



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

Programs, Treatment, and Re-entry Coordination Report

December 2021

Governor Larry Hogan
Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford
Secretary Robert L. Green

I. INTRODUCTION

The Budget Committees requested the Department's Assistant Secretary for Programs, Treatment, and Re-entry Services, submit a report on the redeployment of the Brockbridge Correctional Facility as a comprehensive Prerelease, Re-entry, and Workforce Development Facility. The following language can be found on page 149 of the 2021 Joint Chairmen's Report.

Programs, Treatment, and Re-entry Coordination Report: The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Department) is in the process of redeploying the Brockbridge Correctional Facility (BCF) in Jessup as a comprehensive Pre-release, Re-entry, and Workforce Development Facility to allow the Department to create additional bridges of connection and expand on existing pre-release and re-entry facilities. Over 5,000 people are released in a year, and the population returns to every county across the State. The budget committees request a report due by December 1, 2021, from the Assistant Secretary for Programs, Treatment, and Re-entry Coordination on the following:

- mechanisms to expand and report on public-private partnerships and community engagement with third parties across all counties within the state, including community-based collaboratives;
- the means for county and community-based organizations to conduct remote inreach to BCF to reduce the travel burden on community partners;
- mechanisms to ensure holistic continuity of care on release, including the electronic transfer of information to the returning citizen;
- the provision of trained, community-based coaches to supplement the interventions of and referrals by probation and parole officers, given the continuation of caseloads in excess of national averages; and
- secure technology to support case planning and execution that enables information-sharing between returning citizens, probation and parole officers, State and county agencies, and private entities under the auspices of a trusted third party in order to respect returning citizen privacy and facilitate independent cross-agency reporting.

II. OVERVIEW

Release and re-entry planning begins upon commitment to the Division of Correction (DOC). A number of assessments occur upon intake, including an assessment that enables Case Management staff to establish a case plan for each incarcerated individual. The case plan is a tool used by the Department to identify an inmate's risk factors for reoffending. An inmate's risk factors may include antisocial associates, antisocial thinking and behavior, substance abuse, minimal educational or occupational skills, under employment, poor family or marital support, medical or mental health concerns, or sexual offending. Prior to returning to the community, Case Managers in the facilities work with the incarcerated population to develop a home plan and recommend programming to address any identified risk factors in order to ensure the incarcerated individuals are returning to a stable environment.

In fiscal year 2021, 4,600 incarcerated individuals returned home - 96% of those individuals were released with a verified home plan. In addition to the home plan, other re-entry services include:

- Medicaid enrollment
- 30-day supply of medication
- Identification assistance (Motor Vehicle Administration, Social Security)
- Community health referral
- Behavioral health referral
- Community mental health referral
- SNAP enrollment
- Housing assistance
- Employment & Career placement services
- Financial literacy training
- Mediation services
- Social Security application Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance; and
- Veteran services

For the period of January - September 2021, a total of 2,072 incarcerated individuals returned to their communities. While the incarcerated population's participation in re-entry services is voluntary, of the 2,072 released during this timeframe, 94% received re-entry services, including job readiness and SNAP application assistance. In addition, 72% of the individuals released during the same time frame were enrolled in Medicaid, were determined to be ineligible for Medicaid, or refused enrollment. If individuals are Medicare eligible, they are given information for their local Social Security Administration so they may follow up upon release. The Department is not able to enroll individuals in Medicare during their incarceration. For incarcerated individuals who are Veterans, the process of applying for a copy of their discharge form is initiated during incarceration. Veterans are referred to their regional Veteran Affairs Case Worker prior to release. Contact information and any appointments, housing, or other services that have been set up are included in each release plan.

Re-entry involves allowing incarcerated individuals the opportunity to engage with their home community, family members, and support system. The Department has partnered with local correctional facilities to allow certain, eligible individuals, who are within 18 months of release to be transferred to a local correctional facility in their community. This transfer allows the individual to become acclimated with local support programs, participate in re-entry and work release opportunities, and provides more convenient access for their family members.

I. MECHANISMS TO EXPAND AND REPORT ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Department has recently hired a Director of Community Outreach and Special Projects, which is a newly created position. The Director is responsible for expanding, collaborating, and establishing partnerships with community and faith-based organizations to provide needed re-entry services and programs for all incarcerated individuals.

