



“By improving the re-entry process, we are fundamentally reforming our criminal justice system and laying the groundwork for a safer and stronger New York.” Governor Andrew Cuomo, May 8, 2015.

This bi-monthly newsletter shares news, policy and program updates and best practice information to 19 County Re-entry Task Forces (CRTFs) and community stakeholders.

Funded by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Task Forces are located in the following counties:

- Albany
- Bronx
- Broome
- Dutchess
- Erie
- Kings
- Manhattan
- Monroe
- Nassau
- Niagara
- Oneida
- Onondaga
- Orange
- Rensselaer
- Rockland
- Schenectady
- Suffolk
- Ulster
- Westchester

New CRTF Program Year Began July 1, 2015

The 2015-16 grant award contracts are in various stages of processing to continue funding for the 19 county re-entry task forces. Grant awards are final, as part of a five-year procurement approved by the state Comptroller’s Office.

The 2015-16 CRTF program maintains a focus on strengthening community-based service delivery systems to stabilize individuals upon their release from state prison. The target population remains the same: moderate to high-risk individuals assessed as supervision levels 1, 2 and 3 by COMPAS Re-entry. Special populations eligible for task force services include women with high needs, people with mental or medical illnesses, maximum expirations, sex offenders and juveniles released from the state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) facilities or to parole.

Two new performance measures involving cognitive behavioral interventions are now in effect. Performance measure reimbursements, as established by each contract award agreement, will be made for the enrollment and completion of the following programs: Thinking for a Change (T4C); Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT); or Ready, Set, Work!

Intensive Focus on Cognitive Behavioral Intervention Training

To support successful cognitive behavioral intervention milestones and improve re-entry employment outcomes, DCJS has scheduled a regional T4C facilitator training in Monroe County this month, with a second training planned for New York City this fall.

DCJS also is working with the National Institute of Corrections, which plans to offer a T4C ‘train-the-trainer’ event in September. A limited number of certified facilitators from New York, Ohio and Delaware will be invited to participate in this specialized T4C master training. Task forces are eligible for milestone 3 and 4 reimbursements only when the complete curriculum is delivered by a certified facilitator.

Non-certified facilitators and the use of an abbreviated or modified curriculum are not in line with standards of evidence-based practices and will not be eligible for performance-based reimbursement during 2015-16.

2014-15 CRTF Snapshot Report

The monthly snapshot reports are in and the 2014-15 program year shows success in helping those released from prison. A total of 4,381 intakes were reported, with 3,813 clients retained for 45 days and 3,364 for at least 90 days.

New York's re-entry goal is to reduce recidivism by providing essential services that support behavioral change in individuals returning from state prison to the community.

Effective County Re-entry Task Forces (CRTF) coordinate local efforts to reduce offender re-arrests and parole violations, to change offender behavior, enhance offender accountability and promote public safety.

The 19 CRTFs funded by the state identify and manage services to moderate- and high-risk parolees and ensure the provision of cognitive behavioral and employment services.

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2015 Re-entry Job Summits in New York City and Capital District

Program assessment data collected for the past three years found more than 80 percent of task force participants are *unemployed*, yet mostly *employable*. With the cognitive behavioral intervention focus of the 2015-16 program period, employment outcomes are anticipated to increase.

To facilitate such outcomes, DCJS is coordinating a series of regional Re-entry Job Summits and labor market analysis workshops in key regions statewide. The summits are a joint initiative of DCJS and the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) and state Labor Department.

The first summit was hosted in New York City in May and the second in the Capital District in July. These events brought together leaders from 13 task forces, parole bureau chiefs and managers and employment service providers.

Attendees heard presentations concerning re-entry employment policy issues, labor market analyses, and the challenges facing task forces and parole officers when trying to find employment for former inmates.

Re-entry Job Summits are slated for Buffalo and Syracuse this fall.

CRTF's Connect with Health Homes

Recently, DCJS conducted a survey to determine whether task force members include Health Home representatives. Of the 19 task forces, 10 did not have a Health Homes agency representative as a stakeholder agency.

Designated by the state Department of Health, Health Homes are community-based systems that give people with serious and chronic health issues access to medical services and programs. Medicaid-eligible individuals with qualifying illnesses work with assigned care managers, who coordinate and secure appropriate treatment services.

Springtime Hub Visits

This spring, task force members met with senior offender rehabilitation specialists at DOCCS regional hubs to discuss community-based initiatives, programs and services available and to discuss issues related to discharge planning and facilitating successful re-entries.

Many thanks to Corrections' Transitional Services for inviting task force members to attend these meetings in the Wende, Elmira, Oneida, Sullivan, Great Meadow and Green Haven hubs.

Changes in Task Force Leadership

Several task forces recently welcomed new co-chairs and coordinators. We wish them well in their new roles:

- District Attorney Robert Johnson is the *Bronx CRTF* County Co-Chair.
- Mental Health Commissioner Michael Ranney is the *Erie CRTF* County Co-Chair.
- Laura Mahler was appointed *Orange CRTF* Coordinator.
- Tracy Canaday was appointed *Rensselaer CRTF* Coordinator.
- Mat Jecker Byrne was appointed the *Ulster CRTF* Coordinator.