



Arkansas Department of Correction

Re-Entry Handbook



Road to Re-Entry – Going Home to Stay

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Mission and Vision

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Correction is to:

- provide public safety by carrying out the mandates of the courts.
- provide a safe humane environment for staff and inmates.
- strengthen the work ethic through teaching of good habits.
- provide opportunities for staff and inmates to improve spiritually, mentally, and physically.

The Vision of the Arkansas Department of Correction is to be an honorable and professional organization through ethical and innovative leadership at all levels, providing cost efficient, superior correctional services that return productive people to the community.

Introduction

The Arkansas Department of Corrections is not responsible for you being here. You engaged in some behavior for which a sentence to the Arkansas Department of Correction is the price you pay. It is not the function of the Department to punish you, only hold you in a safe and humane manner and provide opportunities for you to improve yourself until you have completed your sentence.

The Arkansas Department of Correction is dedicated to providing services and programs that will assist inmates in their successful return to the community. As such, it is hoped that this reentry handbook will serve as a quick reference resource for information to aid both families of inmates being released from the ADC and the inmates as they return to the community. Contact information is provided in this booklet from various agencies to assist with barriers you may face while preparing to return to the community.

This Re-Entry handbook provides you with basic information about the Department's policies and procedures. The information in it does not cover every possible situation, and it may not reflect recent changes in policy or procedure. Official Department policies, Board Regulations (ARs), and laws control in the event of any discrepancies with the content of this handbook.

All Board Regulations and most Department policies can be reviewed at your unit's law library.

The Arkansas Department of Correction offers a Pre-Release Program should you want additional information; that program is a structured classroom program. It is also available in video format for inmates unable to participate in classroom instruction. The Pre-Release program promotes and provides an atmosphere to learn personal confidence, personal responsibility, self-respect and respect for others and value system. The ultimate purpose of the Pre-Release Program is to provide necessary life skills, job skills and resources which will aid in everyday life, both within and outside the prison system. The program is based on the expectation that the

acquisition of the above skills and personal abilities will significantly increase abilities to lead law-abiding, creative and fulfilling lives as contributing members of free society.

This handbook is available to all inmates, and all are encouraged to begin preparing for re-entry immediately.

Inmate Classifications

Inmates are classified in various ways: security classification, classification that determines the rate of good time earned, medical classification, and mental health classification. Security classification is the result of scoring established criteria including crime, length of sentence, disciplinary record, prior violence, escape history and various other factors that determine risk to the public and risk within the institution. The classification may limit the facilities to which an inmate can be assigned.

Good time classification places inmates in Class I, II, III, or IV status. Class I earns 30 days good time credit per month (for example, after 30 days in Class I status, the inmate has 60 days credit); Class II earns 20 days credit per month; Class III earns 10 days credit per month; and Class IV does not earn any good time. An inmate being held in a city or county jail awaiting transfer to ADC will be awarded good time at a Class II level unless the sheriff or staff submit a written report that recommends denial of this award.

Class status is not automatic. All inmates are placed in Class II status when they arrive at the Department. It is up to them to earn Class I status, and their class can be reduced because of disciplinary problems. Promotions in class status are handled by the Unit Classification Committee, which makes the decisions based on behavior and on recommendations from an inmate's work supervisor and/or other staff. This same committee may also make decisions regarding an inmate's assignment to protective custody or administrative segregation.

Health care professionals assign an inmate's medical classification based upon the health services policy. Mental health staff assigns an inmate's mental health code or classification. Any restrictions necessary for health reasons are taken into account by the classification committee when making an inmate's work assignment.

Personal Integrity

Personal Integrity is defined as a person's rigid adherence to a code or standard of values. In other words, integrity is honesty. It is doing what you know to be right.

Your integrity should be important to you as an individual. Remember to stick to the facts when telling about your personal daily experiences while assigned to the program. Do not exaggerate when writing or calling home. Do not blame others for any problems you have created.

Teamwork

Teamwork can be defined as “a joint action by a group of people in which group unity and efficiency are placed above individual interests.” A few examples of areas requiring teamwork are the living areas in the barracks such as the latrine or dayroom, when you are performing homework activities or special unit inspections.

Respect for Authority

By signing your name to a participant agreement, you agreed to obey the rules of the Pre-Release Agreement and orders given you by those appointed to positions of authority above you. Respect for authority and discipline go hand-in-hand, but the first one to be acquired is discipline. Self-discipline involves full and voluntary acceptance of authority. You respect authority when you realize that some things, both pleasant and unpleasant, must be done and that there must be people to see that they are done.

Living in a Prison Setting

Your cooperation and attitude toward yourself, the staff and other inmates play important roles in how you will get along. The staff is here to help while making sure that order and safety are maintained in the institution. When talking to staff and other inmates, you are expected to use common courtesies of conversation. An insubordinate or hostile manner will only make your situation more difficult.

While you are in the institution, you will frequently hear the word “rehabilitation.” You will probably be told that you are expected to become “rehabilitated.” However, no one can rehabilitate you. You must do this yourself with the help of the staff and programs of the institution to which you are assigned.

Rehabilitation means rebuilding. This rebuilding should include your attitude, values, work skills, and education. It is not going to be easy and will require a good deal of effort on your part. Your goals in rehabilitation should be a useful and productive life. You should learn to put others first.

Mental Health Services

Inmates can receive individual and group outpatient treatment from psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and counselors. The Residential Program Unit provides intensive treatment and specialized assessment.

The Ouachita Habilitation program provides management and treatment for people with cognitive disabilities.

Crisis intervention and management of self-injurious behavior is available at all units. If you think mental services are needed, contact the mental health staff at your unit.

Education

The beginning of the 1997-98 school years, academic education became mandatory for all inmates who do not have a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate. A full range of academic programs is available at most units, including special education and Title I and Title VI programs.

Summer school is available at some units, and homebound educational services are offered for inmates in segregation. Inmates progress at their own pace and work toward their GED certificate.

Vocational Training

Vocational courses available to inmates include graphic arts, electrician, culinary arts, plumbing, computer technology, heating and air conditioning, horticulture, printing occupations, computerized accounting, consumer electronics, cosmetology, cabinet making, carpentry, building & grounds maintenance, facilities maintenance, finish carpentry, graphic arts, landscape design & construction, office technology, upholstery, warehouse logistics, combination welding and small engine repair.

Religious Programs

Chaplains and volunteers provide religious services, pastoral counseling, study groups, revivals and other special events. Certified Religious Assistants are referred to as CRAs; they are volunteers who have attended special training to serve as an extension of the Department's Chaplaincy Services.

Most Certified Religious Assistants are lay people who volunteer on behalf of their denominations. Religious interaction is permitted in all housing areas. Chaplains and spiritual advisors interact according to the religious needs of the inmate.

Legal Services

There are two licensed Arkansas attorneys to assist with legal advice and explanations of court documents. The attorneys cannot represent inmates in court on post-conviction matters or in lawsuits against the Department of Correction or its employees. These lawyers are sometimes appointed by the court in certain civil cases or the Department of Human Services matters.

All units, except Work Release centers, have a law library that is open during set hours. The attorneys for inmates make sure information available at Unit law libraries is kept up to date.

Inmate complaints are called grievances and there is an established procedure for filing them. The process, including a description of grievable issues, is outlined in policies available to inmates in their unit law libraries.

Meritorious Good Time

Act 748 of 2011, which went into effect July 27, 2011, allows good time to be awarded for successful completion of additional ADC programs. In addition to the 180 days that can be awarded for each completion of General Education Development (GED), drug or alcohol treatment program or vocational education program, additional good time can be awarded for successful completion of Pre-Release and other rehabilitative programs or assignments as approved by the Board of Corrections. Pre-Release will bring an award of 180 days of good time following successful completion.

The amount only applies to inmates who are eligible to earn good time, and they may be changed at any time by the Board of Corrections. No inmate can earn more than 720 days of program good time, and good time cannot decrease a sentence by more than 50%.

An inmate's sentence can be changed only by the courts or commutation from the governor.

Work Assignments

A vital part of your self-improvement is the work habits you develop while you are here. All inmates who are physically able will be required to work. Work details include work in agriculture, maintenance, construction, food service, inmate services, clerical services and various industrial programs such as printing, graphic arts, vehicle body repair, sewing, furniture restoration/repair, etc. These provide a meaningful opportunity for you to learn a skill or trade while on a work assignment. Participation in the Pre-Release Program will not interfere with gaining marketable job skills. While participating in the Pre-Release Program you will be required to participate in a ½ day job assignment.

Parole/Transfer

Parole or transfer is early release from incarceration, and it is supervised and conditional. Since parole is a privileged and not a right, it may carry several conditions. An inmate can be required by the Parole Board to complete certain ADC programming such as pre-release, substance abuse treatment, various mental health classes, academic education, and vocational education, the Reduction of Sexual Victimization Program or the sex offender treatment program for females before being released on parole.

When interviewing an inmate for parole, the Board considers the following factors among others:

- Institutional adjustment in general, including the nature of any disciplinary actions.
- When considered necessary, an examination and opinion by a psychiatrist or psychologist.
- The record of previous criminal offenses (misdemeanors and felonies), the frequency of such offenses, and the nature thereof.
- Conduct in any previous release program, such as probation, parole, work release, boot camp, or alternative service.
- Recommendations made by the Judge, Prosecuting Attorney, and Sheriff of the county from which a person was sentenced, or other interested persons.
- The impact statements submitted by victims of crime.
- The nature of the release plan, including the type of community surroundings in the area the person plans to live and work.
- The results of a validated risk assessment.
- The inmate's employment record.
- The inmate's susceptibility to drugs or alcohol.
- The inmate's basic good physical and mental health.
- The inmate's participation in institutional activities, such as, educational programs, rehabilitation programs, work programs, and leisure time activities.
- The presence of a detainer from another law enforcement agency. (A detainer is not considered an automatic reason for denying parole.)

An inmate should always endeavor to be prepared by the time they meet the Board and not wait to be stipulated to complete a program.

Every inmate approved for parole must meet all conditions imposed on them by the Parole Board. If conditions of release are not met or if the offender fails to follow the reporting schedule, parole can be revoked and the offender can be sent back to prison. Communication is the key to successful supervision/parole. You should keep your parole officer informed and communicate issues you are facing; your officer may have a solution, but cannot help you if you fail to communicate with the officer. As an example, if you need to modify our community service hours due to employment, you need to discuss the issue with your parole officer.

Parole Eligibility/Transfer Eligibility Dates

The records offices of the various units compute parole eligibility or transfer eligibility dates. All inmates, except those sentenced to life, life without parole, death or certain repeat offenders can be eligible for parole/transfer at some point. Eligibility dates will depend on state laws concerning the crime, the sentence and goodtime. The eligibility date can change because of disciplinary action, good time, or additional convictions.

Early Release Program for Offenders to Transitional Housing Facilities (Act 679 of 2005)

Inmates held in the ADC, other than those excluded below are eligible for early release to a transitional housing facility, or an equivalent entity, licensed by the Department of Community Correction (ACC) up to one (1) year prior to the inmate's date of eligibility for parole or transfer. Inmates released under this program must reside at an approved transitional housing facility until they reach their eligibility date.

An inmate is not eligible for this program if:

1. They have failed to maintain Class I or II status at the time of petition or between the time of their hearing and release to the transitional housing facility.
2. They have served less than 6 months in the ADC. Time served in the county jail shall not be counted toward program eligibility.
3. They have been convicted of any of the following:
 - a. Any homicide, §§ 5-10-101 – 5-10-105
 - b. Battery in the first degree, § 5-13-201
 - c. Domestic battering in the first degree, § 5-26-303
 - d. Kidnapping, § 5-11-102
 - e. Aggravated robbery, § 5-12-103
 - f. Causing a catastrophe, § 5-38-202(a)
 - g. Engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, § 5-64-405
 - h. Simultaneous possession of drugs and firearms, § 5-74-106
4. They have been convicted of any offense requiring registration under the Sex Offender Registration Act of 1997.
5. They have been convicted of any offense determined by the Board to, by its nature or definition, involves violence, the threat of violence, the potential threat of violence, or the disregard for the safety of the lives of others.
6. They have received a disciplinary or conviction (§§ 5-54-110 – 5-54-112) for behavior related to an escape, or an attempted escape, from the ADC, DCC, or a law enforcement agency.

Eligible inmates shall submit a written petition to the Board for consideration under this program through their unit Institutional Release Officer. Once a petition has been received, reviewed, and the offender's eligibility has been determined, the offender will be scheduled for an Act 679 hearing before the Board.

Inmates released under this program will be supervised by ACC Officers under the guidelines of the Act 679 Conditions of Release established by the Parole Board (see Parole Board Manual Attachments). Inmates who violate program rules will be subject to having their release revoked until their regular eligibility date.

An offender who without permission leaves the custody of the transitional housing facility in which he or she is placed may be subject to criminal prosecution for escape, §§ 5-54-110 – 5-54-112.

Interested inmates should contact their unit Institutional Release Officer.

Arkansas Community Correction

Mission: "To enhance public safety by enforcing state laws and court mandates through community partnerships and evidence-based programs that hold offenders accountable while engaging them in opportunities to become law-abiding, productive citizens."

ACC is committed to providing services and treatment for inmates when they return to the community. We understand that navigating the many services available can be overwhelming, so ACC has established reentry coalitions dedicated to helping you locate quality services and treatment in your area. Reentry Coalitions are located throughout the State that consist of community members and organizations willing to assist returning parolees in locating services such as employment assistance or training, education, child care, housing, transportation, healthcare, and substance abuse treatment. Your parole officer can assist you with locating the closest Reentry Coalition and their meeting times and location. Members of the Reentry Coalitions are working together to ensure parolees in their communities have the necessary skills and tools to help them succeed. They can serve as the support structure to help build a solid foundation when you are back in the community. The assistance of the Reentry Coalitions is available to anyone in the community needing services or support.

Supervision of Parolees

The Arkansas Department of Correction does not supervise parolees. Supervision of parolees is provided by Arkansas Community Correction.

Successful Parole

You must have the willingness to accept responsibility for whatever led to your incarceration and have the mindset of wanting to change.

The Parole system works off the behavior modification process and basically it is YOU having the ability and the desire, along with our assistance to make positive change. Reporting within 24 hours is the first step because it shows your commitment to your parole. An intake and Risk/Needs Assessment is completed at your first visit. A supervision plan will then be developed between you and your supervising officer. You will be referred for services as necessary.

The goal of your supervision is to remain crime free and successfully integrate back into society.

We will provide you with opportunities to obtain employment and to enroll in educational programs. You will need to consider what is most important to you, living crime free or a life of incarceration. There will be a sanction process for non-compliance which may result in the revocation of your parole. Incentives are offered for compliance and meeting certain goals.

Together we share the same community; therefore working together we can reach goals and change lives.

Arkansas Community Correction Treatment Services

During your time in Arkansas Community Correction (ACC) as a probationer or parolee, you may be eligible to participate in treatment/rehabilitative services available within ACC. With the exception of Drug Court fee, you are not charged a fee when you participate in programs. While each program has eligibility criteria, your admission to a specific program is mainly determined by an assessment of your needs. As you reconnect with society, you may also visit the Reentry Solutions Portal at <http://alpha.csenext.com> for more information on helpful resources. Below is the process for getting ACC services as you join the ACC community.

Your assigned ACC officer will refer you to a Substance Abuse Program Leader (SAPL) for an assessment if you are Board ordered for a specific program, and the SAPL would make recommendations based on the assessment. Following a discussion with you at any time during your stay with ACC, your officer may also refer you to an SAPL for assessment if the officer observes symptoms of concern including recurrent positive tests for substance use. You are also welcomed to ask your officer to refer you to an SAPL at any time for assessment or to “talk to someone” about an issue you may have.

Once you are admitted to a program, attendance and participation are important. Sanctions and incentives are used to encourage your participation. The Substance Abuse Program Leader communicates with your officer in matters of attendance and participation; this is so the officer could monitor your compliance with supervision requirements. The SAPL will maintain confidentiality of clinical issues you discuss and would only disclose such matters as required by law. It is essential you understand that the SAPL is a mandatory reporter; this means the SAPL is required by law to report any information you provide about any child abuse, elderly abuse, or a threat specific to an individual or an entity. All other personal issues you discuss in therapy with an SAPL are confidential.

In addition to the services provided within Arkansas Community Correction, the SAPL may refer you to other services in the community as needed. Such services may include: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Adult Education, Employment, Housing, Healthcare, Recreational Services, etc. If you have not already signed up for the Affordable Healthcare, please talk to your officer or SAPL for information on how to go about doing so because this is beneficial to you. You may also look up information about healthcare at www.healthcare.gov.

Below is a list of treatment/rehabilitative services available within Probation & Parole Services. We use evidence-based curriculums with foci that include promotion of rational belief system, positive thinking, productive attitude and behavior. All programs are outpatient:

Assessment & Referral: Assessments are conducted by credentialed counselors and Counselors-in-Training under the supervision of a certified Clinical Supervisor and referrals are made to other behavioral health services in the community as needed.

