



Final Report



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
RE-ENTRY
A D V I S O R Y B O A R D

Prepared by

ASHLEY N. SHARP
CHIEF OF STAFF
OFFICE OF COUNCIL CHAIR
CALVIN S. HAWKINS, II

Approved by

JUDGE ALEXANDER WILLIAMS, RET., CHAIR
WALTER L. SIMMONS, VICE CHAIR

NOVEMBER 2021

DONNA J. BROWN
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 2ND FLOOR
14741 GOVERNOR ODEN BOWIE DRIVE
UPPER MARLBORO, MD 20772

DEAR MS. BROWN:

ON BEHALF OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY [RE-ENTRY ADVISORY BOARD](#), I WRITE TO SUBMIT THE BOARD'S FINAL REPORT. THE BOARD CONSISTS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, NON-PROFITS, FAITH-BASED ENTITIES AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED RESIDENTS. I AM EXTREMELY PROUD OF THE INDIVIDUALS THAT SERVED ON THIS BOARD AND AM GRATEFUL FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO RESOLVING AND IMPROVING THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY.

THIS BOARD, CREATED IN 2019 BY LEAD SPONSOR, COUNCIL CHAIRMAN CALVIN S. HAWKINS, II, UNDER CR-49-2019, MET IN-PERSON ON A MONTHLY BASIS UNTIL THE UNFORESEEN COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTED DAILY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND THE BOARD WAS REQUIRED TO OPERATE VIRTUALLY UNDER EMERGENCY ORDERS OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE ALSOBROOKS AND GOVERNOR HOGAN. NONETHELESS, THE BOARD REMAINED FOCUSED AND DEDICATED TO THIS IMPORTANT WORK AND ALREADY TAKEN PROACTIVE ACTIONS TO BRING THESE NECESSARY RECOMMENDATIONS TO FRUITION.

SINCERELY,



JUDGE ALEXANDER WILLIAMS
U.S. DISTRICT COURT JUDGE - RETIRED
CHAIR



WALTER SIMMONS
PRESIDENT/CEO, EMPLOY PRINCE GEORGE'S
VICE CHAIR

RAB MEMBERS / REPRESENTATIVES

The Chair of the County Council's Health, Human Services and Public Safety Committee

One (1) representative from the County Executive's Office

The President and CEO of Employ Prince George's

The Administrative Judge of the Prince George's County Circuit Court

The Chief of Police

The Sheriff

The Director of Corrections

The State's Attorney

The Public Defender

The Health Officer

The Director of Social Services

The Director of Housing and Community Development

The CEO of Prince George's County Public Schools

The President of Prince George's Community College

Two (2) representatives from non-profit organizations

One (1) male and one (1) female citizen of the County who are formerly incarcerated persons

Two (2) representatives from the Faith-Based Community
A representative from the Juvenile Justice system

RAB County Council Staff



Robert J. Williams, Jr., Council Administrator

William M. Hunt, Deputy Council Administrator

Colette R. Gresham, Legislative Council

Donna Whitman, Legislative Council

Nathaniel Tutt, Legislative Officer

Ashley Sharp, Office of Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II

Shelby McRae, Creative & Web Management

Executive Summary



The Re-entry Advisory Board (RAB) was created by way of Resolution, CR-49-2019, by sponsor, Council Chairman Calvin S. Hawkins, II to address the needs of those formerly incarcerated returning from local, state and federal prisons. The individual's reentry process begins while he/she is still in the pre-release phase and continues through post-release.

This Board researched best practices, surveyed current County agency and non-profit services, pinpointed the gaps in the continuum of care, raised awareness of the needs the formerly incarcerated population amongst agencies and supported new working relationships amongst entities supportive of returning residents. The goal of the Board's work was to reduce barriers to post-release services, housing, job training and employment to assist ex-offenders in building sustainable lives and ultimately reducing recidivism. The RAB met both as a whole and within specific subcommittees on a monthly basis. The subcommittees were focused in the areas of: Policy, Housing, County-Provided Resources, Community Engagement/Service Delivery and Resource Cultivation. As a result, recommendations were referred from each subcommittee producing this comprehensive final report. The most raised factors and concerns among stakeholders were surrounding accessibility to housing, transportation to job sites, adequate facilities to support inmate population and data-sharing between agencies/community-based service providers post incarceration.

Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee met to discuss proposed legislation sponsored during the State and County legislative sessions and highlight policy needs for future consideration. During the 90 Day Legislative Session for the Maryland General Assembly, the group reviewed all relevant legislation in its entirety producing a summary of the bill, a recommendation of position to members of the RAB who would then make recommendations to the County Council's General Assembly Committee to take a position and consider for further consideration. The subcommittee also reviewed and provided feedback to sponsors of relevant legislation presented to the County Council. The following recommendations were provided as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Enhance post-release needs in the areas of housing, health care, employment and social services
- Enhance outreach abilities of the Bridge Center @ Adams House to the Community and to State Correctional facilities
- Formalize coordination between County DoC / MD DSPCS / BOP to notify the Bridge Center of an inmate's release in order to assist him/her with the re-entry process should he/she elect to do so
- Establish a working relationship between the County and the Maryland Dept. of Parole and Probation
- Coordinate with the Problem-Solving Courts and provide education to judges about re-entry options
- Engage legal advocates/programs that can provide assistance with financial planning for child support payments and other civil fines that lead to further barriers for successful re-entry
- Recruit, train and support community-based organizations that provide services to formerly incarcerated and their families
- Subsidize transportation for a limited period immediately following release to support with gaining employment and completing substance-abuse treatment programs
- Assistance for Incarcerated individuals seeking reconsideration of their sentencing
- Expand the capacity of the Problem-Solving - Reentry Courts (funded through the State)
- Re-open and expand the offerings of the Community Release Center (CRC) and prepare for accepting residents transferring from State to County facilities

Housing Subcommittee

The Housing Subcommittee was formed due to the lack of housing being one of the greatest barriers to self-sustainment for those formerly incarcerated. The group discussed best practices in housing models with wrap-around services and financing options for affordable housing.

Presenters with regional experience in the DC, Maryland, Virginia and Baltimore areas spoke to the group to assist in analyzing these best practices with special consideration to the challenges that returning citizens face throughout the Baltimore Washington Metropolitan area. The following recommendations were provided by the as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Work with community organizations and Not-for-Profit Community Developers to support housing for individuals at all stages of their return in order to ultimately achieve independent living
- Create MOUs between the Bridge Center @ Adam's House and specific organizations who are currently facilitating reliable, accessible and safe housing to returning citizens inclusive of wrap-around services that can show success through approved data tracking methods
- Increase financing options available to developers to incentivize affordable housing or to create a set-aside for those historically underserved in order to reduce barriers

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County-Provided Resources Subcommittee

The County-Provided Resources Subcommittee was created to account for the County-provided services/resources that currently exist in Prince George's County to serve returning residents and to create a certification process for community-based organizations/non-profits to be vetted and trained to operate according to data-tracking methods. The participating agencies were inclusive of all County agencies that interact with an inmate/returning resident throughout their time served to time released with the goal of reducing recidivism in mind. Through collaboration, the agencies were able to clarify the needs of inmates/returning residents and the gaps in the processes that County agencies follow.

The following recommendations were provided as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Establish a web-based platform that provides a central location of all vetted organizations that offer re-entry services that updates in real time
- Dedicate general funds to extend the ETO (Efforts To Outcomes - Social Solutions Case Management) contracted platform selecting the 3-year option as opposed to a year-to-year contract supported by grant funds
- Acquire technical assistance via a cloud-based, user-friendly platform to communicate with end-users (non-profits/service providers) to be utilized post-release to support the continuum of care for returning residents, preferably one that can be integrated with the current ETO system utilized by the Health Department, DoC and other partnering government agencies
- Expand the medical health units within County jail to allow for separate, individual units dedicated for inmates with severe mental challenges that need temporary isolation during their recovery process
- Increase dedicated funding to expand service capabilities of the currently contracted Mobile Crisis Teams to also include Forensic Assertive Community Treatment Teams to support the crisis continuum of care in the community to support returning residents that were unsuccessful in the initial recovery process while incarcerated
- Exploring the possibility of relocating the Bridge Center @ Adams House to increase accessibility by residents returning and taking necessary steps to select a location that is centrally located and near lines of public transit and considerate of space accommodations and cost-savings to prioritize effectiveness and sustainability
- Have a DSS staff member on-site of County correctional facilities to support with initiating federal benefits enrollment process for Medicaid
- Increase availability of temporary housing (Transitional/Emergency) to provide support and a physical address upon release and during the job-seeking process
- Support for efforts by EMPLOY Prince George's to expand partnerships in industries that returning citizens can be trained, hired and working for a living wage (i.e.- Construction, Trucking/CDL, Food Service, Auto Mechanics, Other On-the-job Training/OJT, etc.)

