
Veterans Services
Health Department
Service Providers with a Reentry Focus
Recovery Prevention Resources
Unit Way Industries
ODRC – Office of Reentry
Legal Aid

Helpline
County Sheriff’s Office
Faith Community and organization
Jail Ministries
National Alliance of Mental Health
Mentoring Programs
United Way
Community Based Correctional Facilities
Child Support (CSEA)
Recovery Courts
Reentry Courts
Veterans Court
Education Providers
Criminal Justice Involved Individuals
Community Action
Ohio Means Jobs
Salvation Army
County ADAMHS Board
DRC Facilities (population of county)
Reentry Coalition Development

- Develop a Strategic Plan
- Create a Mission and Vision Statement
  - Mission Example: Building a safer community and reducing recidivism in XXXX County by providing evidence-based models of successful reentry through social service agencies, citizens, law enforcement and returning citizens to XXXX County from an institution or jail.
  - Vision Example: Creating a safer community and productive citizens by offering an opportunity for social service agencies, law enforcement, businesses, person(s) with lived experience, and citizens of XXXX County to join and develop a strategic plan to reduce recidivism in XXXX County.
    - Please see Mission Statement Handout at https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
    - Please see Guide for use in establishing a Reentry Coalition at https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
- Develop By Laws (recommended based upon your structure)
  - Please see By Laws Handout at https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
- Determining method of Leadership for the Coalition
  - Qualities (Reentry Coordinator):
    - Belief in Reentry and that people may change, strong communication skills, developed trust with the services and leadership of the county, versed in Reentry concepts, knowledge of all services available and their providers, relationship with key stakeholders, strong skills in coordination, commitment/supported by power structure of county, willingness to work on difference between membership.
    - Please see Position Description Sample Handout at https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
- Assessment of County Practices
  - Is Restored Citizen data being collected?
    - If so, what data is collected?
    - How is the data being used?
    - Are there reentry services being provided?
    - Are those services being tracked?
    - Was this data used to determine service needs?
    - Do the services fit the needs of clients?
    - Does the county have Justice Involved Citizen population statistic?
      - Please see Data Sheets Sample Handouts at https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about
**Reentry Coalition Development**

- Developing a Reentry Plan
  - This Reentry Plan is a Strategic Plan that is an official document that captures the status of reentry and the plan meet any gaps in the services within a community.
  - The ODRC requires all recognized coalition to have a plan registered within the Office of Reentry and the plan that has a 3-year outlook by the 15th of January. Submit your plan to the Office of Reentry email address: DRC.OfficeofReentry@odrc.state.oh.us
  - Please see Reentry Strategic Planning Handout at [https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about](https://www.drc.ohio.gov/oerc/about)

**Consideration for Funding Sources**

There are funded and unfunded Reentry Coalitions throughout Ohio. Funding sources for coalitions varies. Some coalitions receive funds through county commissioners, adult court services, and/or through local Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Boards (ADAMH). While considering what you need, you need to remember utilizing your community partners. While a Reentry Coalition is highly recommended to have a dedicated leader, many other resources can be found within your community and the partners who already serve this population. The dedicated leader should be the leader in organizing, collaborating, and focused on the goals of Reentry in the community. Despite whether a coalition is funded or not funded, their mission is helping reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and assist with the successful reintegration of men and women returning to our communities.
What does a Reentry Coalition Mean to a Community?

“Reentry programming in rural communities requires strong partnerships and collaborations since there are often less resources. In Southeast Ohio there is less economic development and more extensive travel is often required creating more obstacle for the success of our returning citizens. Reentry Coalitions with the connections of their members can help to pool resources for the benefits of our returning citizens’. “When I began assisting people as a Reentry Coordinator for Athens County, I had no idea the impact that our reentry programming would have on our community. Our partners and community members work together to create a more cohesive system of understanding the benefits of helping our returning citizens and building safer communities.”

Shawn Stover
Athens County Reentry Coordinator

“Coalitions need to exist within communities to bring the community and reentry individuals together to help the individual returning home to not feel alienated. Coalitions are effective because when an individual returns home they know they have a group of people who believe in them and will help them to succeed.”