SATP (Substance Abuse Treatment Program): Is available in 6 and 12-week Educational Tracks and 16-week Treatment Track. Using individual and group sessions, the program addresses substance use disorder and recovery related topics with considerations for co-occurring disorders. Limited mental health and family services provided within scope of practice and referrals are made as needed to related community service providers.

SATP for Sex Offenders: Same as above; designed specifically for sex offenders. This is in addition to the specialized sex offender management program that addresses sex offender specific issues in individual and group sessions. Services to sex offenders include periodic polygraphs.

Life and Social Skills: Addresses daily life and relationship skills, G.E.D., employment skills, attitude, self-awareness and improvement, etc. Program runs 12 to 16 weeks and gender specific groups are offered as needed.

Drug Court: ACC works in collaboration with the courts to provide supervision, substance use disorder treatment, and related behavioral health needs. The 18 month outpatient program is divided into phases, refers clients to residential treatment as needed, and employs 12 Steps and other cognitive-behavioral based curriculums.

Tobacco Use Treatment Program: Provides education on effects of tobacco use to all clients receiving treatment services. The 6 week Treatment Track program is designed for clients willing to attempt cessation, and quit-line referral is made for additional assistance.

Continuing Care: Addresses relapse prevention, daily life management skills, and issues relating to return to society after incarceration. The program is for clients who have successfully completed a treatment program or Boot Camp residents returning to the community. The 6 month program requires weekly groups for the first three months and a monthly individual session each month for the last three months.

Day Reporting Center: (In Fort Smith, Fayetteville, Little Rock, Texarkana, & West Memphis). Primarily for clients lacking a structured and productive daily lifestyle; no job, not in school, no clearly defined daily goals, etc. This client reports to the Day Reporting Center and participates in structured group activities from e.g. 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. when the Center closes until his/her lifestyle changes. Clients with structured daily life but in need of specific service may participate in a specific group scheduled within the Day Reporting Center's operating hours as need.

Community Programs: Programs vary by areas and include:

___ Outpatient Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs

___ Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs

___ Mental Health Services

___ Medical Services

___ Employment and Adult Education

___ DHS, etc.

You may also meet criteria for one of the community-based residential centers operated by Arkansas Community Correction. Below is a brief introduction of the programs; your officer would coordinate the referral as appropriate if you qualify for the program:

Long Term Program: This is a 9 to 12 month modified therapeutic community program with the goal of overall lifestyle changes for the client. The program employs a positive peer culture approach and has three main phases that are progress driven. Foci include thinking errors, responsibility, and ultimately a return to life in society without criminal activities and substance use disorder.

Short Term Program: This is a 30 – 90 day intensive residential treatment program designed primarily for drug court clients in need of a level of treatment higher than outpatient. Daily structured activities include individual and group sessions, cognitive intervention, anger management, Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous, etc.

Technical Violator Program: This is a 60 – 90 day phase system program designed as an alternative to prison for technical violators. A technical violator is a parolee who has violated a condition of current parole. The program is intensive with daily structured activities, and upon completion, participants return to society and complete the Continuing Care program under community supervision.

Special Needs Program: This 6 – 12 month long term modified therapeutic community program is designed for co-occurring disorder clients with substance use disorder, mental health, and or medical issues. Services include individual and group sessions, and the program employs guided activities tailored to individual ability and need.

In addition to positive life changes, incentives for your successful participation in some of these programs and demonstration of changed attitude and behaviors include certificate of completion, reduction in community service hours, material gifts, and reduction of fees as applicable. The services are available to you, the staffs have credentials and are ready to serve; the result you get is dependent on your honest participation. We welcome you to Arkansas Community Correction and we are here to work with you.

Arkansas Community Correction Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing Facilities provide structured case management services including housing, treatment, support, community/family engagement and work opportunities at the release of the incarcerated. They also serve individuals assigned to the facilities by the courts. Some facilities serve and house a population of both offender and those in the community who need housing and/or treatment.

Incarcerated individuals who have no approved parole plan to family or friend may ask their institutional parole officer about the possibility of temporary housing in a transitional facility.

Participants must agree to abide by facility rules and regulations as well as the conditions of their release and are expected to obtain employment as soon as possible.

The goal of all transitional facilities is to aid the offender in the acclimation back into free society as an employed, self-supporting individual.

ACC Licensed Transitional Housing Facilities

| Organization Name | Intake Info. | Cap. | Area | Address | Phone | Contact | Renewal |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------|------|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| A. O. Decision Point | Male & Female | 65 | 1 | 602 N. Walton Blvd. Bentonville, AR 72712 | 479-464-1060 | Jim Clark | 6/1/15 |
| Arkansas Cares | Women w/Children | 54 | 7 | 5821 Charles Bussey Ave Little Rock, AR 72204 | 501-661-0720 501-661-7180 | S. Delee Rickett | 5/15/15 |
| ARVAC Freedom House | Male & Female | 28 | 6 | 400 Lake Front Drive Russellville, AR 72802 | 479-968-7086 | Gary Rhodes | 9/5/14 |
| Casa Women's Shelter | Women & Children | 33 | 11 | 1113 State Street Pine Bluff, AR 71611 | 870-535-2955 | Karen Palmer | 7/14/15 |
| Chance Sobriety | Male Only | | | | | | |
| Covenant Recovery, Inc. | Male & Female | 53 | 11 | 3201 West Pullen Pine Bluff, AR 71601 | 870-850-7527 | Jeremy McKenzie | 5/28/15 |
| Darnell Brown Community Development | Female Only | 9 | 12 | 917 Garland Ave Texarkana, AR 71854 | 870-216-1570 | W. Darlena Brown | 3/19/15 |
| D.A.R.P. Foundation | Male Only | 76 | 1 | 1199 Grant Decatur, AR 72722 | 918-459-9265 | Raymond Jones | 7/22/15 |
| Effort Development Foundation | Male Only | 8 | 4 | 201 West McHaney Street Blytheville, AR 72315 | 870-740-3502 | Jay E. Slaughter | 3/19/15 |
| Gateway Recovery Center | Women & Children | 32 | 5 | 3900 Armour Fort Smith, AR 72904 | 479-785-4083 | Jimmie Wooding | 11/20/14 |
| Gyst House | Male & Female | 80 | 7 | 8101 Frenchman's Lane Little Rock, AR 72209 | 501-568-1682 | Stephanie Norvell | 3/12/15 |
| Harbor Recovery Center | Male Only | 31 | 5 | 615 North 19th Street Fort Smith, AR 72901 | 479-785-4043 | William "Brad" Walker | 1/13/15 |
| Hidden Creek Development Center | Male & Female | 30 | 7 | 10905 West Markham Little Rock, AR 72211 | 501-221-1025 | Bill Allen | 3/14/15 |
| Hoover Center | Male & Female | 30 | 7 | 3805 West 12th Street Little Rock, AR 72204 | 501-663-4774 | Richard Richardson | 7/12/15 |
| Freedom for Life | Female Only | | | | | | |
| Jumpstart Ministries | Male Only | 16 | 3 | 3262 Hwy 67 B Walnut Ridge, AR 72476 | 870-637-5916 | Danny Whitmire | 2/12/15 |
| New Hope Living Center | Male Only | 25 | 7 | 1522 Scott Street Little Rock, AR | 501-376-2457 | Fatima Baird | 12/23/14 |

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|--|---------------|-----|----|--|--------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Northeast Regional Recovery Center | Male & Female | 56 | 4 | 6009 C.W. Post Road Jonesboro, AR 72401 | 870-932-0228 | Darla Tate | 7/9/15 |
| OMART | Male & Female | 32 | 2 | 116 Snowball Drive Gassville, AR 72635 | 870-435-6200 | Darlene Prine | 11/6/14 |
| Phoenix Recovery, Inc. | Male Only | 126 | 6 | 1224 Jersey Street Conway, AR | 501-499-6696 | Matt Bell Dean Castle | 8/6/15 |
| Project New Start Ester House | Female Only | 32 | 3 | 712 Malcolm Street Newport, AR 72212 | 870-523-8413 | Tim Bumpous | 6/5/15 |
| Project New Start Joshua House | Male Only | 8 | 3 | 1600 Bryant Street Newport, AR 72212 | 870-523-8413 | Tim Bumpous | 6/5/15 |
| Project New Start Gideon House | Male Only | 15 | 3 | 1501 Bryant Street Newport, AR 72212 | 870-523-8413 | Tim Bumpous | 6/5/15 |
| Project New Start Promise Land | Male Only | 21 | 3 | 903 Second Street Newport, AR 72212 | 870-523-8412 | Tim Bumpous | 6/5/15 |
| Quality Living Center 1 | Male Only | 48 | 7 | 3925 Asher Street Little Rock, AR 72204 | 501-663-3490 | Curtis Keith | 5/16/15 |
| Quality Living Center 2 | Female Only | 20 | 7 | 2900 South Cedar Street Little Rock, AR 72204 | 501-663-3490 | Curtis Keith | 5/16/15 |
| Quapaw House Hazel Street | Male Only | 24 | 10 | 225 Hazel Street Hot Springs, AR 71901 | 501-760-4764 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Quapaw House B.A.R.B. Place | Female Only | 20 | 10 | 274 Linden Street Hot Springs, AR 71901 | 501-760-4764 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Quapaw House Newton House | Female Only | 10 | 10 | 301 Walters Street Hot Springs, AR 71913 | 501-767-4456 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Quapaw House Security House | Male Only | 40 | 10 | 619 Hobson Street Hot Springs, AR 71913 | 501-767-4456 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Quapaw House Harmony House | Female Only | 16 | 10 | 1309 West Grand Avenue Hot Springs, AR 71913 | 501-760-4764 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Quapaw House Inc. | Male & Female | 46 | 10 | 812 Mountain Pine Road Hot Springs, AR 71913 | 501-767-4456 | Jessie Jester | 8/13/14 |
| Recovery Center of Arkansas Riverbend | Male & Female | 84 | 7 | 1201 River Road North Little Rock, AR 72114 | 501-614-4607 | Carole Baxter | 7/22/15 |
| Recovery Center of Arkansas Williamsburg | Male & Female | 108 | 7 | 6301 Father Tribou Little Rock, AR 72205 | 501-614-4900 | Carole Baxter | 7/22/15 |
| River Ridge Treatment Center | Male & Female | 29 | 12 | 7000 N. Stateline Ave. Texarkana, AR 71854 | 870-774-1315 | Mitch Francis | 5/1/15 |
| Safe Harbor | Male Only | 56 | 7 | 4800 Confederate Blvd. Little Rock, AR 72206 | 501-374-5399 | Charles Sims | 10/16/14 |
| Sober Living | Male & Female | 70 | 7 | 4201 John Barrow Little Rock, AR 72204 | 501-562-0507 | Jennifer Davidson | 2/12/15 |

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| Sobriety Living Center | Male & Female | 55 | 11 | 2100 West 5th Street Pine Bluff, AR 71601 | 870-535-1111 | Jennifer Stewart | 8/4/14 |
| South Arkansas Substance Abuse | Male & Female | 70 | 13 | 100 Hargett El Dorado, AR 71730 | 870-881-9301 | Paul Meason | 8/6/14 |
| St. Francis House | Veterans only | 56 | 7 | 2701 South Elm Street Little Rock, AR 72214 | 501-664-5036 | Ken Mace | 12/23/14 |
| Wilbur D. Mills Kay Goss Apartments | Female Only | 17 | 3 | 3202 East Moore Street Searcy, AR 72143 | 501-268-7777 | Rod Smith | 8/6/14 |
| Wilbur D. Mills Homestead House | Male & Female | 14 | 3 | 3210 East Moore Street Searcy, AR 72143 | 501-268-7777 | Rod Smith | 8/6/14 |
| Wilbur D. Mills McCrory Clinic | Male & Female | 50 | 9 | 900 West Popular Street McCrory, AR 72101 | 501-268-7777 | Rod Smith | 8/6/14 |
| Wilbur D. Mills Batesville Transitional Living | Male & Female | 20 | 3 | 1355 Main Street Batesville, AR 72501 | 501-268-7777 | Rod Smith | 8/6/14 |
| Wilbur D. Mills Treatment | Male & Female | 46 | 3 | 3204 East Moore Street Searcy, AR 72143 | 501-268-7777 | Rod Smith | 8/6/14 |
| Wings of Freedom | Male Only | 37 | 7 | 2800 East Dixon Road Little Rock, AR 72206 | 501-590-8463 | Jerry Wardlaw | 5/28/15 |
| Licensed Facility but NOT on Approved Vendor List | | | | | | | |

Pardons

Pardons are granted by the Governor and are used to restore rights that may have been lost as a result of a criminal conviction. An application for pardon can be obtained from an Institutional Release Parole Officer; or, after release from the Arkansas Board of Parole.

Right to Vote

The Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 51, Section 11, (d)(2) provides that after a person with a felony conviction has discharged his sentence or been pardoned, he shall provide the county clerk with proof along with proof that all probation or parole fees and terms of imprisonment have been satisfied along with all court costs, fines, or restitution. Section (B) provides that upon proof, the felon shall be eligible to vote.

Child Support Obligations

Incarcerated Parents

Being in jail or prison does not automatically change a court-ordered obligation to financially support your children. Contact the local child support agency enforcing your order to let them know you're in jail.



What Is *NPOWR!*?

A program designed to assist noncustodial parents (NCPs) who are behind on child support payments by offering referral for employment placement assistance and job readiness services.

Who Is Eligible For Participation?

Noncustodial parents who are unemployed and behind in their child support payments and are in OCSE's current case load. NCPs with open child support cases may be referred to the program by the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) or, in some cases, by the court system.

You may be eligible for the NPOWR program if:

- You are unemployed
- You have child support arrears
- You have not paid in 30 days

- There are no pending or existing OCSE legal actions on your case such as body attachments or pick up orders
- Your case has not been referred for criminal non-support

How Does The Program Work?

- The program is voluntary unless you have been ordered by the court system to participate in the program. If you are interested in participating in the NPOWR program, you may contact us and ask us to review your case for program eligibility. OCSE will contact you to explain the status of your child support obligation and criteria for participation in the program.
- If your case meets the eligibility criteria, you will be scheduled to attend a program orientation session. The orientation will provide details of the program and the employment assistance services that the Arkansas Workforce Centers will provide to you.
- The Workforce Center will provide job search support such as employment leads, skills assessment, help with resume writing, and other related job search activities.
- As a program participant, you will be required to make a minimum of three valid job contacts per week.
- You will be required to provide proof of job search activities to OCSE every 30 days.
- Maximum program participation is 90 days.

What Happens If I Can't Find A Job?

If you have not found a job after 90 days of participating in the program OCSE will review your case and contact you to discuss the options that are available to you.

What Happens If I Don't Follow The Program?

To participate in the program, you must follow the program's guidelines. If you do not, your participation in the program will be terminated and any and all court sanctions or enforcement actions will immediately apply.

You may be dropped from the program for any of the following reasons. If you:

- Do not report to the Workforce Center as required by the program's guidelines
- Miss scheduled appointments with employers, OCSE, Workforce Center counselors, or the court
- Fail to comply with the employment plan established by the Workforce Center counselor
- Fail to report employment status
- Fail to provide proof of job search

- Are unwilling to continue participation in the program

Any display of disruptive, threatening, or non-cooperative behavior at any time towards any staff member of agencies administering the program will result in immediate termination from the program and any court sanctions or enforcement actions will immediately apply.

What are the Advantages of Participating in the Program?

While you are participating in this program, OCSE will not take action to suspend your driver's license, automobile license plates, or any professional licenses you may hold. If your licenses have already been suspended, we will initiate action to release them. Additionally, OCSE will not file legal action against you. However, if you were ordered into the program by the court system, the program's guidelines cannot supersede the judge's orders.

Other enforcement remedies, such as interception of your state and federal tax refund, passport denial, and credit bureau reporting, are required by federal law to continue. Additionally, state law requires that OCSE refer cases meeting certain criteria to the appropriate prosecuting attorney for possible prosecution for failure to support a child.

Will I Have To Make Child Support Payments While I Am Participating In The Program?

Your child support obligation will still be in force and continue to accrue while you participate in the *NPOWR!* Program. However, as explained in the previous section, OCSE will suspend certain administrative and civil actions against you during your participation in the program.

Contact Us

For more information on the program or to find out if your case may be eligible for the program, you may:

- Call the *NPOWR!* Program Information line at (501) 371-5020. You will be asked to leave your name and telephone number. We will contact you regarding the program.
- Fill in the online *NPOWR!* Inquiry form at www.childsupport.arkansas.gov which can be accessed by selecting the Noncustodial Parent link, and then selecting the *NPOWR!* link.

The Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement administers the *NPOWR* Program in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, and Arkansas Workforce Investment Boards. Case management decisions are made by

the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement. Any questions regarding your case should be directed to your OCSE caseworker.



PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Program Eligibility

Noncustodial parents (NCPs) who have failed to comply with orders for payment of child support and are unemployed are eligible to have their cases reviewed for participation in the *NPOWR!* Program. The program is intended to offer an alternative to coercive and punitive support enforcement actions by providing employment placement and readiness services. However cases that have been submitted to law enforcement officials for criminal non-support are not eligible for the program, unless specifically referred by the Courts. The program is voluntary unless mandated by the courts. The program is currently open to NCPs residing in Pulaski County and Lonoke County. The NCP must live in one of the participating counties; however, the NCP's case(s) can be an open case in any county within Arkansas.

Participating Agencies

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) administers the *NPOWR* Program, in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Boards.

Making Referrals

Non-custodial parents can be referred to the program by either the court or OCSE.

1. **Court Referral** – The *NPOWR!* Program will be made available to the courts as an alternative to civil or criminal sanctions, such as jail time, and will provide a structured and monitored course of skills assessment, educational or training referral if needed, and job placement. The Court may stipulate participation in the program and/or in addition to any other court sanctions.
2. **OCSE Referral** - OCSE may refer noncustodial parents to the program as an early intervention step in an effort to avoid a non-payment situation, thereby reducing the need for legal action or administrative enforcement remedies.

Program Participation Guidelines

1. Upon confirmation of program participation, the NCP will be required to attend an orientation session and report to the Workforce Center for an appointment with a counselor within five business days of attending the orientation. Failure to do so may result in revocation of eligibility for participation in the program or other sanctions.
2. NCP will engage in job seeking activities with the assistance of Workforce Center counselors, utilizing the tools and resources available at the Workforce Centers.
3. The Workforce Center counselors will conduct skills assessment to determine appropriate course of action needed for highest probability of successfully obtaining employment. Other assistance may be provided by the Workforce Center, which may include transportation assistance, education and training assistance, work related expenses and other services that may be necessary in support of the employment effort.
4. NCP will be required to make a minimum of 3 job contacts/interviews per week. Contact includes job interviews, applications submitted in response to newspaper ads, online job searches and walk-in job inquiries.
5. NCP must provide proof of job search activities to OCSE every 30 days until employment is obtained. OCSE will review employment activities and payment status in support of program compliance.
6. Maximum participation in the program should not exceed 90 days. If employment is not obtained after 90 days of program participation, the case will be reviewed by OCSE for further action.
7. Child support payments will continue to accrue while NCP participates in the *NPOWR!* Program and collection of support through income withholding and state or federal tax offset will continue. Certain OCSE administrative enforcement actions such as license suspensions and other OCSE legal actions may be temporarily suspended upon program participation, unless specified otherwise by court order.

Non-Compliance and Termination of Program Participation

1. An NCP will be deemed in non-compliance of the *NPOWR!* program and may be terminated from the program for any of the following reasons:

The NCP:

- a) Does not report to the Workforce Center within the time frame specified by program guidelines
 - b) Misses scheduled appointments with employers, OCSE, Workforce Center counselors, or the court
 - c) Fails to comply with the employment plan established by the Workforce Center counselor
 - d) Fails to report employment status
 - e) Fails to provide proof of job search
 - f) Is unwilling to continue participation in the program
2. Each incidence of non-compliance will be reviewed by OCSE to determine appropriate course of action.
 3. Program guidelines may permit continuation in the program if it can be shown that the non-compliance was due to circumstances beyond the NCPs control.
 4. Any display of disruptive, threatening, or non-cooperative behavior at any time during program participation towards any staff member of agencies administering the program will result in immediate termination from the program and any and all court sanctions or enforcement actions will immediately apply.

Program Administration

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) administers the *NPOWR* Program, in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Boards. However, neither the partner agencies nor their staffs serve in an enforcement capacity in conjunction with this program. Enforcement actions are the sole responsibility of the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Inquiries

For more information on the program or to find out if your case may be eligible for the program, you may:

- Call the *NPOWR!* Program Information line at (501) 371-5020. You will be asked to leave your name and telephone number. We will contact you regarding the program.
- Fill in the online *NPOWR!* Inquiry form at www.childsupport.arkansas.gov which can be accessed by selecting the Noncustodial Parent link, and then selecting the *NPOWR!* link.

Inquiries regarding program administration should be directed to the Communications and Outreach Department at (501) 682-6079. Program guidelines are available on the OCSE website at www.childsupport.arkansas.gov which can also be found under the Noncustodial Parent link.

Social Security – What Prisoners Need to Know

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments generally are not payable for months that you are confined to a jail, prison or certain other public institutions for commission of a crime. You are not automatically eligible for Social Security or SSI payments when you are released.

Who can get Social Security benefits?

Social Security disability benefits can be paid to people who have recently worked and paid Social Security taxes and are unable to work because of a serious medical condition that is expected to last at least a year or result in death. The fact that a person is a recent parolee or is unemployed does not qualify as a disability.

Social Security retirement benefits can be paid to people who are age 62 or older. Generally, you must have worked and paid Social Security taxes for 10 years to be eligible.

Who can get SSI payments?

SSI can be paid to people who are age 65 or older or who are blind or disabled and whose income and resources are below certain limits.

No benefits are payable for any month in which you reside in a jail, prison or certain other public institutions.

What happens to my benefits when I am in prison?

If you are receiving Social Security, your benefits will be suspended if you are admitted for more than 30 continuous days to a jail or prison because you were convicted of a criminal offense. Your benefits can be reinstated starting with the month following the month you are released.

Although you cannot receive monthly Social Security benefits while you are confined, benefits to your spouse or children will continue as long as they remain eligible.

If you are receiving SSI, your payments are suspended while you are in prison. Your payments can be reinstated in the month you are released. However, if your confinement lasts for 12

consecutive months or longer, your eligibility for SSI benefits will terminate and you must file a new application for benefits.

Can I get my benefits started when I am ready to be released?

If your Social Security or SSI benefits were suspended because you were in prison, you can request that they be started. You will need to contact Social Security and provide a copy of your release documents before we can take action on your request.

Example: George was receiving **Social Security disability benefits**. He was convicted and confined to prison on May 15, 2007, and his benefits were suspended effective with May 2007. On October 10, 2009, George was released and his benefits were reinstated effective with November 2009. Since Social Security benefits are paid in the month following the month for which they are due, George will receive his November benefit in December.

Example: Sam was receiving **SSI disability benefits** and was confined to prison on June 7, 2009. He was released on September 7, 2009. His SSI can be reinstated as of September 7. Sam will be eligible for a partial payment for September and full benefits for October.

If you were not receiving either Social Security or SSI benefits before you went to prison or your SSI benefits were terminated, you will need to file a new application for benefits if you think you may be eligible. You should contact Social Security for more information about filing a claim for benefits. You will need to provide proof of your release from prison, in addition to a new application and other documents.

***NOTE:** We cannot start your benefits until you are actually released. And we must have your official release documents from the jail or prison where you were confined. Please remember to bring your release forms when you visit your local Social Security office. This will help us get your benefits started more quickly.*

What about my Medicare or Medicaid coverage?

Your eligibility for Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) continues uninterrupted while you are in prison. But **Part B Medicare** (medical insurance) will terminate if you do not pay your monthly premiums while you are in prison. To start Part B Medicare, you will need to file an application with us during a general enrollment period, which is January through March of each year. If you file during this enrollment period, your Part B eligibility will begin on July 1 of that year.

If your Medicaid eligibility was terminated while you were in prison, you will need to contact your local social services office to apply for Medicaid coverage. We can provide a referral form for you to take to the social services office.

How do I file an application if I am in prison?

After you know your release date, notify someone at your facility that you want to start your Social Security or SSI benefits. **If your institution has a prerelease agreement with the local Social Security office**, it will notify us if you are likely to meet the requirements for SSI or Social Security benefits. We will obtain an application from you several months before your anticipated release. That way, we can begin processing your application and your benefits can start as soon as possible after your release.

If you are filing for benefits based on disability, we will gather medical evidence from your doctors to help us decide whether you are disabled under our rules.

Family members or a social worker can help you by contacting Social Security to let us know of your upcoming release. A family member also may be willing to serve as your representative payee if your medical condition prevents you from handling your own finances.

If there is no prerelease agreement, when you know your anticipated release date, contact Social Security to apply for benefits if you think you may be eligible. You can call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** and tell the representative that you are scheduled to be released from a correctional facility and want to ask about receiving benefits. Please have your Social Security number handy when you contact us. We will set up an appointment with your local Social Security office to take your application after you are released.

What happens if I have a financial emergency and cannot pay my bills?

If the prerelease procedure is used and you are qualified for benefits, we usually can get your benefits started soon after your release. If we are unable to do so and you are facing a financial emergency, we can issue a payment immediately if we determine that:

- You are eligible for either Social Security or SSI benefits;
- You are already due a payment; and
- Your situation qualifies as a financial emergency under our rules.

Contacting Social Security

For more information and to find copies of our publications, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free, **1-800-772-1213** (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**). We treat all calls confidentially. We can answer specific questions from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We can provide automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.



Your nine-digit Social Security number remains your first and continuous link with Social Security. It helps us accurately record your covered wages or self-employment earnings. We also use it to monitor your record once you start getting benefits.

Why Do I Need One?

You need a Social Security number to get a job, collect Social Security benefits and get some other government services. But you don't often need to show your Social Security card. **Do not carry your card with you. Keep it in a safe place with your other important papers.**

How do I apply for a new or replacement Social Security number card?

You can get an original Social Security card or a replacement card if yours is lost or stolen by following the steps below. You cannot apply for a card online. There is no charge for a Social Security card. This service is free.

You will need to:

Show the required documents. We need to see different documents depending on your citizenship and the type of card you are requesting.

Fill out and print an [Application for a Social Security Card](#); and

Take or mail your application and documents to your [local Social Security office](#)

How do I change or correct my name on my Social Security number card?

If you legally change your name because of marriage, divorce, court order or any other reason, you must tell Social Security so you can get a corrected card. You cannot apply for a card online. There is no charge for a Social Security card. This service is free.

To get a corrected Social Security card, you will need to:

Show the required documents. You will need proof of your identity. Sometimes you also may need to prove your current U.S. citizenship or lawful noncitizen status.

Fill out and print an [Application for a Social Security Card](#); and

Take or mail your application and documents to your [local Social Security office](#).

Original Card for a U.S. Born Adult (Age 12 or Older)

Important

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. We also cannot accept a receipt showing you applied for the document.

Get a [certified copy of a document](#) showing a birth, marriage or divorce that took place in the U.S.

What original documents do I need?

Citizenship

We can accept only certain documents as proof of U.S. citizenship. These include a U.S. birth certificate or a U.S. passport.

Age

You must present your birth certificate. If one exists, you must submit it. If a birth certificate does not exist, we may be able to accept your:

- Religious record made before the age of 5 showing your date of birth;
- U.S. hospital record of your birth; or
- United States passport.

Anyone age 12 or older requesting an original Social Security number must appear in person for an interview. We will ask for evidence to show you do not have a Social Security number. Here are examples of documents you can use to prove a Social Security number was never assigned:

- If you lived outside the United States for an extended period, a current or previous passport, school and/or employment records, and any other record that would show long-term residence outside the United States could be used to show you do not have a Social Security number.
- If you have lived in the United States and you are applying for an original Social Security number, we may ask you for information about the schools you attended or we may ask you to provide copies of tax records that would show you were never assigned a Social Security number.

Identity

We can accept only certain documents as proof of identity. An acceptable document must be current (not expired) and show your name, identifying information (date of birth or age) and preferably a recent photograph. For example, as proof of identity Social Security must see your:

- U.S. driver's license;
- State-issued non-driver identification card; or
- United States passport.

If you do not have one of these specific documents or you cannot get a replacement for one of them within 10 days, we will ask to see other documents, including:

- Employee identification card;
- School identification card;
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card); or
- United States military identification card.

Note

*We may use one document for two purposes. For example, we may use your U.S. passport as proof of both citizenship and identity. **However, you must provide at least two separate documents.***

Replacement Card for a U.S. Born Adult

You can replace your Social Security card for free if it is lost or stolen. However, you may not need to get a replacement card. Knowing your Social Security number is what is important. You are limited to three replacement cards in a year and 10 during your lifetime. Legal name changes and other exceptions do not count toward these limits. For example, changes in immigration status that require card updates may not count toward these limits. Also, you may not be affected by these limits if you can prove you need the card to prevent a significant hardship.

Important

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. We also cannot accept a receipt showing you applied for the document.

Get a certified copy of a document showing a birth, marriage or divorce that took place in the U.S.

We will mail your card as soon as we have all of your information and have verified your documents. Your replacement card will have the same name and number as your previous card.

What original documents do I need?

Citizenship

If you have not already established your U.S. citizenship with us, we need to see proof of U.S. citizenship. We can accept only certain documents as proof of U.S. citizenship. These include a U.S. birth certificate or U.S. passport.

Identity

We can accept only certain documents as proof of identity. An acceptable document must be current (not expired) and show your name, identifying information (date of birth or age) and preferably a recent photograph. For example, as proof of identity Social Security must see your:

- U.S. driver's license;
- State-issued non-driver identification card; or
- United States passport.

If you do not have one of these specific documents or you cannot get a replacement for one of them within 10 days, we will ask to see other documents, including:

- Employee identification card;
- School identification card;
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card); or
- United States military identification card.

Note

We may use one document for two purposes. For example, we may use your U.S. passport as proof of both citizenship and identity.

Corrected Card for a U.S. Born Adult

If you legally change your name because of marriage, divorce, court order or any other reason, you need to tell Social Security so that you can get a corrected card. If you are working, also tell your employer. If you do not tell us when your name changes, it may:

- Delay your tax refund; and
- Prevent your wages from being posted correctly to your Social Security record, which may lower the amount of your future Social Security benefits.

Important

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. We also cannot accept a receipt showing you applied for the document.

Get a [certified copy of a document](#) showing a birth, marriage or divorce that took place in the U.S.

We may use one document for two purposes. For example, we may use your U.S. passport as proof of both citizenship and identity.

What original documents do I need?

Citizenship

If you have not already established your U.S. citizenship with us, we need to see proof of U.S. citizenship. We can accept only certain documents as proof of U.S. citizenship. These include a U.S. birth certificate or U.S. passport.

Important

This documentation is only required if you have NOT already established citizenship with us.

Name change

If you need to change your name on your Social Security card, you must show us a recently issued document as proof of your legal name change. Documents Social Security may accept to prove a legal name change include:

- Marriage document;
- Divorce decree;
- Certificate of Naturalization showing the new name; or
- Court order approving the name change.

If the document you provide as evidence of a legal name change does not give us enough information to identify you in our records or if you changed your name more than two years ago (four years ago if you are under 18 years of age), you must show us an identity document in your prior name (as shown in our records). We will accept an identity document in your old name that has expired.

If you do not have an identity document in your prior name, we may accept an unexpired identity document in your new name, as long as we can properly establish your identity in our records.

Identity

We can accept only certain documents as proof of identity. An acceptable document must be current (not expired) and show your name, identifying information (date of birth or age) and preferably a recent photograph. For example, as proof of identity Social Security must see your:

- U.S. driver's license;
- State-issued non-driver identification card; or
- United States passport.

If you do not have one of these specific documents or you cannot get a replacement for one of them within 10 days, we will ask to see other documents, including:

- Employee identification card;
- School identification card;
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card); or
- United States military identification card.

Note

Your new card will have the same number as your previous card, but will show your new name. We will mail your card as soon as we have all of your information and have verified your documents.

Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration

Driver Records

Arkansas driving records are governed by Arkansas code section 27-50-901 et. Seq. The statutes are more restricted in the release of information than the Federal Privacy Protection Act. Your records related to your drivers' license have been and continue to be confidential. They can only be released under certain exceptions. Those exceptions include when a release is given to you by others. The release must be signed and dated and include your name, drivers' license number date of birth and the name of the person whom the information is to be released to. This release will remain in effect for 5 years, unless you file a written withdrawal.

You may obtain a copy of your record in the following ways:

- Order [online](#).
- Pick up a record at any [Arkansas Revenue Office](#).
- Pick up a record at the Little Rock Driving Records Office located at Room 1130, Charles D. Ragland Building; 1900 West 7th Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201.
- Request by mail by sending request and payment to: Driving Records, Room 1130, Post Office Box 1272, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203.

The charge for obtaining a copy of your driver's license record is:

Online payment is \$10.00 for an insurance record which covers a three (3) year period or \$13.00 for an employment or commercial driver record which may contain information for longer than the three year period.

Records picked up or mailed will be \$7.00 for the insurance record or \$10.00 for the employment or commercial driver's record.

If you need more information about Driver Records, please call 501-682-7207.

Suspension of Driving Privileges in another State

You will need to contact the state where you are suspended and ask them what you will need to provide them to have the situation resolved.