The Department currently has memorandums of understanding or contracts with the following organizations:

- **Goodwill: Supporting Ex-Offenders in Employment, Training, and Transitional Services (SEETTS):** The SEETTS program provides an array of services to prepare offenders for employment, including career and skills assessments, cognitive-based employment readiness classes, placement, and retention support. Services are offered to individuals within facilities operated by the Division of Pretrial and Detention Services (DPDS) or the DOC, and to individuals who are under the supervision of the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP). Services include the assessment and employment readiness components which are delivered during incarceration with supportive services provided post release. In addition, individuals released from DPSCS facilities and other individuals with criminal histories can receive services as a walk-in or “community referral” by directly contacting the service provider. These services result in stable employment placements for offenders. This program provides the Department with a quarterly report. In the most recent report dated September 2021, SEETTS reported that the organization’s Career Services and Tailored Staffing Agency assisted with job leads and 21 placements during the quarter, with an average wage of \$16.38. The wage represents an .83 cent increase since the previous reporting period. Retention tracked for the quarter yielded 15 participants being employed for 90 days or more. Six of the 15 participants (40%) tracked, maintained employment for 12 months or more.
- **Community Mediation Maryland:** Provides statewide services to incarcerated individuals who need mediation and reunification services to resolve disputes with friends and family in order to ease the release process and heal relationships.
- **The Prince George’s County State’s Attorney:** Provides counseling, mentoring, problem solving skills, and rehabilitative services statewide. These services are provided using a virtual platform that allows inmates at every State facility, who will be returning to Prince George’s and County and its surrounding counties upon release to participate.
- **Gatekeepers:** Provides incarcerated individuals in Washington County with employment opportunities via life coaching, recovery efforts, and resource clubs. The program’s primary goal is to provide the necessary means to achieve a stable and productive lifestyle that supports employment efforts.

The Department also has relationships with many community-based organizations throughout the State. The Department is currently developing a public website where formerly incarcerated individuals and their families and friends will be able to search the hundreds of resources available in each jurisdiction within Maryland. A list of the types of services available includes:

Resources	
Addiction Services	Family Services
Advocacy	Food, Housing, & Shelter
Behavioral Health	Health Services
Career Guidance/Employment Services	Medical Services
Child Support	Mental Health Services
Clothing	Mentoring
Counseling	Ministry/Religious Services
Crisis Services	Sex Offender Treatment
Domestic Violence Resources	Utility Assistance
Education	

In addition to the implementation of a searchable database of resources for re-entering individuals and their family members, the Department has a network of staff and contractors providing re-entry planning services prior to release and post release. Under the direction of the Assistant Secretary for Programs, Treatment, and Re-entry Services, five Re-entry Specialists were hired by the Department and assigned regionally throughout the State. The Re-entry Specialists assist individuals as they transition from the DOC back into the community identified in their home plan. Currently, the Re-entry Specialists are following up with formerly incarcerated individuals 30-60 days post-release, on an as needed basis, to ensure that services planned prior to release have been secured and to determine whether additional services are needed.

The work being done by the Re-entry Specialists is supported by personnel from the Department's Social Work and Case Management Units as well as Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) re-entry staff, and medical and mental health contractors. The medical and mental health contractors employ certified counselors to assist in the treatment and re-entry process. Overall, there are approximately 80 positions between the Re-entry Specialists, Social Workers, Case Managers, and medical and mental health contractors who are involved in providing re-entry services to individuals throughout their incarceration and within their first 60 days post-release.

The Department continues to expand re-entry services through a grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (MCHRC) to implement the Returning Citizens Community Connections (RCCC) Model. Healthcare Access Maryland (HCAM) was selected to act as an administrator and navigator to connect high-risk individuals, who have been

referred from the Division of Pretrial Detention Services (DPDS) and other re-entry services to community resources. HCAM provides wraparound services post-release and each enrolled program participant receives 60-days post-release care coordination to ensure access to health care, manage chronic illnesses and/or behavioral health conditions, and additional resources that meet each individual's essential social determinants including food, housing, employment, education, transportation, and medication. This program is required to complete quarterly reports. The data to be reported includes the percentage of Agency referrals who attended their referred intake appointment, as well as 30 and 60-day treatment retention rates for Agency referrals. The first report is due December 2021.