Bri Moon
Lake County Reentry Coalition

“Reentry Coalitions need to exist is every community. Coalitions bring together resources to lessen the burden on communities, jails, prisons, and guide individuals who are coming home to the resources they need to be successful. Costs are reduced to communities when we keep individuals out of our jails and prisons and focus on work readiness and employment.”

Valerie Carpico
Former Reentry Coalition Coordinator

“The solution to issues surrounding the re-entry and reintegration of offenders into society does not belong solely to corrections; it belongs to the community”.

Corrections Today Magazine
August of 2003, pg. 6
TIPS FROM THE FIELD

No. 01 — It is important to have common pleas judge involved, a person who is influential in the community, like a commissioner or state representative. Just having these two at the table along with other community members is a good start to forming a coalition.

No. 02 — The need can be found when a problem is identified. The support comes in when community members agree on the problem and common goals to act in helping the problem.

No. 03 — Every coalition needs what will work for them. Our coalition is small and in rural Ohio. An advisory council is not something we have felt we needed.

No. 04 — When forming a coalition, it can be overwhelming, but you need to remember to just start small, establish a strategic plan and then grow from there. You do not want to overwhelm people with a ton of ideas, start with what seems most important to your community and build from there.

No. 05 — Continued focus on reducing stigma by educating the community and holding unity empowering events.

No. 06 — Advocate and educate the community about why we need to “welcome home” restored citizens.

No. 07 — I have found that reaching out to individuals while they are still incarcerated is the best route to success. You can work on a reentry plan with the individual and get all the resources and referrals necessary for their success and make sure to meet with them as soon as possible once they return home. Communication and trust are key.

No. 08 — You must have passionate people who truly believe in reentry efforts, people who are open to new ideas and are dedicated to helping those returning home. You also need to be consistent with meetings and hold members accountable.

No. 09 — It takes a grounded leader and consistent team approach to make a difference in the community.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What can be done to support the successful return of offenders from prison back to their community?
Advocate and educate the community about why this is important to support Reentry. It helps keep their communities safer by having supports. It also keeps and costs down by having individuals in the community and not incarcerated. Reaching out to individuals while they are still incarcerated is the best route to success. You can work on a reentry plan with the individual and get all the resources and referrals necessary for their success and make sure to meet with them as soon as possible once they return home.

What is needed to prepare justice involved individuals for their return to your communities coming out of the facilities?
Small actionable steps should be implemented starting prerelease. Putting a plan in place for release, not only including the offenders but their entire families. Continue the outreach post release assisting people with their Reentry plan and continue to wrap community supports around them.

What are some of the barriers that confront Reentry initiative in your communities?
There is stigma and lack of education about those returning to our communities. When forming a coalition. You should include others and their ideas while examining what is most important to your community and build from there.

What is a holistic approach to Reentry?
Most inmates leaving prison or jail return to the same exact place they were prior to their time in incarceration. A holistic approach looks at mental, physical, and social needs of an individual and develops plans to meet those needs. A holistic reentry program works to provide a positive and healthy mindset as well as opportunities for a better situation, before exposure to that environment again.

Does a Coalition need an Advisory Council?
It is up to your county. Some counties feel it is beneficial, some say it isn't needed. It is recommended to identify and engage individual at specific organization that share the same vision. This is not a one-person task. Some areas have Reentry Councils or Executive Committees.

Are Coalitions only focused on those returning from incarceration with ODRC?
Reentry encompasses all partners within the county jail, municipal court, and juvenile court. If you have the means to connect not only with the prisons but also with your local jail(s) you can.