License Problems

DUI, DWI, Court Orders, Violations

Upon arrest a law enforcement officer will give the person an Official Driver's License Receipt and Notice of Suspension/Revocation of Driving Privilege. The law enforcement officer will take the driver's license. The Notice will also allow the person to drive for the next thirty days (if they have a valid license). The Notice will inform the person that they have seven days to request an administrative hearing to determine if they were driving while intoxicated, or registered a .08% BAC, or refused the BAC test. Also, the Notice gives instructions to the licensee to contact Driver Control, or request a hearing to determine their eligibility for an interlock restricted license, or a restricted permit. If at the hearing, the person is found to driving while intoxicated, or registered a BAC .08%, or refused the BAC test the driver's license will be suspended for 6 months for 1st offense DWI, and/or 180 days for 1st offense Refuse Test. Suspension for 2 years for a 2nd offense within 5 years, suspension for 30 months for 3rd offense within 5 years, and revocation for 4 years for 4th offense DWI within 5 years. Revocation permanently for 4 offense Refuse Test within 5 years. Prior to reinstatement a person must have completed an approved drug and alcohol education or treatment program for each DWI/Refusal offense on the person's record, and must pay a reinstatement fee of \$150.00 per offense.

For additional information contact your local Driver Control office or Little Rock Driver Control at 501-682-1631.

Replacements for Driver's License or ID Cards

To obtain a duplicate driver's license or identification card, you may go to any State Revenue Office.

There is a \$10.00 fee for replacement of a driver's license/\$5.00 for identification card.

Driver's License Renewal

If you are in the State of Arkansas you may go to any Revenue Office within Arkansas. If you are temporarily outside the State of Arkansas, you will need to call Driver's License Issuance 501-682-7059 to see if you qualify for a By Mail renewal.

Driver License and ID Cards for Adults

Arkansas driver's licenses or ID Cards can be obtained from your local revenue office.

All applicants for an Arkansas driver's license or identification card must provide a verifiable Social Security Number (SSN) when making application. Applicants who are not eligible for a SSN must sign an affidavit stating they do not have a SSN. The name you request for the driver's license or ID card must match your name with the Social Security Administration.

All new applicants for an Arkansas driver's license or identification card are required to provide proof of legal presence in the United States as well as proof of identity.

To prove legal presence in the United States one of the following documents must be shown:

- U.S. Passport/U.S. Passport Card
- U.S. Birth Certificate
- U.S. Visa
- Photo Document from DHS -
(Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration) -
(No Border Crosser)
- Photo Military/Military Dependent ID
- Armed Forces Discharge Papers
- Naturalization Certificate

If your name is different from what is on the Birth Certificate, you will need to bring a document which changes name, Marriage License, Divorce Decree, specifically stating that you may change your name, or a court order for name change.

For proof-of-identity to obtain driver's license or ID card, each applicant must show either:

- Two (2) primary documents, or
- One (1) primary document and one (1) secondary document.

All first-time driver's license applicants OR out-of-state transfers who have lost their license or whose license is expired over 31 days are required to test with the [Arkansas State Police](#) prior to applying for an Arkansas driver's license:

Pass Vision Exam

Primary Documents

- Photo Driver License (cannot be expired more than thirty-one (31) days)
- Certificate of Birth (US only)
Must be original or certified copy, have a raised seal and be issued by the Bureau of Vital Statistics or State Board of Health.
- INS Documents, as follows:
Certificate of Naturalization (N-550, N-570, or N-578).
Certificate of Citizenship (N-560, N-561, or N-645).
Resident Alien Card (I-151, I-551, AR-3, AR-3A, or AR-103).
- Court Order:
Must contain full name, date of birth and court seal.
Examples include adoption document, name change document, or gender change document. Does not include abstract of criminal or civil conviction.
- Military ID with photograph.

- Military Dependent ID with photograph.
- Valid Passport. If foreign, appropriate INS document is also required.
- Armed Forces Discharge Papers.

Secondary Documents

- Photo Work/School ID
- Vehicle Registration/Title
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Card/Indian Treaty Card
(Tribal ID Card is NOT acceptable)
- Court Order (Official Court Records Only)
- Health Insurance Card (Issued by Insurance Company)
- Tax Document received from IRS
- Marriage Certificate/License
- Parent/Guardian Affidavit
Parent/guardian must appear in person, prove his/her identity and submit a certified/notarized affidavit regarding the child's identity. Applies only to minors.
- Concealed Handgun License
- Pilot's License
- Certified School Record/Transcript
- Prison Release Document
- Photo Work/School ID

If you are requesting a "Valid Without Photo" driver's license, that may only be obtained from the Driver's License Issuance office in Little Rock, Ragland Building, Room 2120. For additional information call 501-682-7059.

License Verification Letter and Clearance Letter from Arkansas

Call (501) 682-7059 or write:

Office of Driver Service
Driver's License Issuance
Room 2120
PO Box 1272
Little Rock, AR 72203

Department of Human Services Frequently asked questions:

Public Assistance

How do I apply for public assistance programs such as Medicaid, ARKids, nutrition assistance, cash assistance or child care assistance?

You will find the applications you need online at [Access Arkansas](#). The site also will provide you with information so you can determine whether you're qualified for assistance before submitting an application. You also may apply at your local county office.

What does Medicaid provide?

The Medicaid Program helps you, if you are eligible, to pay some of your medical bills. Eligibility depends on your income, resources, age and situation. Most people who are eligible fall into one of the following categories: age 65 or older, under age 19, blind, disabled, pregnant, nursing home resident, have breast or cervical cancer, disabled but work some, in need of home and community-based services or are under 21 and in foster care.

What is ARKids First?

ARKids First health insurance provides coverage options for more than 300,000 Arkansas children who otherwise might have gone without health care. Eligibility for ARKids is based on your family's income and other factors. Resources are totally disregarded. ARKids A offers low-income families a comprehensive package of benefits. ARKids B provides coverage for families with higher incomes. Children must be under age 19, living in your home and a U.S. citizen or qualified legal alien. If you have questions about your child's eligibility, call our ARKids First free hotline at 1-888-474-8275, visit your local county office or log on to [Access Arkansas](#).

How can I get help purchasing food?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) provides food assistance to eligible households to cover a portion of a household's food budget. Benefits are distributed through an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card and must be used to buy food products or seeds to grow vegetables. In addition to food assistance, the

program provides SNAP recipients with nutrition education regarding food safety, healthy foods, portion sizes, and food preparation.

I just lost my job. How can I provide for my children?

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is a federally funded program that provides case management services to assist families with children under age 18 with finding employment. Arkansas's TANF program is called Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA). While looking for a job, the family will receive a cash assistance payment based on household size. The family's income must be equal to or less than \$223 per month. SSI income is not counted in this total. The family's resources must be \$3000 or less. Supportive services also will be provided to the recipient if needed while looking for employment. TANF also provides cash assistance to children being cared for by caretaker relatives other than the parent.

I cannot pay for my utilities. Where can I get help?

The Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program helps low-income households with home energy costs by providing financial assistance through the Winter Assistance Program and Crisis Intervention Program. Each program provides assistance to a household's energy supplier or, under certain circumstances to the applicant. The Crisis Intervention Program provides assistance to eligible households facing energy-related emergencies. The Winter Assistance program runs from early January until the end of March or the depletion of funds. The Crisis Programs runs from the beginning of April until the end of September or until the depletion of funds. Both program are operated by the 16 Community Action Agencies and cover all 75 counties of the State of Arkansas.

Childcare

What types of childcare assistance are there?

Transitional Employee Assistance (TEA) - is childcare which is available to TEA clients receiving TEA benefits. Extended Support Services childcare which is available only to those TEA clients who gain employment and their TEA case is closed due to earnings. Low Income Childcare which is available to those who work 30 hours per week, be a full time student, or work part time and go to school part time that averages out to 30 hours per week.

How long will I be on the waiting list for childcare assistance?

As services become available in a particular county, the Program Eligibility Specialist will contact the applicants based on the availability of day care services.

Once I'm approved for childcare assistance how often will my case be reevaluated?

Every six (6) months.

How do I appeal a denial decision?

Whenever an application is denied, or an adverse action is taken on a case, the client will be informed in writing of the decision and of the right for a review of the decision. The notice to the applicant/client must state that he/she has ten (10) days from the date of the Notice of Action in which to submit a request to Internal Review of the decision.

Where can I find the minimum licensing requirements for day care homes, centers and voluntarily registered homes?

For information, visit the [Child Care Licensing](#) page.

Services for the Disabled

How do I apply for services offered by the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services?

For children ages 0-21, contact DDS Children's Services Intake and Referral Unit at 501-682-1464. For adults, contact the DDS Adult Services Intake and Referral Unit at 501-683-5687.

Does a physician have to make the referral for my infant or toddler (birth to 36 months) to receive First Connections Early Intervention Services?

No. Anyone can refer an infant or toddler for Early Intervention services (examples: a parent, a concerned friend, neighbor, physician or teacher). Please contact the Early Intervention program at our help and information line. 800-643-8258.

Youth Committed to the Division of Youth Services

How long does a youth stay in Division of Youth Services residential programs?

Youth Services uses a matrix to set the length of stay based on the law violated. However, we do monitor the progress of each youth in their rehabilitative work and adjust the length of stay accordingly. The average length of stay is approximately six months.

Do youth in residential programs receive educational services?

Yes. Youth Services system of education is recognized by law and the Arkansas Department of Education. The youth are required to attend school while in residential programs and receive credit toward graduation for their work.

Seniors

What types of programs or services are available in Arkansas for seniors?

DHS Division of Aging and Adult Services, 501-682-2441 or 866-801-3435 or you may visit our website at www.daas.ar.gov and search for public benefits and programs for Arkansas seniors.

Where can I get a list of senior centers in a particular county?

Call the Division of Aging and Adult services at 501-682-2441 or 866-801-3435. We will put you in touch with the Area Agency on Aging for your Region. You also may visit our website at www.daas.ar.gov for more information.

Are all services offered in every county in Arkansas?

Unfortunately, not all services are offered in every county. Call the Division of Aging and Adult Services at 501-682-2441 or 866-801-3435. We will give you the number for your local Area Agency on Aging. You also may visit our website at www.daas.ar.gov for a comprehensive list of services by county.

Who should I contact for help with Medicare or Medicaid?

You may call your local Area Agency on Aging or the DAAS Choices In Living Resource Center at 866-801-3435. You also may visit our website at www.daas.ar.gov for a comprehensive list of DHS county offices.

Are there programs for families who need help with a parent but do not want to place the parent in a nursing home.

Yes. Long Term Care Medicaid Waivers and private pay services are available depending on circumstances.

Medicaid

Where do I call if I have a problem with Medicaid transportation?

You may call the Transportation Help Line at 1-888-987-1200 and follow the directions.

What is a Connect Care Primary Care Physician or PCP?

A Connect Care Primary Care Physician or "PCP," is your family "doctor" who will take care of all your healthcare needs. Your Connect Care doctor has your medical records and will give you medical advice based on your medical needs. Your doctor can handle your basic medical needs, refer you for special care, and admit you into the hospital. You may contact your doctor 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays. When attempting to contact your doctor, you may talk to your doctor directly, another doctor, or staff person based on the availability of your doctor.

How do I get a Connect Care doctor?

1. Your Medicaid caseworker should ask you to complete a Connect Care Primary Care Physician enrollment form when applying for a Medicaid card.
2. If you are a SSI (Supplemental Security Income) recipient, you may go to a DHS office to select a Connect Care doctor once you have become Medicaid eligible, or call Connect Care at 1-800-275-1131 (1-800-285-1131 TDD), or if you are in the Central Arkansas area, call 614-4689.
3. You may select your doctor at his or her office. Your choice is valid from the date the office calls it into Medicaid.
4. You may call the Connect Care Help Line at 1-800-275-1131 (1-800-285-1131 TDD), or if you are in the Central Arkansas area, call 614-4689, 6:00 am to 10:00 pm Monday – Friday.
5. You also may request a doctor using the online assign/change form on our website at www.seeyourdoc.org. Please note that using this method DOES NOT guarantee your request. If you need a doctor immediately, please call the Help Line.

Mental Health/Substance Abuse

I need mental health and/or substance abuse treatment, but I have no insurance or way to pay for it. How can I get help?

Community mental health centers (CMHC) provide services for priority populations and persons with limited financial resources. Priority populations are served first and include Act 911 forensic patients (including those jailed and recently released) and patients certified as seriously emotionally disturbed or seriously mentally ill. Other patients are served as resources allow.

These CMHCs provide a full array of services, including individual and group therapy, medication management and case management. Please refer to Community Mental Health Centers under Related Documents for the location of the mental health center in your area. It is possible that the CMHC may allow a reduced payment option for services.

For alcohol and/or substance abuse treatment, please contact the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (OADAP) at (501) 686-9866 for more information regarding receiving treatment with limited financial resources.

My adult son/daughter needs mental health and/or substance abuse treatment but refuses to go. What are my options?

If your son or daughter is a clear and present danger to self or others because of a mental illness or alcohol and/or drug abuse, they can be “committed”. This involves a judge issuing an order that this person get an evaluation and/or treatment regardless of the person’s agreement. The treatment can be inpatient (in a hospital) or outpatient (at a clinic). Arkansas law is very specific about the commitment process, and the dangerous behavior must be serious and also recent or an immediate threat. More information about the commitment process can be found on this (DBHS) website at Mental Health Commitment Law under Related Documents. You also can contact the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (OADAP) at (501) 686-9866 to learn more about your options.

You also might check into Psychiatric Advanced Directives. This is a legal instrument used to document a competent person’s specific instructions or preferences regarding future mental health treatment, in preparation for the possibility that the person may lose capacity to give or withhold informed consent to treatment during acute episodes of psychiatric illness. More information about Psychiatric Advanced Directives can be found on this (DBHS) website under Related Documents.

How can I help a family member or friend that is threatening to harm themselves?

The first step is to make sure they are safe. Call the police if you feel they are an immediate threat to do harm. If the threat is not immediate, there are other resources available to help you. The Arkansas Crisis Center (1-888-274-7472 or www.arcrisis.org) has a 24-hour hotline with dedicated volunteers and staff members. You also can contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433) or 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or TTY 1-800-799-4TTY (4889). You also can contact the local community mental health center or RSPMI private provider in your area. Each of these providers is required to have emergency/crisis services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Other suicide prevention resources are available at the [Arkansas Suicide Prevention](#) website.

HELP PUT AMERICA TO WORK

AND EARN FEDERAL INCOME TAX CREDITS FOR HIRING NEW EMPLOYEES

WHAT IS THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT?

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire individuals from eligible target groups with significant barriers to employment. Each year, employers claim over \$1 billion in tax credits under the WOTC program. The success and growth of this income tax credit for business is beneficial for all who participate, while increasing America's economic growth and productivity.

- WOTC reduces an employer's cost of doing business, requires little paperwork, and applying for WOTC is simple.
- WOTC can reduce an employer's federal income tax liability by as much as \$9,600 per employee hired.
- There is no limit on the number of individuals an employer can hire to qualify to claim the tax credit.
- Certain tax-exempt organizations can take advantage of WOTC hiring eligible veterans and receiving a credit against the employer's share of Social Security taxes.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Veterans
- TANF Recipients
- SNAP (food stamp) Recipients
- Designated Community Residents
- Vocational Rehabilitation Referral
- Ex-Felons
- Supplemental Security Income Recipients
- Summer Youth Employees

Visit <http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/eligible.cfm> for more target group eligibility information.

HOW MUCH IS THE TAX CREDIT?

Employers can earn a tax credit of between \$1,200 and \$9,600 per employee, depending on the target group of the new employee and the number of hours worked in the first year.

Employees must work at least 120 hours in the first year of employment to receive the tax credit. Visit <http://www.doleta.gov/wotc> for the maximum tax credit for each WOTC target group.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications and supporting documentation for the tax credit will be accepted through the Arkansas WOTC web-based system using the links below.

Employers: http://ar.wotc-web.net/wa_login_emp.html

Consultants: http://ar.wotc-web.net/wa_login_consult.html

The WOTC unit will make a final determination. The determination will indicate whether the employee is certified as meeting the eligibility for one of the WOTC target groups.

After the target group employee is certified, employers can file for the tax credit with the Internal Revenue Service.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For additional information, call 1-866-330-9459 or (501) 683-1354.

The WOTC unit also can be contacted at ADWS.WOTC@arkansas.gov.

Visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov for more information

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beta network

The Department of Workforce Services and the Arkansas Workforce Centers are Equal Opportunity Employers/Programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

HELP PUT AMERICA TO WORK AND EARN FEDERAL INCOME TAX CREDITS FOR HIRING VETERANS

WHAT IS THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT?

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire veterans and individuals from other eligible target groups with significant barriers to employment. Each year, employers claim over \$1 billion in tax credits under the WOTC program. The success and growth of this income tax credit for business is beneficial for all who participate, while increasing America's economic growth and productivity.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A veteran who has a service-connected disability, is unemployed, or is receiving SNAP (food stamp) benefits.

| <u>VETERAN TARGET GROUP</u> | <u>MAXIMUM TAX CREDIT</u> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Receives SNAP (food stamps) benefits | \$2,400 |
| Entitled to compensation for service-connected disability: | |
| • Hired within 1 year of discharge or release from active duty | \$4,800 |
| • Unemployed at least 6 months in the year ending on the hiring date | \$9,600 |
| Unemployed | |
| • At least 4 weeks | \$2,400 |
| • At least 6 months | \$5,600 |

Employees must work at least 120 hours in the first year of employment to receive the tax credit.