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The following recommendations were provided as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Conduct County-funded training (Level of Service Case Management Inventory [LSCMI] Professional Development Training) for select community-based organizations/non-profits to prepare the service-providers to operate utilizing systemic, evidence-based data-tracking methods to fully support individuals post-release and effectively reduce recidivism
- Increase services and accessibility to services for women returning, especially single mothers, and increase frequency and effectiveness of outreach/education efforts for Women
- Work with State stakeholders to support the development of a Women's only Pre-release location
- Further develop Support Group options with local non-profits and faith-based partners for the family unit of formerly reincarcerated and for children of those formerly incarcerated to address trauma-informed mediation and support

Community Engagement / Service Delivery Subcommittee

The Community Engagement & Service Delivery subcommittee was created to foster partnerships between the community and government service providers. Community involvement was continuously present throughout the RAB's process to offering essential insight into the barriers and challenges faced by individuals who are returning home after spending anywhere from 3 months to decades of life incarcerated. Because of this and a myriad of other factors, the needs of this population vary on a case-by-case basis which requires an integrated approach to provide a continuum of care. The following recommendations were provided as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Strategically expand the connections of faith-based entities who have programs currently operating to support returning residents with the DoC/Health Department to work together to target geographically strategic areas that could support capacity-building and receiving educational training hours to become Peer Supporters/Life Coaches who are residents of the strategic area to readily engage individuals upon release and who are easily accessible
- Formalize partnerships via MOUs between the Bridge Center @ Adams House and organizations with case managers on staff to assist the Bridge Center @ Adams House in connecting clients with community resources post-release and beyond (beginning with those organizations who completed the official LSCMI County training)
- Formalize partnerships via MOU between the County and community health clinics/local hospitals that offer Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment to proactively bridge the gap in treatment until individual has enrolled or is successfully reinstated for Medicaid and help to reduce ER visits/demand. Some of the local, major medical facilities have social workers already on-site, however there needs to be more effort in determining the individual's eligibility and educating him/her on medical benefits
- DSS and DoC to work together to assign a DSS member (permanent assignment as part time position) at the County jail to assist with enrolling/activating Medicaid during pre-release period
- Work in partnership with the Judge AW Center for Education, Justice & Ethics to expand research and recommendations for mental/behavior health assistance for returning citizens, especially in areas of Housing for this population within the State & County
- Train/certify eligible nonprofit service providers to be registered Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) with the State to assist residents with applying for federal assistance (SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, etc.). Working with entities who have completed the County LSCMI training are strongly preferred.

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- Develop a Resource Directory or "Reentry Playbook" that would serve as a roadmap for residents returning outlining all available resources/organizations in and around Prince George's County that support successful reentry. Distributing this material to inmates, should be an added condition within an MOU language crafted with the MD DPSCS. This information should also be shared with the County Dept. of Corrections and Federal DOJ-BOP.
- Establish modernized IT capabilities that allows for secure, ongoing, virtual visits to accommodate reentry coordinators, act as a platform to support stabilizing therapy sessions/wellness checks as well as workforce training.
- Establish a point of contact within Dept. of Corrections (post-pandemic) to coordinate visitation of family/friends, connect them to familial support groups and actively develop partnerships between the agency and faith-based/non-profit organizations specifically with those who would enter the facility to provide interventions, trainings, religious activities, etc.
- Dept. of Corrections and the chaplaincy vendor (Prison Ministry of America) should select a permanent chaplain for the County jail as soon as possible
- Prioritize funding for a new jail inclusive of capabilities like isolated cells for inmates diagnosed with severe mental health illnesses. Individualized units should be utilized on a rotational basis.
- Establish a workforce development/life skills training programs between the Dept. of Corrections and Employ Prince George's to receive training during stay at the Community Release Center (CRC) and throughout pre-release term
- Create a process for individuals to apply for a waiver or time-extension for payment of child support for returning residents in partnership with the SAO and the MD Child Support Administration
- Expand partnerships with municipalities for the Dept. of Corrections' CRC and the Bridge Center @ Adam's House to determine how these entities can play an integral part in successful reentry of the residents returning to incorporated cities/townships
- Establish a data monitoring process that all County agencies and vetted County partner service providers (County LSCMI certification) can access through licensing to update on an ongoing basis with data tracking and overall re-entry success rates
- Strengthen relationship between the Bridge Center @ Adams House, the Dept. of Corrections and their Federal counterparts (DOJ - BOP)
- Strengthen relationship between the Bridge Center @ Adams House, the Dept. of Corrections and their State counterparts (MD DPSCS) as well as the Maryland Navigators workforce development program (under MD DLLR)

Resource Cultivation Subcommittee

The Resource Cultivation subcommittee was created to ensure that the focused efforts and recommendations of the RAB are supported and sustained through organizational structure, staffing and fiscal needs.