How does a community determine whether there is a need and or support for a coalition?
Majority of the people who are incarcerated come home, so yes, there is a need. The support includes your coalition and community members working together on common goals to empower those coming home to be successful community members and not return to incarceration.
RESOURCES

Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition
https://drc.ohio.gov/reentry-coalition

Local Reentry Coalitions
https://drc.ohio.gov/oerc/local-coalitions

Recidivism Reduction Checklists: A Resource for State Corrections Agencies

Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services
https://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/#gsc.tab=0

Bureau of Justice Assistance
https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/current

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/news/juvjust/ojjdp-funding-opportunities-available

The Council of State Governments Justice Center
https://csgjusticecenter.org/

The National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated
https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/

The National Reentry Resource Center
https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/

National Institute of Corrections
https://nicic.gov/

SAMHSA
https://www.samhsa.gov/

Relink.org
https://relink.org/
Mission and Vision Handout

A mission statement is a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, identifying the goals of its operations:

- What kind of service(s) it provides?
- Who are its customers?
- What geographical region will its service?

An effective mission statement must be a clear, concise declaration about your organization strategy. Here are some Tips for Creating an Effective Mission Statement found on www.bigcommerce.com

- Do keep it short and concise. Sum up the organization's mission in just a few sentences.
- Don't write an essay.
- Do think long term.
- Don't make it too limiting.
- Do find out what your customers think of the mission statement.
- Don't be afraid to change it.

Here are some examples of the Mission Statements used by existing Coalitions:

- The Delaware County Reentry Coalition:
  Assists justice involved individuals 18 years and older in making a successful transition into the community, helping to reduce recidivism and improve public safety using holistic and systemic approaches in linking individuals with services specific to their needs.

- Lake County 5-year plan:
  The mission of the Reentry Coalition is to ensure successful offender reentry, reduce recidivism and enhance public safety. The Reentry Coalition will achieve these goals through collaboration partnerships with government entities, faith and community-based organizations and other stakeholders. It will utilize a holistic evidence-based approach that starts at the point of contact with the criminal justice system and includes, education, families, health services, alcohol and other drug treatment, job training, mentorship, and housing.

- ODRC Office of Reentry:
  To connect individuals with communities, programs, and services

- ODRC:
  To reduce recidivism in those we touch

Here are some examples of the Vision Statements used by existing Coalitions:

- The Delaware County Reentry Coalition:
  Empowering justice involved individuals to increase their overall quality of life by creating community collaborations to help them become responsible and self-sufficient in making personal changes that will impact their community positively.

- Lake County 5-year plan:
  Lake County Reentry Coalition will remove barriers for ex-offenders to live, work and be productive citizens of Lake County.

- ODRC Office of Reentry:
  To facilitate successful reintegration for individuals

- ODRC:
  To reduce Crime in Ohio
By-Laws Handout

There are set standards of the community approach and standards for personnel of agencies, service providers and grass root organizations. They also have set standards for showing results, tracking services and recidivism rates.

Local Reentry Coalitions shall create by-laws that are approved by its members and outline operational requirements of the coalition.

At minimum, the coalition by-laws need to include the following:

- **Name**—Official name of coalition
- **Mission and Vision**—The mission statement is to explain the purpose of the coalition in a sentence to a short paragraph. The vision statement is to explain the long-term goals/ambitious of the coalition.
- **Membership**—Outline a diverse and well represented membership and any eligibility requirements.
- **Leadership Structure**—Define the leadership positions and responsibilities of the coalition. This is to include but not limited to chair, vice chair, coordinator, subcommittee chairs, etc.
- **Meeting Logistics**—Outline the frequency and location of meetings. Coalitions should meet quarterly, however the coalition may meet more frequently.
- **Decision Making/Voting**—Determine how decisions will be made, what issues members will vote on, quorum, etc.

It is highly recommended that if you plan on applying for 501c3 in the future that your by-laws meet all the requirements of Chapter 1702-Nonprofit Corporation Law of the Ohio Revised Code.
Position Title: Reentry Coordinator

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** include the following. Other duties may be assigned.