HOW WOTC WORKS FOR YOU

- WOTC reduces an employer's cost of doing business, requires little paperwork, and applying for WOTC is simple.
- WOTC can reduce an employer's federal income tax liability by as much as \$9,600 per veteran hired.
- There is no limit on the number of individuals an employer can hire to qualify to claim the tax credit.
- Certain tax-exempt organizations can take advantage of WOTC by receiving a credit against the employer's share of Social Security taxes.

Veterans are excellent job candidates as they are experienced and possess many desirable characteristics such as

- The ability to rapidly adapt and adopt new skills.
- A strong sense of personal integrity and accountability.
- Training in many occupational skills that can be invaluable in today's labor market.

See www.americasheroesatwork.gov for more reasons to hire America's veterans.

HOW MUCH IS THE TAX CREDIT?

Employers can earn a tax credit of between \$1,200 and \$9,600 per employee, depending on the target group of the new employee and the number of hours worked in the first year. Employees must work at least 120 hours in the first year of employment to receive the tax credit. Visit <http://www.doleta.gov/wotc> for the maximum tax credit for each WOTC target group.

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Visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov for more information.

Department of Workforce Services

Employment Assistance

Employment Assistance provides policy development and technical assistance for the federally-funded employment and training programs administered by the Agency.

Employment & Training Program Operations

- **Wagner-Peyser Employment Service** – quite often referred to as job service, employment services, or the labor exchange program. This program is supported by the Arkansas Job Link (AJL) system, which is a publicly funded labor exchange service to match job seekers with job openings and employers with qualified job seekers. This program is free of charge to employers and jobseekers.

- **Veterans programs** – There are two programs that serve veterans through DWS –
 - (1) **Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)** ensure that veterans are provided the range of labor exchange services needed to meet their employment and training needs. They also work with other workforce development providers to develop their capacity to recognize and respond to these needs. Responsibilities may include the following: encourage employers to employ veterans and conduct OJT and apprenticeship programs; promote veterans and employer participation in employment and training programs; and refer veterans to training, supportive services, and education services.

 - (2) **Disabled Veterans Outreach Program** – The DVOP Specialists work with disable veterans with special employment and training needs. Services may include any combination of the following services: develop jobs and job opportunities, develop and promote apprenticeship and OJT positions, provide technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services for disable veterans, and coordinate linkages to promote employment opportunities for disable veterans.

- **Alien Labor Certification Program** – federally funded program that allows employers who have been unable to hire qualified workers in the US to file a labor certification application to bring foreign workers into the US on a permanent or temporary basis. One example of this practice, would be hiring of specialized doctors from other countries.

- **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** – Provides tax incentives to employers for hiring individuals from specified target groups.

Dislocated Worker Services

Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force – charged with addressing the needs and concerns of communities and individuals affected by worker dislocation.

The Task Force identifies most permanent closings and substantial layoffs in advance. Whenever possible, the task Force begins immediately to work with the company, the community, and the affected individuals to lessen the impact of dislocation.

Immediately upon receiving notice of a permanent closure or a substantial layoff, the Task Force contacts company officials. Whenever possible, a community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to create action plans to assist both the community and the dislocated worker.

The Task Force conducts a Worker Assistance Workshop, attended by representatives of local and state agencies and affected workers to review the programs and assistance available to them. Services and needs discussed at the workshop include re-training and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, stress associated with unemployment, credit counseling, insurance needs, and tips on finding new jobs.

The task Force operates mobile career resource centers which are transported as needed to the area of dislocation. A course of instruction is individually designed for each dislocated worker in order to enhance employability skills. Workers are provided assistance in resume and application preparation, as well as interviewing techniques. A resource library is available which includes videotapes, out-of-state newspapers, state manufacturers directories, and publications on job search methods in today's labor market. Instructors also provide assessment, counseling and development of individual re-employment plans.

Other services available to dislocated workers include: (1) information and assistance in applying for Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA benefits in situations where workers are dislocated due to foreign trade; (2) enrollment in a Job Search Workshop, an intensive program designed to provide assistance in such areas as interviewing techniques, resume preparation, job applications and role playing; and (3) self service centers operated throughout the state where workers may access up-to-date job openings in Arkansas and the Nation on the internet through Arkansas' Job Bank and America's Job Bank, respectively.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a benefit for those workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports or shifts in production to foreign countries. TAA includes a variety of benefits and reemployment services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may receive assistance in skill assessment, job search workshops, job development/referral and job placement. In addition, workers may be eligible for training, job search allowances, a relocation

allowance, and other reemployment services. Weekly Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) or Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) may be payable to eligible workers following the exhaustion of unemployment benefits. Usually, TRA / RTAA benefits will be paid only if an individual is enrolled in, waived from, or has completed a TAA approved training program.

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) there is a single petition form for both TAA and ATAA. If the worker group is found eligible for TAA, then eligibility for ATAA will also be considered. Eligible individuals in the certified group who are age 50 and over and who obtain new employment at wages of less than a threshold amount within 26 weeks of their separation may receive a wage subsidy for 50% of the difference between the old and new wages (up to a maximum amount for up to two years).

Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) – Eligible TAA and ATAA recipients may receive a tax credit covering 80% (formerly 65%) of the qualified health insurance premium costs. HCTC is administered by the IRS.

Labor Market Information (LMI) – The Labor Market Information Section provides economic data about Arkansas. THE LMI Section provides:

- Workforce information to assist job seekers and employers navigate the labor market;
- Examples include: career exploration materials, identification of projected growth occupations, surveys of employers to determine trends in employment and wages in employment.
- Unemployment Statistics – this unit publishes the state’ unemployment rate each month;
- Mass layoff statistics – to determine the impact of major, permanent job layoffs and cutbacks.

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides monthly cash benefits to very low-income families based on eligibility standards set by the state. TANF is not an entitlement, program, meaning eligible families are not guaranteed benefits. One of the main goals of TANF is to transition recipients to employment, so that cash benefits are no longer necessary. Recipient families must fulfill ongoing work requirements, and there is a time limit on benefits. TANF cash assistance is funded through a combination of state and federal funds. TANF was created to help families stay together by empowering family leaders with job skills, resources, and assistance. TANF serves four functions:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- Reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) – provides low-income families with supportive services and cash assistance payment for up to two years to assist them in becoming employed. The TEA program is federally funded and provides time-limited cash assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children. In order to qualify for this benefit program, you must be a resident of Arkansas, either pregnant or responsible for a child under 18 years of age, a US national, citizen, legal alien, or permanent resident, have low or very low income, and be either under-employed (working for very low wages), unemployed or about to become unemployed. In addition, TEA furnishes parents with work training and other supportive services they need in order to attain permanent self-sufficiency. The TEA program also provides assistance to children being cared for by non-parental guardians.

Arkansas Work Pays – program implemented for former TEA clients to bridge the gap between becoming employed (in the TEA Program) and reaching self-sufficiency (being able to support oneself without public assistance). Many TEA clients enter low-wage, entry level jobs. Work Pays allows them to receive a small cash assistance payment for up to 24 months and significant bonuses for reaching employment and retention goals. Participating families are eligible for the same support services and assistance as families enrolled in the TEA program and will receive a monthly cash assistance payment. The extra income provided is designed to help families make an easier transition to self-sufficiency.

Career Readiness Certificate – Uses the KeyTrain online curriculum and Workkey assessments.

Community Investment Initiative – TANF funds contracts with faith and community –based organizations to provide services to low-income families that will strengthen family formation and assisting families in reaching self-sufficiency.

Career Pathways Initiative – Partnership between DWS, Arkansas Department of Career Education, and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, whereby , DWS provides several million dollars annually from the TANF Block Grant to Career Education for sub grants to the state's 22 two-year colleges and three technical institutes to provide remedial education, employability training, and post-secondary education to low-income families. Under the Career Pathways Initiative, Arkansas invests public funds to support the development and implementation of career pathway programs in the state's two-year colleges and technical institutions for low-income families. In addition, career pathway programs provide training in local high-demand occupations and career fields, in addition to intensive counseling and supplemental services such as child care and transportation assistance.

Community Investment Initiative – Workforce contracts with private or community organizations, including faith-based organizations, to offer services and supports to parents,

children and youth in their communities. The Community Investment Initiative focuses on improving outcomes for your; parenting and family functioning, marriage and relationship skills, employment skills and family connections of parents who leave state jails and prisons; and support devices to child-only cases in the TEA program.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) in addition to helping workers and their families, the UI programs play a key role in helping business, communities, and the nation's economy. The program helps cushion the impact of economic downturns and brings economic stability to communities, state and the nation by providing temporary income support for laid off workers.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW), pursuant to section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act, assists migrants and other seasonally-employed farmworkers and their families, achieve economic self-sufficiency through job training and other services that address their employment related needs.

Arkansas New Hire Registry – requires employers to report newly-hired or rehired employees to DWS within 20 days of being hired. DWS maintains a database and the information is used to assist with child support enforcement, detect UK fraud and assist with administering the state's Workers' Compensation Program.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) – intended to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy and vocational rehabilitation programs in the United States. Its purpose is to provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce investment systems that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants; increase occupational skill attainment by participants, and consequently improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State.

Business Services

Locate people with specific skills or experience
Connect with people new to Little Rock
Reach those new to the job market
Access labor market information

Adult Services

WIA services include Adult Services creating a job seeker account to assist with Conduct a Job Search, Build an on-line Resume, Register with Job Service, Receive emails on new job openings

Dislocated Worker Services

Have you been laid-off from your job?
Have you received notice of termination or layoff letter due to permanent closure?

Has your office or plant downsized resulting in you losing your job?
Has your spouse been dislocated and you were dependent on his/her income?

Youth Services

Tutoring (Service or Information)
Alternative Secondary School opportunities
Summer Employment
Paid and Unpaid Work Experience
Occupational Skills Training
Leadership Development Activities
Supportive Services
Adult Mentoring
Follow-up Services for 12 Months
Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling

Arkansas JobLink

An Arkansas Job Link Jobseeker account provides the ability to:

- Conduct a Job Search
- Build an on-line Resume
- Research Career Information
- Register with Job Service
- File an Unemployment Claim
- Receive emails on new job openings
- [Access additional details and Jobseeker services](#)

An Arkansas JobLink Employer account provides the ability to:

- Post job openings
- Search resumes for qualified employees
- Receive emails on new jobseeker resumes
- Get assistance in listing your job openings
- [Access additional details and employment related services](#)
- [Unemployment Services and Additional Employer Services](#)

The State of Arkansas is divided into ten Local Workforce Investment Areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center and many other affiliate service centers.

Department of Workforce Services Local Office Listing

All offices are open Monday - Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| <u>ARKADELPHIA</u> | Street Address: 502 S. Sixth Street Arkadelphia, AR 71923-6011 | Telephone Number: 870-246-2481 | Counties Served: Clark |
| | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 620 Arkadelphia, AR 71923-0620 | Fax Number: 870-246-0344 | |
| <u>BATESVILLE</u> | Street Address: 396 Barnett Drive Batesville, AR 72501-8994 | Telephone Number: 870-793-4156 | Counties Served Fulton Independence Izard |
| | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2296 Batesville, AR 72503-2296 | Fax Number: 870-793-2577 | Stone Sharp |
| <u>BENTON</u> | Street Address: 400 Edison Street Benton, AR 72015-4313 | Telephone Number: 501-776-2974 | Counties Served: Saline |
| | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2470 Benton, AR 72018-2470 | Fax Number: 501-776-2980 | |
| <u>BLYTHEVILLE</u> | Street Address: 2825 S. Division Street AR Northeastern College Campus Blytheville, AR 72315 | Telephone Number: 870-762-2035 | Counties Served: Mississippi |
| | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1409 Blytheville, AR 72316-1409 | Fax Number: 870-762-0561 | |

CABOT

Street Address:
#1 City Plaza, Suite C
Cabot, AR 72023

Telephone Number:
501-941-2185

Counties Served:
Lonoke

Mailing Address:
#1 City Plaza, Suite C
Cabot, AR 72023

Fax Number:
501-941-1039

CAMDEN

Street Address:
237 Jackson Street SW
Camden, AR 71701-3941

Telephone Number:
870-836-5024

Counties Served:
Calhoun
Dallas
Ouachita

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 717
Camden, AR 71711-0717

Fax Number:
870-836-7237

CLARKSVILLE

Street Address:
23 Sherwood Plaza Shopping Center
Clarksville, AR 72830-0774

Telephone Number:
479-754-8969

Counties Served:
Johnson

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 774
Clarksville, AR 72830-0774

Fax Number:
479-754-1166

CONWAY

Street Address:
1500 North Museum Road, Suite 111
Conway, AR 72032-4761

Telephone Number:
501-730-9894
501-730-9897

Counties Served:
Faulkner
Van Buren

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 189
Conway, AR 72033-0189

Fax Number:
501-730-9869

DANVILLE

Street Address:
DHS Building
818 M Street/ Hwy 10E
Danville, AR 72833-0789

Telephone Number:
479-495-2233

Counties Served:
Yell

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 789
Russellville, AR 72811-0789

Fax Number:
479-495-3643

DEQUEEN

Street Address:
858 East Collin Raye Drive
DeQueen, AR 71832

Telephone Number:
870-584-3421

Counties Served:
Sevier

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 151
DeQueen, AR 71832

Fax Number:
870-642-3065

DUMAS

Street Address:
130 West Waterman
Dumas, AR 71639

Telephone Number:
870-382-1017

Counties Served:
Desha

Mailing Address:
130 West Waterman
Dumas, AR 71639

Fax Number:
870-382-1029

EL DORADO

Street Address:
523 East Sixth Street
El Dorado, AR 71730-5175

Telephone Number:
870-862-6456

Counties Served:
Union

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2038
El Dorado, AR 71731-2038

Fax Number:
870-862-6962

FAYETTEVILLE

Street Address:
2143 West Martin Luther King Blvd.
Fayetteville, AR 72701-6219

Telephone Number:
479-521-5730

Counties Served:
Madison
Washington

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2038
Fayetteville, AR 72702-1205

Fax Number:
479-521-1595

FORREST CITY

Street Address:
300 Eldridge Road, Suite 2
Forrest City, AR 72335-4901

Telephone Number:
870-633-2900
870-633-4580

Counties Served:
Cross
Monroe
Prairie
St. Francis

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1059
Forrest City, AR 72336-1059

Fax Number:
870-633-1710

FORT SMITH

Street Address:
616 Garrison Avenue, Room 101
Fort smith, AR 72901-2525
Mailing Address:
P.O. 1987
Fort Smith, AR 72902-1987

Telephone Number:
479-783-0231
Fax Number:
479-783-2132

Counties Served:
Crawford
St. Franklin
Sebastian

HARRISON

Street Address:
818 North Highway 62-65
Harrison, AR 72601-2100
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 280
Harrison, AR 72602-0280

Telephone Number:
870-741-8236
Fax Number:
870-741-7901

Counties Served:
Boone
Carroll
Newton
Searcy

HELENA

Street Address:
819 Newman Drive
Helena, AR 72342-3230
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 279
Helena, AR 72342-0279

Telephone Number:
870-338-7415
Fax Number:
870-338-8061

Counties Served:
Phillips
Lee

HOPE

Street Address:
700 South Elm Street
Hope, AR 71801-6597
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 598
Hope, AR 71802-0598

Telephone Number:
870-777-3421
Fax Number:
870-722-2912

Counties Served:
Hempstead
Howard
Nevada
Pike County South

HOT SPRINGS

Street Address:
2254 Albert Pike Road, Suite A
Hot Springs, AR 71913-7290
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2278
Hot springs, AR 71914-2278

Telephone Number:
501-525-3450
Fax Number:
501-525-3944

Counties Served:
Garland
Montgomery
Pike County North

JACKSONVILLE

Street Address:
#2 Crestview Plaza
Jacksonville, AR 72076-7358

Telephone Number:
501-982-3835

Counties Served:
Lonoke
Pulaski

JONESBORO

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 39
Jacksonville, AR 72078-0039
Street Address:
2311 East Nettleton Avenue
Jonesboro, AR 72401-7205

Fax Number:
501-982-5365

Telephone Number:
870-935-5594

Counties Served:
Craighead
Poinsett

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 16127
Jonesboro, AR 72403-6127

Fax Number:
870-935-0024

LITTLE ROCK UI

Street Address:
5401 South University
Little Rock, AR 72209

Telephone Number:
501-682-2257

Counties Served:
Pulaski

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 4970
Little Rock, AR 72214-4970

Fax Number:
501-682-7797

LITTLE ROCK ES

Street Address:
5401 South University
Little Rock, AR 72209

Telephone Number:
501-682-7719

Counties Served:
Pulaski

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 4970
Little Rock, AR 72214-4970

Fax Number:
501-682-7801

**LITTLE ROCK TEA
& WORK PAYS**

Street Address:
5401 South University
Little Rock, AR 72209

Telephone Number:
501-320-3026
501-320-3027

Counties Served:
Pulaski

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 4279
Little Rock, AR 72214-4279