II. THE MEANS FOR COUNTY AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO CONDUCT REMOTE IN-REACH TO BCF TO REDUCE TRAVEL BURDENS ON COMMUNITY PARTNERS

As described in the August 2020 BCF Replacement Report, much of the work related to the transformation of BCF into a comprehensive prerelease, re-entry, and workforce development facility was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department understands "in-reach" to be the ability of community resources to initiate services with incarcerated individuals prior to a return to their communities. The Department is currently utilizing a regional intake and release process which has allowed for increased knowledge about resources in each region. Regional resources are able to participate in in-reach activities utilizing video and teleconference technology. Community-based organizations are able to initiate intake processes with incarcerated individuals, assisting in preparing them for re-entry. The Social Work and Re-entry units, as well as the Medical and Mental Health Units, Division of Parole and Probation agents, and Home Detention personnel connect the individual to community-based programs within the jurisdiction identified in their home plan prior to their release.

While comprehensive prerelease, re-entry, and workforce development programs existed prior to COVID-19, the pandemic has also allowed the Department increased flexibility in how personnel work with community-based organizations. Services for incarcerated individuals are identified as part of the re-entry planning process and contacts are made on behalf of incarcerated individuals with community-based providers as the incarcerated individuals are preparing for release. The intent of these contacts is to create a smooth transition and warm hand-off from the correctional setting to community-based services providers. The Department plans to continue to utilize all available technology to facilitate relationships between individuals returning to the community and community-based providers whether through virtual meetings, conference calls, or in-person appointments prior to and/or after release.

III. MECHANISMS TO ENSURE HOLISTIC CONTINUITY OF CARE ON RELEASE, INCLUDING THE ELECTRONIC TRANSFER OF INFORMATION TO THE RETURNING CITIZEN

Medical and Mental Health providers and Social Work Specialists have the ability to transfer an individual's electronic health care record to community-based providers with the

appropriate release of records permissions. Currently, the incarcerated individual does not have direct electronic access to their care records, but processes are in place to allow hard copy records to be provided to the individual.

The Department is working to implement a new Electronic Patient Health Record (EPHR) system. The EPHR will allow for data and records from medical, mental health, dental, social work, re-entry, and other units to be collected and stored in a manner that will increase collaboration and coordination across the Department. The EPHR will create one universal area in which progress, release, and re-entry notes will be documented and shared. The intent is to create an ongoing record of services that includes all essential information and results in the creation of a comprehensive release and re-entry plan for each incarcerated individual. Information from this record of services will be able to be reviewed and provided to the individual before release. This new system will also allow the Department to maintain better data on re-entry efforts.

Finally, individuals are provided a “release envelope” at discharge. This envelope includes instructions for reporting to the appropriate parole and probation office if the individual is under supervision, release medications, and release documents such as their birth certificate, social security card, and Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) identification card. Re-entry Specialists provide additional resources for individuals in need of re-entry services including appointment information and county-specific release resources.

IV. THE PROVISION OF TRAINED, COMMUNITY-BASED COACHES TO SUPPLEMENT THE INTERVENTIONS OF AND REFERRALS BY PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICERS, GIVEN THE CONTINUATION OF CASELOADS IN EXCESS OF NATIONAL AVERAGES¹

From the date of admission through release, the Department’s personnel are working toward the development of a re-entry plan for each individual. Within 120 days of release, Re-entry Specialists conduct initial meetings with individuals to review home plan information and assess each individual’s needs. Based on the assessed needs, the full Re-entry Release Plan is developed and contacts are made with both internal providers and community-based organizations. Individual meetings with the internal providers and community-based organizations are held, as needed, to facilitate direct referrals. A follow up meeting is conducted when the incarcerated individual is within 30 days of release to finalize the Release Plan and provide the individual with any appointment details and general resource packets for the jurisdiction to which the offender is returning.