- Directs and coordinates inmate programming activities. Evaluates performance, screens and assigns volunteers, develops new programming opportunities.
- Researches and develops programs through needs assessments.
- Reviews Policy and procedures, recommends and writes changes and/or new policy procedures related to Reentry.
- Remains informed of current developments and procedures pertinent to duties; may be required to attend seminars/training.
- Compiles monthly/quarterly/yearly reports as requested.
- Completes quarterly video in reach with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.
- Attends monthly meetings and participates in treatment teams for specialty dockets. Attends court hearings as requests for Reentry planning.
- Collaboration with courts/attorneys to link inmates to inpatient treatment.
- Complete once a month video in reach with the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.
- Coordinate and organize new initiatives for Reentry for XX County.
- Liaison to community partners providing services within the jail.
- Serve as a representative for local boards in the community.
- Oversees the quarterly Reentry Coalition.
- Serve as a member of the State of Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition.
- Overseeing inmate programs.
- Briefs Jail Administrator as needed on operations activities and status of duties and/or special projects.
- Performs other job-related duties as necessary or assigned.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Strong communication skills—verbal and written.
- Vast knowledge of community resources.
- Critical thinking skills.
- Ability to assess situations and develop an action plan.
- Strong time management skills.
• Commitment to the agency
• Strong leadership skills
• Locating and assisting resources
• Locating assistance and resources
• Ability to execute a plan
• Strong Collaboration skills
• Ability to lead and guide others with respect
• Respect for inmates/clients and external partners
• Well-organized

**EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE:**

• Bachelor’s degree (B.A.) from four-year college or university; and one to two years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

**BACKGROUND REQUISITES:**

• Bachelor’s degree in Corrections/Human Services required.
• Ability to operate a motor vehicle and maintain a valid driver's license.
• Ability to work under limited supervision.
• Ability to utilize organizational skills and effectively manage time and documentation/records.
• Ability to utilize independent judgement and establish priorities with limited supervision.
• Ability to provide effective work direction and supervision of others to ensure adherence to work rules, personnel and County policies, and Jail procedures.
• Ability to collect, analyze and interpret reports, and documentation in an effort to solve problems and provide accurate information for management, staff, or other County departments.
• Demonstrated knowledge of correctional facilities, inmate management and legal procedures.
• Knowledge of and ability to operate computer software and equipment. Proficient in use of word processing and electronic spreadsheet software.

**SUPPLEMENT:**

• Reports to: Jail Administrator and Chief Deputy
Data Collection - Handout

When a community is looking for ways to meet the needs of those returning from incarceration. The collection and assessing of data surrounding the county current practices as it relates to reentry services becomes the center of a community’s reentry plan.

The reentry community and its services should initially ask the following questions: Is Restored Citizen data being collected?

- If so, what data is collected?
- Who is collecting the data?
- How is the data being used?
- Are there reentry services being provided?
- Are those services being tracked?
  - If so, what is the method of tracking?
- Was this data used to determine service needs?
- Is mentoring being offered?
  - If so, is it being track?
- Do the services fit the needs of the clients?
- Does the county have Justice Involved Individuals population statistic?

Once the range of data being collected in the community is determined, the following data should be drawn out and highlight in the community’s reentry plan.

- How many people were served?
- Who (list of names) are those people?
- What services were people referred to (or agencies)?
- What services are being requested?
- Is mentoring work being measured?
- Programs provided: list of their programs
- Events sponsored by coalition
- Did the justice involve individual follow through?
  - If not, is there an attempt to follow up with the individuals?

This reentry data plan will be used to determine needs, and a process that will help reach the needs of those returning from the criminal justice system. The data will assist community services, courts, county agencies, policy reform, political leaders, counseling services and finally with educating the community.
A Strategic Plan is an official document that captures the status of reentry and the plan to meet any gaps in the services within a community.

For all Coalitions, the development of a reentry strategic plan should, at minimum, include the following steps:

- Conduct an environmental scan of county practices by identifying trends, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and barrier.

- Identify the major problem areas (housing, employment, transportation, etc.) and gaps in reentry services in the county.

- Determine a strategic direction for the coalition through the development of goals and objectives related to the major problem area and gaps in reentry services.

- Develop tasks and actions steps to achieve the identified goal and objectives.

- Develop performance measures to track the coalition’s success in addressing the identified goal and objectives.

The ODRC requires all recognized coalitions to have a plan with a three-year outlook registered within the Office of Reentry by the 15th of January. These should be submitted to: DRC.OfficeofReentry@odrc.state.oh.us