Fax Number:
501-320-3075

MAGNOLIA

Street Address:
203 North Fredrick
Magnolia, AR 71753-3921

Telephone Number:
870-234-3440

Counties Served:
Columbia
Lafayette

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 369
Magnolia, AR 71754-0369

Fax Number:
870-234-8360

MALVERN

Street Address:
1735 East Sullenberger Street
Malvern, AR 72104-3832

Telephone Number:
501-332-5461

Counties Served:
Hot Spring

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 788
Malvern, AR 72104-0788

Fax Number:
501-337-9003

MENA

Street Address:
601 C Highway 71 North
Mena, AR 71953-4393

Telephone Number:
479-394-3060

Counties Served:
Polk
Scott

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 230
Mena, AR 71953-0230

Fax Number:
479-394-4910

MONTICELLO

Street Address:
477 South Main Street
Monticello, AR 71655-4817

Telephone Number:
870-367-2476

Counties Served:
Ashley
Bradley
Chicot
Desha
Drew

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 30
Monticello, AR 71657-0030

Fax Number:
870-367-7105

MOUNTAIN HOME

Street Address:
1058 Highland Circle, #20
Mountain Home, AR 72654-3251

Telephone Number:
870-425-2386

Counties Served:
Baxter
Marion

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1945
Mountain Home, AR 72654-1945

Fax Number:
870-424-6056

NEWPORT

Street Address:
7648 Victory Boulevard, Suite B
Newport, AR 72112-8912

Telephone Number:
870-523-3641

Counties Served:
Jackson
Woodruff

Mailing Address:
7648 Victory Boulevard, Suite B
Newport, AR 72112-8912

Fax Number:
870-523-8678

PARAGOULD

Street Address:
1015 Linwood Drive, Suite 4
Paragould, AR 72450-4430

Telephone Number:
870-236-8512

Counties Served:
Greene
Clay

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 336
Paragould, AR 72451-0336

Fax Number:
870-236-9162

PINE BLUFF

Street Address:
1001 South Tennessee Street
Pine Bluff, AR 71601-5032

Telephone Number:
870-534-1920

Counties Served:
Arkansas
Grant
Cleveland
Jefferson
Lincoln

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 8308
Pine Bluff, AR 71611-8308

Fax Number:
870-534-7688

ROGERS

Street Address:
100 North Dixieland Road
Rogers, AR 72756-5996

Telephone Number:
479-636-4755

Counties Served:
Benton

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 99
Rogers, AR 72757-0099

Fax Number:
479-621-0322

RUSSELLVILLE

Street Address:
104 South Rochester Avenue
Russellville, AR 72801-5537

Telephone Number:
479-968-2784

Counties Served:
Conway
Johnson
Perry
Pope
Yell

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 727
Russellville, AR 72811-0727

Fax Number:
479-968-1670

SEARCY

Street Address:
501 West Arch Avenue
Searcy, AR 72143-5203

Telephone Number:
501-268-8601

Counties Served:
Cleburne
White

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 248
Searcy, AR 72145-0248

Fax Number:
501-268-9166

SILOAM SPRINGS

Street Address:
809 South Mount Olive Street
Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Telephone Number:
479-524-5181

Counties Served:
Benton

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 768
Siloam Springs, AR 72761-0768

Fax Number:
479-524-8384

TEXARKANA

Street Address:
1702 Hampton Road
Texarkana, TX 75503-2598

Telephone Number:
870-216-4011

Counties Served:
Little River
Miller
Sevier

Mailing Address:
1702 Hampton Road
Texarkana, TX 75503-2598

Fax Number:
903-792-0983

WALNUT RIDGE

Street Address:
116 West Elm Street
Walnut Ridge, AR 72476-2338

Telephone Number:
870-886-3556

Counties Served:
Lawrence
Randolph

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 470
Walnut Ridge, AR 72476-0470

Fax Number:
870-886-6117

WEST MEMPHIS

Street Address:
Mid-South Community College
2000 West Broadway
West Memphis, AR 72301

Telephone Number:
870-400-2269

Counties Served:
Crittenden

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1928
West Memphis, AR 72303-1928

Fax Number:
870-735-7656

**INTERSTATE
CLAIMS**

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 3137
Little Rock, AR 72203

Telephone Number:
501-683-2760
866-392-7284

Counties Served:
Out of State

Hours of Availability
7:30am - 4:15pm

Fax Number:
501-683-0021

The Remaining Pages of this Handbook are REENTRY MYTHBUSTERS,
A Product of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council

Reentry Myth-Busters are fact sheets designed to clarify existing federal policies that affect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families in areas such as public housing, employment, parental rights, Medicaid suspension/termination, voting rights and more.

So who are the Reentry Myth-Busters helpful for?

- **Prison, jail, probation, community corrections, and parole officials** who want to ensure that individuals can access healthcare, behavioral health treatment, and federal benefits, as appropriate, immediately upon release to help stabilize the critical first days and weeks after incarceration. Pre-release applications and procedures are available for certain federal benefits (veterans, Social Security, food assistance, and student financial aid).
- **Reentry service providers and faith-based organizations** who want to understand the laws and policies related to public housing, employment, VA services, child support options, and parental rights while incarcerated.
- **Employers and workforce development specialists** who are interested in the incentives and protections involved in hiring formerly convicted individuals. The Reentry Myth-Busters are also helpful to employers who want to better understand the appropriate use of a criminal record in making hiring decisions.
- **States and local agencies** that want to understand, modify, or eliminate certain bans on benefits (TANF, SNAP) for people who have been convicted of drug felonies.

EMPLOYMENT

On Federal Bonding Program

MYTH: Businesses and employers have no way to protect themselves from potential property and monetary losses should an individual they hire prove to be dishonest.

FACT: *Through the Federal Bonding Program (FBP), funded and administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), fidelity insurance bonds are available to indemnify employers for loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e., theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement).*

Job seekers who have in the past committed a fraudulent or dishonest act, or who have demonstrated other past behavior casting doubt upon their credibility or honesty, very often are rejected for employment due to their personal backgrounds.

The FBP is an employer hiring incentive that guarantees the job honesty of at-risk job seekers, including ex-offenders. The DOL provides state workforce agencies with a package of promotional bonds to provide a base and incentive to employers and others to participate.

Beyond the promotional bonds, additional bonds may be purchased from the bonding agent by states, localities, and other organizations providing reentry services.

- Employers receive bonded employees free of charge which serves as an incentive to hire hard to place job applicants.
- The FBP bond insurance was designed to reimburse the employer for any loss due to employee theft of money or property with no employer deductible.
- This tool has proven to be extremely successful with only 1% of the bonds ever issued resulting in a claim.

On Hiring/Criminal Records Guidance

MYTH: People with criminal records are automatically barred from employment.

FACT: *An arrest or conviction record will NOT automatically bar individuals from employment.*

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment based on race, color, national origin, religion, or sex. This law does not prohibit an employer from requiring applicants to provide information about arrests, convictions or incarceration. But, employers may not treat people with the same criminal records differently because of their race or national origin. In addition, in the vast majority of cases, employers may not automatically bar everyone with an arrest or conviction record from employment. This is because an automatic bar to hiring everyone with a criminal record is likely to limit the employment opportunities of applicants or workers because of their race or ethnicity.

If an employer is aware of a conviction or incarceration, that information should only bar someone from employment when the conviction is closely related to the job, after considering:

- The nature of the job,
- The nature and seriousness of the offense, and
- The length of time since it occurred.

Since an arrest alone does not necessarily mean that someone has committed a crime, an employer should not assume that someone who has been arrested, but not convicted, did in fact commit the offense. Instead, the employer should allow the person to explain the circumstances of the arrest. If it appears that he or she engaged in the alleged unlawful conduct, the employer should assess whether the conduct is closely enough related to the job to justify denial of employment.

These rules apply to all employers that have 15 or more employees, including private sector employers, the federal government and federal contractors.

On Federal Hiring Policies

MYTH: The Federal Government's hiring policies prohibit employment of people with criminal records.

FACT: *The Federal Government does not have a policy that precludes employment of people with criminal records from all positions.*

The Federal Government employs people with criminal records with the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities.

Consistent with Merit System Principles, agencies are required to consider people with criminal records when filling positions if they are the best candidates and can comply with requirements.

Individuals seeking admission to the civil service must undergo an investigation to establish suitability or fitness for employment. The principal issues for agencies as they consider hiring people with criminal records involve making determinations related to:

- An individual's character traits and conduct to determine whether employment would not protect the integrity and promote the efficiency of the service.
- Whether employment of the individual in the department or agency is consistent with the interests of national security.
- The nature, seriousness, and circumstances of the individual's criminal activity, and whether there has been rehabilitation or efforts toward rehabilitation.

People with criminal records are eligible to work in vast majority of federal jobs. For a few positions, they may not be deemed suitable or fit for the job, depending on the crime committed.

- A handful of federal laws, like those prohibiting treason, carry with them a lifetime ban on federal employment.
- Others, like the criminal statute for inciting a riot, prohibit federal employment for a certain number of years.

- Previous criminal conduct could potentially render an individual incompatible with the core duties of the job.
- Previous criminal conduct may also affect an individual's eligibility for a security clearance, depending on the level of clearance being sought and the nature of the conviction.

Expected (Schedule A) Appointing Authority permits employment of individuals in work-release programs when a local recruiting shortage exists.

- Allows agencies, with OPM approval, to employ inmates for federal and state correctional institutions.
- Appointments limited to one year.

On Criminal Histories and Employment Background Checks

MYTH: An employer can get a copy of your criminal history from companies that do background checks without your permission.

FACT: *According to the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), employers must get one's permission, usually in writing, before asking a background screening company for a criminal history report. If one does not give permission or authorization, the application for employment may not get reviewed. If a person does give permission but does not get hired because of information in the report, the potential employer must follow several legal obligations.*

Key Employer Obligations in the FCRA

An employer that might use an individual's criminal history report to take an "adverse action" (e.g., to deny an application for employment) must provide a copy of the report and a document called *A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act* before taking the adverse action.

An employer that takes an adverse action against an individual based on information in a criminal history report must tell the individual – orally, in writing, or electronically:

- the name, address, and telephone number of the company that supplied the criminal history report;
- that the company that supplied the criminal history information did not make the decision to take the adverse action and cannot give specific reasons for it; and
- about one's right to dispute the accuracy or completeness of any information in the report, and one's right to an additional free report from the company that supplied the criminal history report, if requested within 60 days of the adverse action.

A reporting company that gathers negative information from public criminal records, and provides it to an employer in a criminal history report, must inform the individual that it gave the information to the employer or that it is taking precautions to make sure the information is complete and current.

If an employer violation of the FCRA is suspected, it should be reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The law allows the FTC, other federal agencies, and states to take legal action against employers who fail to comply with the law's provisions. The FCRA also allows individuals to take legal action against employers in state or federal court for certain violations.

The FTC works to protect consumers from violations of the FCRA and from fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace, and to educate them about their rights under the FCRA and other consumer protection laws.

On the Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Myth: Employers have no federal income tax advantages by hiring an ex-felon.

Fact: *Employers can save money on their federal income taxes in the form of a tax credit incentive through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program by hiring ex-felons. An ex-felon under WOTC is an individual who has been convicted of a felony under any statute of the United States or any State, and has a hiring date which is within one year from the date of conviction or release from prison.*

The main objective of this program is to enable certified employees to gradually move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing tax payers. At the same time, participating employers are compensated by being able to reduce their federal income tax liability. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC) joins other workforce programs that help incentivize workplace diversity and facilitate access to good jobs for American workers.

The WOTC: For each new ex-felon hired, the credit is 25% of qualified first year's wages for those employed at least 120 hours, or \$1,500; and 0% for those employed 400 hours or more, or \$2,400.

Target Groups: The WOTC is a federal tax credit used to reduce the federal tax liability of private -for-profit employers. Employers can hire individuals from the following 9 target groups, which have traditionally faced significant barriers to employment:

- Qualified TANF Recipients
- Qualified Veterans
- Qualified Ex-Felons
- Qualified Designated Community Residents (DCR)

- Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Referrals
- Qualified Summer Youth
- Qualified Food Stamp Recipients
- Qualified Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Recipients
- Qualified Long-Term Family Assistance Recipients

Application Process: *There's no limit to the number of "new" ex-felons an employer can hire to benefit from these tax savings. Employers apply for and receive a WOTC certification for each new hire from their State Workforce Agencies. There's minimal paperwork needed to qualify and claim the tax credit!*

HOUSING

On Public Housing

MYTH: Individuals who have been convicted of a crime are "banned" from public housing.

FACT: *Public Housing Authorities have a great discretion in determining their admissions and occupancy policies for ex-offenders. While PHAs can choose to ban ex-offenders from participating in public housing and Section 8 Programs, it is not HUD policy to do so. In fact, in many circumstances, formerly incarcerated people should not be denied access.*

On January 5, 2011, during an Interagency Reentry Council Meeting, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan reminded council members that "this is an Administration that believes in the importance of second chances." He further stated, "And at HUD, part of that support means helping ex-offenders gain access to one of the most fundamental building blocks of a stable life – a place to live."

Fact: There are only two convictions for which a PHA MUST prohibit admission – those are:

- If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program; and,
- If any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.

Additionally, PHAs must prohibit admission of an applicant for three years from the date of eviction if a household member has been evicted from federally assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity. PHAs must also establish standards which prohibit admission if the PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in illegal use of a drug or the PHA determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that a household member's illegal drug use or a pattern of illegal drug use may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. In these cases, however, PHAs retain their discretion to

consider the circumstances and may admit households if the PHA determines that the evicted household member who engaged in drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program, such as those supervised by drug courts, or that the circumstances leading to eviction no longer exist (24 CFR 5.854).

PHAs must also formally allow all applicants to appeal a denial for housing giving the applicant an opportunity to present evidence of positive change since the time of incarceration. Working within the parameters and flexibilities of the above regulations, many PHAs have established admissions and occupancy policies that have promoted reuniting families in supportive communities and using stable housing as a platform for improving the quality of life.

HEALTH

On Medicaid Suspension vs. Termination

MYTH: Medicaid agencies are required to terminate benefits if an otherwise eligible individual is incarcerated.

FACT: *States are not required to terminate eligibility for individuals who are incarcerated based solely on inmate status. States may suspend eligibility during incarceration, enabling an individual to remain enrolled in the state Medicaid program, thereby facilitating access to Medicaid services following release.*

Medicaid-eligible individuals may continue to be enrolled in the program before, during, and after the time in which they are held involuntarily in the secure custody of a public institution.

The statutory Federal Financial Participation (FFP) exclusion applies to Medicaid-eligible inmates of public institutions and only affects the availability of federal funds under Medicaid for reimbursement of medical services provided to an incarcerated individual. The FFP exclusion does not affect the Medicaid eligibility of an incarcerated individual. Additionally, Medicaid reimbursement is available for inpatient services provided to an inmate in *medical* facilities.

Prior to release from incarceration, the state may make certain that enrolled individuals in suspended status are placed in payment status to ease the receipt of Medicaid-covered services immediately upon leaving the facility.

Inmates not already enrolled in Medicaid may file an application prior to discharge. Beginning the process before release allows the state time to enroll eligible individuals so that they may receive Medicaid-covered services upon leaving the facility.

On Veterans Health Care

MYTH: A Veteran with criminal convictions or a history of incarceration is not eligible for VA health care.

FACT: *An eligible Veteran, who is not currently incarcerated, can use VA care regardless of any criminal history, including incarceration. Only when an otherwise eligible Veteran is currently incarcerated, or in fugitive felon status, is he or she not able to use VA health care.*

By regulation, the Veterans Administration (VA) cannot provide health care services to Veterans who are patients or inmates of another government agency's institution, if that agency has a duty to provide the care. Because jails and prisons must provide health care for their inmates, VA cannot treat Veterans while they are incarcerated.

For Veterans who are not currently incarcerated and are otherwise eligible for VA health care, past involvement with the criminal justice system has no impact on their ability to enroll for or to receive health care. The only exception applies to Veterans with an open warrant for a felony offense (fugitive felons), whom VA is prohibited from treating by a separate Federal law.

Because Veterans with criminal histories face additional barriers to employment and other services in their communities, and may be at increased risk for homelessness, VA has two programs designed specifically to reach Veterans involved with the criminal justice system:

- **Health Care for Reentry Veterans**, which provides direct outreach to Veterans nearing release from state and federal prisons, emphasizing rapid linkage to needed health care and other VA and community services; and
- **Veterans Justice Outreach**, which connects Veterans in contact with the “front end” of the system (police, courts and jails) to mental health, substance use, and other treatment resources. Every VA medical center has a Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist who serves as the VA's liaison with the local criminal justice system.

EDUCATION

On Federal Student Financial Aid

MYTH: A person with a criminal record is not eligible to receive federal student financial aid.

FACT: *Individuals who are currently incarcerated in a federal, state, or local correctional institution have some limited eligibility for federal student aid. In general, restrictions on federal student aid eligibility are removed for formerly incarcerated individuals, including those on probation, parole, or residing in a halfway house.*

- An individual incarcerated in a federal or state institution is ineligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant or federal student loans. Although an individual incarcerated in a federal or state prison is eligible to receive a Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and Federal Work-Study (FWS), he or she is unlikely to receive either FSEOG or FWS due to the FSEOG award priority, which is that the grant must be given to those students who also will receive a

Federal Pell Grant, and due to the logistical difficulties of performing an FWS job while incarcerated.