Currently, most County services and programs are supported through grant funds which severely impacts the expansion, effectiveness and fluidity of these efforts.

While a network of community-based re-entry service providers exists in the County, many lack the capacity and evidence-based tracking practices that are necessary to show the rate of effectiveness or recidivism. The following recommendations were provided as a result of ongoing discussions:

- Hire a Re-entry Coordinator (Associate Director level) to report directly to the Chief of Staff of the County Executive about any efforts and initiatives on behalf of the County to support a fluid and sustainable process for returning residents by building partnerships, working with regional stakeholders, correctional entities and community service providers and serving as a supportive liaison between agencies for re-entry matters
- Convene key Institutional Stakeholders (County/State/Federal agencies, quasi-government agencies, entities of higher education) on an ongoing basis to develop plans of action to pursue public and private funding that requires cross-collaboration between State & County agencies
- Create a certification process for County non-profits/community-based service providers to become properly vetted as official County Re-entry Partners utilizing the Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LSCMI) Professional Development Training to assist with guiding organizations to build capacity by educating them on utilizing evidence-based tools.

Glossary

- DoC - **Department of Corrections** (Prince George's County)
- CRC - **Community Release Center** (Prince George's County)
- MD DCSPS - **Department of Correctional Services and Public Safety** (State of Maryland)
- MD DLLR - **Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations** (State of Maryland)
- DOJ - BOP - **Department of Justice - Bureau of Prisons** (Federal)
- DSS - **Department of Social Services** (State of Maryland)
- ETO - **Efforts to Outcomes**
- LSCMI - **Level of Service / Case Management Inventory**: fully functioning case management system that measures the risk and need factors of offenders to aid professionals in treatment planning for and management of offenders
- LSCMI Certification - Process and training for community-based re-entry service providers that wish to become official County providers that acquire certification according to standards and requirements determined by the **Prince George's Behavioral Health Advisory Group (BHAG)**

Appendix

- [CR-49-2019](#)

DR-2

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2019 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-49-2019
Proposed by Council Members Hawkins and Dernoga
Introduced by Council Members Hawkins, Dernoga, Turner, Anderson-Walker,
Davis, Franklin, Glaros, Harrison, Ivey, Streeter & Taveras
Date of Introduction June 11, 2019

RESOLUTION

1 A RESOLUTION concerning
2 The Prince George's County Re-Entry Advisory Board
3 For the purpose of establishing the Prince George's County Re-Entry Advisory Board
4 to determine, evaluate, and implementing a comprehensive Re-Entry Program and re-entry
5 services in the County to service formerly incarcerated persons attempting to acclimate back into
6 society.
7 WHEREAS, in Prince George's County, formerly incarcerated persons return back to the
8 community from numerous correctional facilities and jails/detention centers; and
9 WHEREAS, the recidivism rate amongst formerly incarcerated persons in Prince George's
10 County is high and continues to grow; and
11 WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Department of Health and Department of Social
12 Services is overburdened with ex-offender activity and are unprepared to handle the current and
13 future influx of re-entry citizens based on State and County estimates for the next 5-10 years; and
14 WHEREAS, formerly incarcerated persons face obstacles in the re-entry process such as
15 securing sustainable employment with livable wages, overcoming other significant barriers like
16 the need for substance abuse treatment, and obtaining affordable housing in order to successfully
17 reintegrate into society; and
18 WHEREAS, the effective re-entry of persons transitioning from incarceration back into
19 society fosters their positive rehabilitation and enables them to become productive citizens of our
20 County which can benefit the entire community; and
21 WHEREAS, the County government has an obligation to the residents and citizens to
22 implement services to address the needs of formerly incarcerated persons, a comprehensive

- [Preliminary Report \(PPT Presentation\)](#)



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
RE-ENTRY
ADVISORY BOARD

RAB Preliminary Recommendations |
June 17, 2021 – Prince George's County Council

- Ashley Sharp | Chief of Staff to Chairman Calvin S. Hawkins, II
- Nathaniel Tutt | County Council, Administrative Staff