Re-entry Specialists also provide follow up care for the returned citizen 30-60 days post-release. Additionally, the Department has been awarded a grant under the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) to target resources for the

¹ Please refer to the Department’s Annual Data Dashboard at https://dpscsmaryland.gov/community_releases/DPSCS-Annual-Data-Dashboard.shtml for current data regarding community supervision trends. In FY 2020, there were 6,380 more closures of criminal supervision cases than were opened and 1,617 more closures of drinking driver monitoring program cases closed than were opened.

Homeless, Pre-trial, and Disabled individuals. This re-entry work and the direct referrals that occur prior to release assist parole and probation agents as it allows for services to address risk factors to already be in place prior to release.

The Department submitted a Division of Parole and Probation Caseload Report in September 2021. This report demonstrated that over the past fiscal year, the Department has continued to see a decrease in the average agent to caseload ratio. DPP statewide caseload averages were 62 cases per agent as of the end of fiscal year (FY) 2021. The Department strives to maintain an average caseload ratio per agent that is based on evidence-based supervision techniques, best practices, and national ratio guidelines.

One of the primary ways the Department strives to maintain an average caseload ratio per agent that is comparable to national averages is by filling vacant agent positions. DPP had a total of 688 authorized PINS and 80 Agent vacancies statewide as of June 2021. DPP has worked with the Human Resources Services Division (HRSD) to recruit and fill vacant positions. Since the FY 2020 report, DPP has maintained the agent vacancy rate with an overall vacancy rate remaining below 10%. DPP continues to work closely with HRSD to fill all remaining agent vacancies. Each of the offices with caseload averages over the national average (82 cases) has vacancies. Once the vacancies are filled the averages in those offices will be reduced to below 80 cases/agent. Vacancies directly affect the average caseload ratios since there are fewer total DPP agents. The Department has continued to prioritize filling its vacancies across the entire agency including DPP agent positions. The tremendous efforts of HRSD resulted in the following staff additions:

- FY 2021 – 53 new Agents hired
- FY 2020 – 29 new Agents hired

V. SECURE TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT CASE PLANNING AND EXECUTION THAT ENABLES INFORMATION SHARING BETWEEN RETURNING CITIZENS, PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICERS, STATE AND COUNTY AGENCIES, AND PRIVATE ENTITIES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF A TRUSTED THIRD PARTY IN ORDER TO RESPECT RETURNING CITIZEN PRIVACY AND FACILITATE INDEPENDENT CROSS-AGENCY SHARING

The Department is in the process of developing an EPHR system that will improve information sharing across the Department's units including Medical, Mental Health, and Social Work. Additionally, parole and probation agents maintain records in OCMS. to include supervision activities and referrals. Limited information in OCMS is shared with the Maryland Dashboard and can be accessed by law enforcement agencies. Additionally, private and public community-based organizations are able to receive information based on a signed Release of Information authorization that has been completed by the returning individual.

Conclusion

The Department remains committed to expanding Pre-release, Re-entry, and Workforce Development opportunities. While the pandemic paused efforts to centralize re-entry services

via the re-deployment of BCF, the Department has moved forward with expanding regional pre-release, re-entry, and workforce development opportunities. This includes improving services and moving toward a centralized process to facilitate communication between the Social Work and Re-entry Services units. The Department is continuing to expand staffing of Re-entry Specialists through both the use of permanent positions and contractual grant opportunities.

The Department is also working diligently to strengthen existing relationships with public and private community-based organizations and forge new relationships. One example of this is the development and implementation of MOUs with local detention facilities in every county that operates a local detention facility. The Department currently has MOUs with nine facilities, allowing for individuals to return to the county identified in their home plan and to participate in local programming during the final 12 months of their incarceration.

In fiscal year 2022, the Department is slated to release approximately 1,558 incarcerated individuals from the Division of Correction. Not all of these individuals will have an opportunity to transition back into their communities via local detention facilities as less than 50% of the counties with local detention facilities are currently participating in this program.

Additionally, the Department has increased the utilization of its Home Detention program. The Commissioner of Correction has the authority to place certain, eligible inmates under electronic home monitoring prior to their release date. The Department experienced an increase of 155% in the number of individuals placed on home detention between 2019 and 2020. While this was a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 placements also exceed the number of placements in 2019.