- Those incarcerated in correctional institutions other than federal or state institutions are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, and FWS but not for federal student loans. Also, it is unlikely that incarcerated individuals in correctional institutions other than federal or state institutions will receive FSEOG or FWS due to school funding limitations and to the logistical difficulties of performing an FWS job while incarcerated.
- Incarcerated individuals may not receive federal consolidation loans.
- Upon release, most eligibility limitations (other than those noted below) will be removed. In addition, you may apply for aid in anticipation of being released so that your aid is processed in time for you to start school.
- You may be able to have your federal student loans deferred while you are incarcerated, but you must apply for a deferment and meet its eligibility requirements. To apply for deferment, contact the servicer of your loan(s). To find out what kind(s) of loan(s) you have, and/or to find contact information for your loan servicer, call 1-800- 4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or visit www.nsls.ed.gov
- If your incarceration was for a drug-related offense or if you are subject to an involuntary civil commitment for a sexual offense, your eligibility may be limited as indicated in the two bullets below.
- A student convicted for the possession or sale of illegal drugs may have eligibility suspended if the offense occurred while the student was receiving federal student aid (grants, loans, or work-study).

When you complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), you will be asked whether you had a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal student aid. If the answer is yes, you will be provided a special worksheet to help you determine whether your conviction affects your eligibility for federal student aid. You may preview the worksheet in the FAFSA Information section at www.studentaid.ed.gov/pubs.

- If you have been convicted of a forcible or non-forcible sexual offense, and you are subject to an involuntary civil commitment upon completion of a period of incarceration for that offense, you are ineligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant.

On FERPA/Student Records

MYTH: Transfer of individual student education information from local school systems to juvenile justice agencies is prohibited by FERPA.

FACT: *FERPA allows educational institutions and agencies to disclose student's education records, without parental consent, as long as certain conditions are met.*

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Part 99) is an important federal law for ensuring the privacy of students' education records. The FERPA statute and regulations and other state and local privacy requirements have significant implications for students who are involved in the juvenile justice system. Youth involved with the juvenile justice system experience many transitions between educational programs—from community school into facilities, between facilities, and when returning to their community schools—so it is critical that the relevant agencies understand the conditions under which FERPA allows for the transfer of student records. In fact, FERPA specifically authorizes the non-consensual disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) from students' education records to state or local authorities within the juvenile justice system under the following conditions:

I. When Disclosing to Juvenile Justice Agency-Run Schools or School Districts Where the Student is Placed by the Juvenile Justice Agency

FERPA permits the nonconsensual disclosure of PII from education records to officials of other schools or school systems in advance of the transfer to the new school or school system where a student seeks or intends to enroll or into which a student is being placed (see § 99.31(a)(2) and § 99.34 of FERPA regulations). Juvenile justice agencies that have been designated by their State as either a school or school districts are assigned a code by the National Center for Education Statistics (go to <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>). An originating school may disclose without parental consent student education records to other school systems or schools before a student's actual transfer by meeting any of the following criteria (see § 99.34 and § 99.7):

- The originating school previously notified/informed parents in its annual notification of FERPA rights that it forwards education records to other schools that have requested the records and into which (a) the student seeks or intends to enroll or (b) the student is being placed; or
- The originating school makes a reasonable attempt to notify the parent at his or her last known address of the disclosure; or
- The disclosure is initiated by the parent.

Note that the parent has the right under FERPA to request a copy of the records that were disclosed and the right to seek to amend them.

II. When Disclosing Pursuant to an Authorizing State Statute

FERPA specifically permits juvenile justice agencies to receive PII from students' education records pursuant to an authorizing state statute if the disclosure concerns the juvenile justice system and is needed by such system to effectively serve the student (see § 99.31(a)(5)(i)). However, if the underlying state statute authorizing the disclosure was enacted after November 19, 1974, then the disclosure must be needed by such system to effectively serve the student prior to the student's adjudication as a delinquent (see § 99.31(a)(5)(i)(B) and § 99.38). Also, for

state statutes enacted after November 19, 1974, the officials or authorities receiving the PII from education records must have certified in writing that they will not non-consensually disclose the information to a third party, except as provided under State law. Id.

III. When Disclosing Pursuant to Court Order or Subpoena

In addition, PII from students' education records may be disclosed without parental consent if the disclosure is to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (see § 9.31(a)(9)(i)). However, the educational agency or institution generally only may disclose information under a court order or a subpoena if the agency or institution makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance with it, so that the parent may seek protective action (see § 99.31(a)(9)(ii)). Notification is not required; however, if disclosure is in compliance with a subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose and the court or other issuing agency has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be disclosed. Id.

JUVENILES AND REENTRY

On Juvenile Criminal Records

MYTH: Access to Juvenile criminal records is strictly limited.

FACT: *Privacy of juvenile court records has eroded over the years. In many cases criminal justice professionals – and in some cases others – can access information about an individual stored in state repositories.*

Data collection systems are designed to collect, record, and report information on each felony and serious misdemeanor arrest that occurs in a state, as well as the court's response to the arrest. These records may be used for many purposes, mostly for background checks including identification, employment, security, adoption, immigration/international travel/visa, licensing, assistance in developing suspects in a criminal investigation, and for enhanced sentencing in criminal prosecutions. This information is accumulated into what is commonly known as a "RAP Sheet" (Record of Arrest and Prosecution). This information is linked to a person through fingerprints.

Some state repositories collect information on juvenile arrests and some do not. **Some states with juvenile information report this information when it is requested by a criminal justice entity (e.g., law enforcement, prosecution) and some do not. When a potential employer requests criminal history information on a juvenile applicant, some states will provide some or all of the recorded juvenile information, and some do not.**

The Sealing of juvenile court records means placing them in a separate file or other repository that is not accessible to the public. *Expungement* refers to court records that are considered to have never existed or the destruction of those records. Destruction of such records, however,

does not always mean actual destruction, but rather placing a juvenile's records in a separate file where only certain parties can access them, usually with a court order.

The fact is that the privacy of juvenile court records has eroded over the years. **Persons interested in juvenile justice issues should know the policies and practices of their state's criminal history repository** information on juvenile matters. Given that the information will be collected and stored, the concerns for juvenile justice should focus on the repository's retention and dissemination policies, especially dissemination to potential employers. The questions to ask are:

- Should any juvenile records be reported when a request is made by a potential employer?
- Should reporting be limited to only those matters in which the youth was adjudicated delinquent?
- Should there be criteria established to expunge juvenile information housed in a repository after a certain period of time?
- If a court expunges or seals the juvenile court records on a youth should (and is) the information housed in the state criminal history repository also be expunged or sealed?
- How can juveniles determine if their information is in a repository --- and if it is accurate?

On Medicaid Suspension vs. Termination for Juveniles

MYTH: Medicaid agencies are required to terminate benefits if an otherwise eligible juvenile is incarcerated.

FACT: *States are not required to terminate eligibility for juveniles who are incarcerated based solely on their confinement status. States may suspend eligibility during incarceration, enabling a juvenile to remain enrolled in the state Medicaid program, thereby facilitating access to Medicaid services following release.*

Like Medicaid-eligible adults, Medicaid-eligible juveniles may continue to be enrolled in the program before, during, and after the time in which they are held involuntarily in the secure custody of a public institution.

The statutory Federal Financial Participation (FFP) exclusion applies to Medicaid-eligible inmates of public institutions, including juveniles, and only affects the availability of federal funds under Medicaid for reimbursement of medical services provided to an incarcerated individual. The FFP exclusion does not affect the Medicaid eligibility of an incarcerated juvenile or adult. Additionally, Medicaid reimbursement is available for inpatient services provided to a confined juvenile in *medical* facilities.

Prior to release from incarceration, the state may make certain that enrolled juveniles in suspended status are placed in payment status to ease the receipt of Medicaid-covered services immediately upon leaving the facility.

An application may be filed prior to discharge for otherwise eligible juveniles not already enrolled in Medicaid. Beginning the process before release allows the state time to enroll so that they may receive Medicaid-covered services upon leaving the facility.

Under federal law, individuals under 19 years of age are eligible for Medicaid if their family income is equal to or less than the federal poverty level or they are receiving a federal foster care payment. States may extend the age and income eligibility parameters.

On Youth Access to Education upon Reentry

MYTH: Confined youth easily return to school after release from juvenile confinement.

FACT: *The majority of youth involved in the juvenile justice system have strong aspirations to continue their education, yet face many barriers that reduce their access to education upon reentry.*

According to the latest OJJDP Survey of Youth in Residential Placement (December 2010), more than two-thirds of youth in custody report that they have aspirations of higher education. Research consistently shows that school attendance is a strong protective factor against delinquency; youth who are engaged in school are much less likely to commit crimes in the short and long-terms.

Despite the strong association between school truancy, dropouts, and delinquency, reenrollment in school for youth exiting residential confinement is often challenging. In fact, while more than half of confined youth have not completed the eighth grade, the majority -- 66% -- do not return to school after release.

There are multiple challenges involved in this issue. For instance, states lack a comprehensive mechanism to assess and address the learning needs of youth reentering the system. The process of reenrolling in school is often complicated and lengthy, resulting in a difficult burden for youth to face alone. Youth often face challenges having their educational records and credits transferred from juvenile justice educational facilities to their home schools upon reentry. And some schools place obstacles to reenrollment for formerly incarcerated youth because these youth are considered difficult to manage. In fact, some states have enacted laws that create obstacles for youth attempting to re-enroll in school upon reentry.

Evidence-based practice suggests that successful youth reentry programs and policies must be comprehensive in scope. An educational approach based upon a “think exit at entry” philosophy, which is student-driven and addresses individual strengths and weaknesses of juvenile justice-

involved youth, must be a part of a comprehensive reentry plan whose goal is to prevent recidivism and help youth establish a self-sustaining, law-abiding life.

Ideally, comprehensive reentry plans start when youth enter a juvenile justice facility; they include the time that youth are in juvenile justice facilities, as well as the transitional period when youth leave; and they end in a follow-up phase to ensure that youth have the resources and support they need to successfully rejoin their communities, families, and schools.

In sum, the majority of youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system are motivated to continue their education upon reentry. Significant barriers remain, however, that prevent these youth from achieving their educational aspirations and potential. A comprehensive, community-based approach is needed to facilitate youth reentry into education, and will help to narrow the gap between the goals that these youth possess and the realities that they encounter.

ACCESS TO FEDERAL BENEFITS

On Veterans Compensation Benefits

MYTH: Veterans cannot request to have their VA benefits resumed until they are officially released from incarceration.

FACT: *Veterans may inform VA to have their benefits resumed within 30 days or less of their anticipated release date based on evidence from a parole board or other official prison source showing the Veteran's scheduled release date.*

The Veterans Administration (VA) is proactive with ensuring Veterans are receiving their full entitlement of benefits once released from incarceration.

If the evidence is dated no more than 30 days before the anticipated release from incarceration, VA may resume disability benefits prospectively from the anticipated date of release based on evidence received from a parole board or other official prison source showing the Veteran's scheduled release date.

If the release does not occur on the scheduled date, VA will inform the Veteran that benefits will be discontinued or reduced effective from the date of increase without advance notice.

VA staff conducts outreach in correctional facilities across the nation to share this information with Veterans and prison staff in preparation for release.

On Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits

MYTH: Individuals convicted of a felony can never receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits.

FACT: *This ban applies only to convicted drug felons, and only thirteen States have kept the ban in place in its entirety. Most States have modified or eliminated the ban.*

Section 115 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 prohibited States from providing Food Stamps (now the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to convicted **drug** felons unless the State passes legislation to extend benefits to these individuals.

Only the following 13 States have kept the welfare ban entirely in place: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South Carolina, Texas and West Virginia. All other States have modified the ban or have eliminated it entirely.

The following 18 States and the District of Columbia have eliminated the ban entirely: Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming.

The following 19 States have amended the ban to allow some individuals to regain eligibility by meeting certain additional requirements, like receiving or completing drug or alcohol treatment: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin.

On Snap Benefits/Mailing Address

MYTH: An individual cannot apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits without a mailing address.

FACT: *A person can get SNAP benefits even if he or she does not have a mailing address.*

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application process requires applicants to provide an address where they can receive case related notices.

Some common documents that clients receive by mail include:

- Electronic Benefit Card (EBT) that clients use to access their benefits at authorized stores
- Reapplication forms
- Eligibility interview appointment information

Individuals and families who do not have a mailing address can still receive SNAP benefits. Applicants without a fixed address should notify an eligibility worker at their local SNAP office about their situation to find out how they can receive program-related correspondence.

Some common ways local offices ensure that clients without a mailing address receive notices include:

- Holding correspondence at the local office for pick up;
- Using the address of a local shelter (with the shelter's permission);
- Use the address of a trusted friend or family member (with resident's permission);
- Send correspondence to a local post office as general delivery mail.

Establishing a procedure for applicants without a fixed address to receive timely correspondence helps to ensure that they continue to receive all the SNAP benefits for which they are eligible.

On Snap Benefits/ID

MYTH: An individual cannot apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits without a valid State-issued identification card.

FACT: *A person can get SNAP benefits even if he or she does not have a valid State ID.*

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations require an applicant to verify his or her identity in order to receive program benefits. A valid State-issued ID is a common document used to prove an applicant's identity, but it is not the only acceptable form of proof. SNAP regulations require that local SNAP offices offer applicants flexibility about the type of documents they can provide to verify their information. A local office is required to accept any document that reasonably establishes the applicant's identity and cannot accept only one type of verification. Other examples of acceptable documents that verify an applicant's identity are:

- A birth certificate
- An ID card for health benefits or another assistance program
- A School or work ID card
- Wage stubs containing the applicant's name

If an applicant cannot obtain sufficient verification on his or her own, the local office is required to provide assistance. If sufficient proof of identity cannot be obtained, the local office can accept a statement from a collateral contact who can confirm the applicant's identity. A collateral contact is a person who is knowledgeable about the applicant's situation and can corroborate

information given on the application. Possible collateral contacts include current or former employers, landlords, probation officers or staff members from other social service agencies.

On TANF Benefits

MYTH: A parent with a felony conviction cannot receive TANF/welfare.

FACT: *The 1996 Welfare ban applies only to convicted drug felons, and only eleven states have kept the ban in place in its entirety. Most states have modified or eliminated the ban.*

Section 115 of P.L. 104-193 (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996) imposed a lifetime ban on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (known as TANF or cash/public assistance) benefits for people with felony drug convictions after August 22, 1996, unless their state passes legislation to opt out of the ban. States in which you currently cannot receive TANF if you have a felony drug conviction are Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Mississippi, Nebraska, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, and West Virginia. All other states have modified the ban or eliminated it entirely.

Thirteen States have enacted laws that allow people with drug felony convictions to receive TANF: Kansas, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wyoming.

Nine States (California, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, Oregon, Tennessee, and Utah) have amended the ban to allow individuals who are receiving or have completed drug or alcohol treatment to receive benefits.

Other examples of State modifications to the ban include:

- Providing assistance to individuals who have been convicted of drug possession, while banning those convicted of manufacturing, selling, or trafficking drugs (Arkansas, Florida, and North Dakota).
- Restoring an individual's eligibility after a certain time period if they do not violate the terms of their supervision or become convicted of a new crime (Louisiana and North Carolina).
- Imposing successful completion of drug-testing requirements as a condition of eligibility (Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin).

On Social Security Benefits

MYTH: Eligibility for Social Security benefits cannot be reinstated when an individual is released from incarceration.

FACT: *Social Security benefits are not payable if an individual is convicted of a criminal offense and confined. However, monthly benefits usually can be reinstated after a period of incarceration by contacting Social Security and providing proof of release.*

By law, Social Security benefits are not payable to an individual who is convicted of a criminal offense and confined for more than 30 consecutive days. If an individual was getting Social Security benefits prior to confinement, benefits are suspended until he or she is released. Generally, there is no time limit on the period of suspension.

Upon release, benefits can be reinstated without filing a new claim. The individual must request reinstatement and provide proof of release to the Social Security office. Upon provision of necessary proof, the Social Security office will reinstate benefits quickly.

Social Security cannot reinstate benefits after release if the individual was not receiving benefits before confinement. Instead, the individual must file a claim and be approved before benefits can be paid. For these individuals, Social Security offers a prerelease application procedure, which enables a claim to be filed several months before the scheduled release date. This process allows benefits to start shortly after the individual is released.

Social Security also administers the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for aged or disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits are suspended if the individual is incarcerated for a full calendar month or more. If the incarceration is 12 months or less, Social Security can reinstate SSI benefits quickly upon release. For incarceration periods greater than 12 months, SSI eligibility is terminated and a new claim must be filed to reestablish eligibility. The prerelease application procedure expedites the provision of SSI benefits after the individual is released.

ADDITIONAL MYTHBUSTERS

On Voting Rights

MYTH: An Individual with a felony conviction can never vote.

