



RESOURCES FOR HELPING JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS

Like their non-veteran counterparts, veterans exiting jails and prisons and returning to their communities face significant challenges to securing housing and employment. They also run the risks of returning to jail or prison, or falling into homelessness. Homelessness and incarceration appear to increase the risk of each other, and these factors seem to be mediated by mental illness and substance abuse, as well as by disadvantageous sociodemographic characteristics (Greenberg et al., 2008). In a report on prisoner reentry in Houston, Brazzell, and Vigne (2009) identified employment barriers as the single biggest challenge in successful reintegration. According to their respondents, obtaining a job is critical not only because it provides income and self-sufficiency, but also because a daily routine can help individuals avoid negative influences and stay focused on reentry success. Unfortunately, both groups noted that discrimination by employers is common, particularly for those with serious felonies.

Helpful Sites for Navigating Return to Communities after Justice Involvement

Tax Incentives for Employers

<https://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a Federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment, including justice-involved veterans. WOTC joins other workforce programs that incentivize workplace diversity and facilitate access to good jobs for American workers.

Insuring Employers Who Hire Ex-Offenders Against Loss

<http://www.bonds4jobs.com/>

In 1966, the U.S. Department of Labor established The Federal Bonding Program to provide Fidelity Bonds that guarantee honesty for “at-risk,” hard-to-place job seekers. The bonds cover the first 6 months of employment. There is no cost to the job applicant or the employer. In most states, the bonds are made available through the state agency responsible for workforce matters. Some states, such as Florida, have found this program useful, and it has helped nearly 400 justice-involved job seekers use the federal bond to secure employment. Each state has a bonding coordinator and most American Job Centers have staff experienced with the Federal Bonding program.

National H.I.R.E. Network

<http://hirenetwork.org/?q=home>

This organization helps people with criminal records re-enter the workforce. It serves both as a national clearinghouse for information and an advocate for policy change.

The National Reentry Resource Center

<https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc>

The National Reentry Resource Center operates under the Council of State Governments Justice Center, which is a national nonprofit organization that serves policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels from all branches of government. Staff provides practical, nonpartisan advice and evidence-based, consensus-driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities. Readers may be particularly interested in [The Reentry and Employment Project](#).

The National Institute of Corrections

[National Institute of Corrections—Transition & Offender Workforce Development Division](#)

This Workforce Development Division coordinates the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies to improve employment programs for offenders and ex-offenders. It provides assistance to corrections professionals who provide direct services to offenders and ex-offenders, including ex-offenders with disabilities.

The Sequential Intercept Model

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/CJRS%20042314%20Item%203%20Sequential%20Intercept%20Model.pdf>

The Sequential Intercept Model provides a conceptual framework for communities to use when considering the interface between the criminal justice and mental health systems as they address concerns about criminalization of people with mental illness. The model envisions a series of points of interception at which an intervention can be made to prevent individuals from entering or penetrating deeper into the criminal justice system. Ideally, most people will be intercepted at early points, with decreasing numbers at each subsequent point.

Ban the Box

<http://www.nelp.org/publication/ban-the-box-fair-chance-hiring-state-and-local-guide/>

When justice-involved job seekers face a job application that asks, “Have you ever been arrested?” or “Have you ever been convicted of a crime?”, it feels like a signal that tells the applicant you are not welcome and are unlikely to get a job interview. More than 100 cities and counties, as well as a few states, have outlawed questions on job applications that query job applicant about their criminal background. This website will tell you which communities have banned the box, as well as offer information about current advocacy activities.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Corrections

<http://www.iriforum.org/download/35IRII.pdf>

Vocational Rehabilitation and Corrections: Achieving Successful Employment Outcomes for Persons with Disabilities and Criminal History is a 2012 publication from the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues No. 35. Addressing the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and criminal history (PDCH), this resource covers critical topics relevant to the vocational rehabilitation of ex-offenders with disabilities including collaboration and partnerships, strategies for program development and career development approaches with this population.

Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study, 2011-2015

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/ex-prisoner-reentry-strategies-study>

The Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study, being conducted by [The Urban Institute](#), will document the implementation of selected reentry programs initially funded in FY 2011 under the Responsible Fatherhood grant program, the experiences of staff and participants, and lessons useful to others in the field. Additional work will involve evaluation design recommendations and a focus on measures appropriate for use in evaluations of programs with similar goals and objectives as these grant programs.

Sesame Street helps Children with Incarcerated Parents

<http://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/incarceration>

“Sesame Street—Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration” gives tips and advice about how to talk with children about incarceration. As a service provider, you play an important role in helping families cope with the incarceration of a loved one. This resource may be useful for veterans with families, particularly younger justice-involved veterans, in helping children understand their parent’s incarceration.

Getting a Copy of Your Criminal Record and How to Fix Errors

Helping justice-involved job seekers review their criminal record is an important step in getting them ready for a job search. They need to know what employers are going to see when they request their record. [How do I get a copy of my criminal record?](#) was prepared by The Law Dictionary and can help people get started. Once you get a copy of the record, if there are errors, the person may want to consider fixing them. Because the process may be different in each state, here is an example from Michigan for people interested in [Fixing Mistakes on Your Criminal Record](#).

Expungement

Like criminal records the process for expungement is different in every state. Here is a link to a good, brief introduction to [Expungement Basics](#).

NVTAC

National Veterans Technical Assistance Center

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