FACT: *Almost all States restrict voting rights for a period of time, but every State has a restoration process to return voting rights. Generally, it is not a matter of whether one can vote, but how and when one can vote.*

Almost all States restrict the voting rights of persons with felony convictions. The cumulative effect of such laws is that on any given day, about 13% of African American men are unable to vote. Such disenfranchisement need not necessarily be permanent, however. It is a common misconception that all states permanently disenfranchise a person on the basis of a felony conviction. In fact, every State is different with respect to disenfranchisement and restoring one's right to vote.

While most States do take away a citizen's right to vote for a criminal conviction, most States automatically restore that right once a person is no longer incarcerated or once they complete probation or parole. Thus, in the real sense, most people have their voting rights suspended, not terminated. A snapshot of state policies:

- 13 States (plus the District of Columbia) suspend a citizen's right to vote only while incarcerated. Those states are DC, HI, IL, IN, MA, MI, MT, NH, ND, OH, OR, PA, RI, and UT.
- 23 States suspend a citizen's right to vote until certain sentence obligations are satisfied, including probation and parole, and often times the payment of fees and restitution associated with such.
- 8 States require an additional waiting period after sentence completion, and/or additional requirements, such as applying for clemency or pardon from a governor, parole board, or judge, or even convincing a state legislature to pass a bill specifically designated to re-enfranchise an individual.

In two states; ME and VT, people with criminal convictions are not disenfranchised. Individuals may vote even while incarcerated.

FL, IA, KY, and VA permanently disenfranchise individuals for criminal offenses. All of these states have restoration processes for all disqualifying criminal convictions; however some are lengthy and left to the discretion of the governor or pardon board.

On Parental Rights

MYTH: Child welfare agencies are required to terminate parental rights if a parent is incarcerated.

FACT: Important exceptions to the requirement to terminate parental rights provide child welfare agencies and states with the discretion to work with incarcerated parents, their children and the caregivers to preserve and strengthen family relationships.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requires State child welfare agencies to initiate termination of parental rights if a child is in foster care for 15 out of the previous 22 months, unless one of several exceptions apply. The ASFA exceptions to the mandatory filing rule that are most relevant to incarcerated parents include:

- at the option of the State, the child is being cared for by a relative; and
- the State agency has documented in the case plan... a compelling reason for determining that filing such a petition would not be in the best interests of the child.

These exceptions provide child welfare agencies with flexibility to work within the requirements imposed by ASFA by recruiting relatives as caregivers for children. And by developing carefully written case plans that document, as circumstances warrant, that the severance of the parent-child relationship would be contrary to the child's best interests.

Because they are in federal statute, the exceptions provided in the law are available to every State, though not all use them in practice. Some States and the District of Columbia repeat the exceptions in their State statutes, emphasizing their applicability. These States include (as of February, 2010): Alabama, Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

On Child Support Modifications

MYTH: Non-custodial parents who are incarcerated cannot have their child support orders reduced.

FACT: *Half of all states have formalized processes for reducing child support orders during incarceration. Three-quarters of all states have laws that permit incarcerated parents to obtain a reduced or suspended support order.*

Paying child support is an important responsibility for parents and orders usually reflect a support amount based on state guidelines that take into account parents' ability to pay. Debt accumulation is often associated with incarceration because parents have little or no ability to earn income while they are incarcerated. For non-custodial parents leaving prison, studies report child support arrearages in the range of \$15,000 to \$30,000.

Three-quarters of the States have the ability to suspend orders during periods of incarceration and 25 States have implemented formalized initiatives or processes to reduce orders during incarceration. However, the process is not automatic. In most States, incarcerated non-custodial parents have to initiate a request for a review of their order before any adjustment or modification can be made.

Examples of State processes to modify orders for incarcerated parents include:

- Orders set based on actual, not imputed, income during incarceration. (CT)
- If the child support agency is notified that a noncustodial parent is incarcerated, it must review the order to determine whether it is appropriate under the guidelines and may request a modification if warranted. (DC)
- Child support staff meets with inmates at intake, file a modification request, and suspend enforcement. After release, a court hearing reviews order. (MA)

- Order can be reduced to zero if the parent requests modification and is expected to be in prison for at least six more months and earns less than \$200/month. (OR)

On Federal Tax Obligations and Benefits

MYTH: Incarceration exempts individuals from the requirement to file taxes, halts the accumulation of federal tax debts, and prohibits the receipt of tax credits and deductions upon release.

FACT: *Incarceration neither changes one's obligation to pay taxes and tax debts nor prohibits the receipt of tax credits and deductions upon release.*

Filing Taxes and Accumulation of Tax Debt

All citizens must comply with the federal requirements to file and pay taxes. Collection of tax debts does not stop automatically upon incarceration. Individuals who are unable to pay should contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

A tax return is necessary when:

- Applying for housing and providing proof of income to the rental agency or owner.
- Applying for a student loan-- the college/university will ask for proof of income and request to see an individual's most recent tax return.
- Purchasing large items such as homes, cars, etc. that also require proof of income.
- Proving or establishing residency in the United States and providing employers with employment history.

If the IRS deems an individual unable to pay any tax debt, collection may be delayed until the individual's financial condition improves. But, delay of collection will *increase* tax debt because *penalties and interest are charged until payment of the full amount.*

- Individuals who owe \$25,000 or less in combined tax, penalties, and interest, can, for a fee, request an installment agreement.
- Additional time to pay taxes in full may be granted, but the payments must be timely. To make an installment or payment delay request, use the Online Payment Agreement application at www.irs.gov or call 800-829-1040.

Individuals have three years from the due date of a tax return to file a past due return and receive a refund. Individuals who do not have the necessary documents to prove employment should:

- Call 1-800-829-1040 and request a copy of their Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, or Form 1099-MISC, Miscellaneous Income, for the year for which the tax return is being filed.
- After receiving the forms, contact the local IRS office or local 211 number to receive free tax return preparation services.

Before or after incarceration, individuals can visit a Low Income Tax Clinic (LITC) for assistance. LITCs are independent organizations that provide low income taxpayers with representation in federal tax disagreements with the IRS for free or for a nominal charge.

Free help is available through the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS), an independent organization within the IRS that helps taxpayers who are experiencing economic harm as a result of tax issues. Individuals should contact their local advocates, whose numbers are in the phone book, in Publication 1546, Taxpayer Advocate Service -- Your Voice at the IRS, online at www.irs.gov/advocate, or by calling 1-877-777-4778.

Tax Credits and Deductions

After release, a felony conviction does not bar an individual from receiving tax credits or deductions. Tax Credits create a dollar for dollar reduction in tax liability. Tax deductions reduce the level of taxable income.

Common tax credits include:

- **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** – Individuals who work and have an earned income below the thresholds may qualify for the refundable EITC; the amount is determined by income and family size. **Income received for work performed while incarcerated, in a work release program or while in a halfway house is not included in the calculation of the EITC amount.**
- **Child Tax Credit** - Individuals with a qualifying child may receive this tax credit which can be claimed in addition to the Child and Dependent Care Credit (see below).
- **Child and Dependent Care Credit** –Covers a percentage of the expenses paid for the care of children under age 13, or for a disabled spouse or dependent, which enables the taxpayer to work.
- **Education Credits**—The American Opportunity Tax Credit covers some tuition and related expenses in the first four years of post-secondary education of an eligible student for whom the taxpayer claims an exemption on the tax return. The Lifetime Learning Credit can be claimed for all postsecondary education for an unlimited number of years. Both credits cannot be claimed for the same student in one year.
- **Retirement Savings Contribution Credit** – May be claimed on a percentage of qualified retirement savings contributions. Eligible individuals must be age 18 or older at the end of the year, not a student or an individual for whom someone else claims a dependency exemption, and have an adjusted gross income below a specified amount.

Common tax deductions include:

- Standard Deduction - Consists of the basic standard deduction and any additional standard deduction for age or blindness.
- Exemption – Reduces taxable income. Individuals are entitled to a personal exemption when filing a tax return.

On Child Support/Driver License Renewal

MYTH: Noncustodial parents who lose their drivers' license for nonpayment of child support cannot have them reinstated.

FACT: *While federal law requires that State child support programs have mechanisms to suspend licenses, states have the flexibility to allow reinstatement or issue provisional licenses for employment.*

Federal law 42 USC 666(a)(16) requires that State child support programs have processes to withhold, suspend, or restrict licenses for noncompliance with child support. Under the federal law, States may suspend drivers' licenses for a variety of non-driving offenses, including nonpayment of child support.

Each State administers this requirement in different ways-- through an administrative or judicial process, or through a combination of both. States also have great flexibility in deciding what triggers suspension, such as the threshold of an unpaid past due amount. However, many States have a specific hardship exemption, recognizing the importance of helping parents who are behind in their child support avoid license revocation. These States assist parents in reinstating their licenses if they meet certain payment requirements.

Examples of State drivers' license renewal practices include:

- Child support offices may supply work-restricted licenses for parents who have jobs.
- Child support offices may provide payment plans and conditional licenses while payments are being made.
- Child support statutes or policies may provide that inability to pay is a defense to license suspension if the parent lacked the ability to pay the underlying support order.
- Child support programs may partner with employment programs to help noncustodial parents find and keep jobs. These employment programs may help with restoring drivers' licenses.

The process to restore a license will likely require affirmative steps from the noncustodial parent. Noncustodial parents may wish to contact their local child support offices and request assistance with arrears management, order modification, and license reinstatement. Partnerships with legal

service programs or fatherhood programs may help noncustodial parents navigate the complexities of reinstatement.

On Replacement Social Security Cards

MYTH: Incarcerated individuals cannot get a replacement Social Security Card unless they have a current drivers' license or United States passport.

FACT: *The Social Security Administration can issue a replacement card for many inmates nearing release even if they do not have a current drivers' license or U.S. passport.*

By law, the Social Security Administration (SSA) must see documents to prove the identity of every applicant for a replacement Social Security card. Individuals who have been incarcerated for an extended period may not have the documents needed to prove identity, such as a current drivers' license or passport. To help soon-to-be released persons obtain a replacement Social Security card, many institutions agree to perform an investigation to prove each incarcerated person's identity at the time they enter into custody.

The institution may prove a person's identity by reviewing documents in their file; reviewing records from other law enforcement entities; examining birth records, school transcripts, employment records, conferring with family members; and comparing the individual's physical characteristics against the physical description found in National Crime Information Center records.

Once the investigation is complete and documented, individuals confined in an institution that has an agreement with Social Security may file an application for a Social Security card as they near their anticipated release date. Because the institution has established the individual's identity, Social Security accepts written certification from an official of the institution in lieu of documents usually required when a person applies for a card at a Social Security office. This process ensures that the individual has a Social Security card in-hand when they are released.

Correctional institutions should contact the local Social Security office to learn how to enter into an agreement with Social Security to help soon-to-be released individuals obtain replacement cards.

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENT SERIES

On Child Welfare

MYTH: Child welfare agencies do not need to plan family reunification for children in foster care if they have incarcerated parents.

FACT: *Child welfare agencies should make efforts to involve parents in planning for children in foster care, even if the parents are incarcerated.*

Child welfare agencies are required to engage parents, including absent, noncustodial or incarcerated parents, in case planning for their children in foster care whenever possible and appropriate.

Incarceration alone should not be considered an obstacle that changes the child welfare agency's efforts:

- to work with the child's parents through caseworker visits or contacts with the parent;
- to identify relatives who may be able to serve as a resource for the child;
- to encourage, where appropriate, parent visitation or contacts with the child;
- to work to preserve the parent-child relationship; and
- to involve the parent in case planning for the child.

Reunification between incarcerated parents and their children in foster care is not always feasible, but social workers can and should plan for reunification when possible. While federal child welfare law requires child welfare agencies to initiate Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) if a child is in foster care for 15 out of the most recent 22 months, the law provides exceptions to this mandatory TPR rule at the option of the State in the following circumstances:

- The child is being cared for by a relative.
- The State agency has documented in the case plan a compelling reason that filing such a petition would not be in the best interests of the child.
- The State has not provided to the child's family the required services necessary for the safe return of the child to the home.

These exceptions give child welfare agencies flexibility to work within the TPR requirements and work towards unifying incarcerated parents with their children after release.

On Medicaid

MYTH: When parents are incarcerated, their children lose eligibility for Medicaid.

FACT: *Many children remain eligible or gain eligibility for Medicaid coverage while their parents are incarcerated.*

When parents go to prison, their children's living situations may change. The children may move in with family or friends, or they may enter foster care. As children change living situations, their Medicaid eligibility may change, but parents' incarceration does not itself make children ineligible for federal or State health insurance programs. Many children with incarcerated

parents remain eligible for Medicaid, and, in fact, some children who were previously ineligible for Medicaid may become eligible in their new living situations.

Many different factors determine children's eligibility for Medicaid, including the income of the parents and siblings with whom they live, their ages, the States where they live, and whether they are under State guardianship.

If children with one incarcerated parent live with another parent, it is the income of the parent with whom they live that determines their eligibility for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Starting in 2014, children may become eligible for subsidies for private health insurance purchased through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Eligibility for such subsidies is based on who claims the children as tax dependents. Children in foster or guardianship care and receiving Title IV-E payments are automatically eligible for Medicaid. If children live with friends, or relatives other than their parents, while their parents are incarcerated, the children's caretaker's income is not counted towards determining eligibility for Medicaid or CHIP.

Rules for eligibility and coverage vary among the States, but every State allows caregivers to apply for Medicaid or CHIP on behalf of children who live with them. Family member caregivers may also be eligible for Medicaid coverage of their own healthcare needs.

On Parental Arrests

MYTH: When police arrest parents, they must call child protective services to make decisions about the children's placement.

FACT: *At the time of their arrest, parents can make decisions regarding placement of their children.*

Since arrest does not necessarily indicate child abuse or neglect, arrested parents can still make decisions about the welfare of their children. Children may be placed in the care of relatives, friends, or neighbors recommended by the arrested parents. If the police find that arrested parents were not providing a safe environment for children -- for example if the parents were fabricating drugs inside the home -- police may call child protective services to investigate the situation and assess whether out-of-home placement is needed.

In every situation, it is important for police officers to assess the immediate safety of the children and if the situation warrants, work with child protective services to ensure the suitability of a temporary placement for children.

On Social Security

MYTH: Families of persons convicted of a crime and incarcerated for more than 30 continuous days can no longer receive a portion of their Social Security payments.

FACT: *If the family was eligible to receive a portion of the Social Security benefits prior to the conviction and incarceration, they should continue to receive the benefits.*

Other family members are sometimes eligible to receive a portion of one family member's Social Security retirement or disability check. For example, benefits can be paid to a spouse aged 62 or older, or any age if the spouse is caring for a beneficiary's child who is under 16 or disabled. Benefits can also be paid to the person's unmarried children under 18; to those between 18 and 19 who are full-time elementary or secondary school students; or to those 18 or older who became severely disabled before age 22.

Persons convicted of crime and incarcerated for more than 30 continuous days no longer receive Social Security retirement or disability payments while serving their sentences. But family members eligible to receive a portion of the incarcerated person's benefits should continue receiving payments.

It is important to note that this rule does not apply to benefits paid from the Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI). SSI pays benefits to disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources, but because these benefits are paid only to individuals, not to families, the benefits are suspended when the beneficiary is incarcerated for a full calendar month.

On TANF Eligibility

MYTH: If parents become ineligible for TANF assistance due to a felony drug conviction, their children also loses TANF assistance.

FACT: *Children may be eligible for TANF assistance even if they live with ineligible parents.*

Children may still be eligible to receive TANF assistance even if one or both parents become ineligible. A State may provide assistance to the children of a family with ineligible parents through a "child-only" case, as long as the family meets all other eligibility criteria. Child-only cases may include cases in which the parents present in the home are ineligible to receive TANF due to sanctions or prohibitions, such as felony drug convictions. In many cases the ineligible parents could be designated the "non-recipient parent payee" and receive benefits on behalf of the children. In these cases the parents are not members of the "assistance unit" -- that is, the parents' needs are not taken into account when calculating the assistance payment.

Two-parent households where only one parent is ineligible due to a felony drug conviction would not warrant a child-only case because one eligible parent remains. Any parent living with children receiving assistance is still subject to the TANF work-requirements, unless exempted.

The specific rules governing eligibility determination and calculation of assistance vary from State to State.

On Snap Eligibility

MYTH: If parents become ineligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, their children also lose eligibility.

FACT: *Children may be eligible for SNAP assistance even if their parents are not.*

Children may be eligible to receive SNAP benefits (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) even if other members of the household are ineligible; as long as the household meets the program's other eligibility criteria.

Some States have a lifetime or modified ban on SNAP eligibility that applies to individuals with past drug felony convictions. In such cases, ineligible family members may not receive benefits themselves but their income and resources will be considered in determining SNAP eligibility and the benefit amount for other members of the household.

If parents are ineligible for SNAP because they are incarcerated, their children may still be eligible for benefits. The children's guardians or caregivers can apply on behalf of the children or may include them as a part of their own SNAP household if they are also participating in the program.