**An** **Examination** **of** **Rural** **Prisoner** **Reentry** **Challenges**

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**EXECUTIVE** **SUMMARY**

This study explores issues and challenges surrounding the reentry of state prison and

county jail inmates to rural communities in Pennsylvania. Reentry refers to the process of a

prisoner transitioning to the community after a period of secure confinement in a state or federal

prison or county jail. Reentry is one of the most popular topics in the corrections field. Most of

the national reentry research has focused on the urban context of reentry, with relatively less

focus on rural reentry. Even within Pennsylvania, reentry research has focused heavily on urban

settings. Successful reentry hinges on pre-release planning, continuity of treatment and services

into the community, and following the known principles of effective intervention—for example,

targeting key treatment needs (such as antisocial attitudes and substance use), using evidence-

based programs, and providing community-based aftercare services.

There is a critical need to examine reentry in the context of rural communities in

Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania led the nation in 2009 with the largest absolute increase in its state

prison population. The overall recidivism rate for state prisoners in Pennsylvania is 62% at three

years post release, suggesting significant challenges to successful reentry. Moreover, while

statewide reentry programs operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections have been

evaluated, very little is known about county jail reentry efforts, further reinforcing the timeliness

and importance of the proposed study. Finally, Pennsylvania spent nearly $1.9 billion on

corrections at the state level in Fiscal Year 2011-12, a 40% increase over the past five years,

reflecting an increase in the prison population of over 20% during that time. The financial and

policy implications of successful reentry are highly significant and timely.

Reentry is a primary focus of the criminal justice system, yet research related to the rural

context of reentry—a significant element of Pennsylvania’s corrections environment—is sorely

lacking. Much of the extant reentry research has focused on urban areas - which admittedly

receive the bulk of returning offenders – at the cost of understanding the challenges faced by

offenders returning to rural areas. The current study attempts to build a knowledge-base for the

understanding of rural reentry.

The current study first provides an estimated projection of the number of state prison and

county jail inmates to be released to each of Pennsylvania’s 48 rural counties over the next five

years, along with an analysis of their key demographic characteristics. This study next reviews

the literature on the challenges related to inmate reentry in general, and specifically within rural

areas. Rural reentry challenges in Pennsylvania are explored through interviews and surveys

with state and local corrections officials. Reentry programs offered within the state and local

corrections systems in Pennsylvania are also documented. This study next examines the

numbers and types of community services and programs that are potentially available to state and

local inmates returning to rural areas. Finally, a gap analysis is conducted to examine gaps

between reentry services needed by returning inmates and community programs available.

Data used for this study included data runs on released state inmates supplied by the

Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

Information on reentry programs in prison and in the community was also supplied by those two

agencies. Data on inmates released from county jails were abstracted from an earlier study on

county jails conducted for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania by the Principal Investigator for the

current study. Interviews and surveys were also conducted with state corrections officials and

county jails wardens to solicit their experiences with the reentry needs of returning inmates. Due

to limitations on resources available to this study, however, no interviews or surveys could be

conducted with returning inmates themselves.

Based upon trends in released state and county inmates over the previous five years, this

study projects that releases of county jail inmates to rural counties will hold constant over the

next five years, but that there will be a slight increase in the number of state inmates released

over that period. The most likely explanation for the slight increase in releases of state inmates

is that state parole approval rates have improved somewhat over the past several years. The most

notable demographic trends among released inmates is an increase in the number of older

inmates being released, and a slight increase in the number of female inmates being released.

Significant reentry needs for returning rural inmates include assistance with employment,

housing and transportation. Transportation is a crucial linchpin in the reentry process, as the lack

of public transit in rural areas can hamper returning inmates in their abilities to search for and get

to jobs and housing, to get to treatment groups and medical and mental appointments, and to

make required meetings with their parole agents. The challenges of finding work and suitable

housing are magnified for “hard to place” offenders, such as those with serious mental illness,

and sex offenders. The latter face significant restrictions on where they can live and work. This

report also found that returning inmates also face some stigma for their status as ex-offenders.

This is most notable for returning sex offenders.

While there appears to be a reasonably robust network of social services and programs in

the rural counties for returning inmates, these services are unevenly distributed between rural

counties. Most notably, there are very few reentry programs for sex offenders in any of the rural

counties, and almost no programs that specifically address the most important rehabilitative

needs of ex-offenders, including programs that address ex-offenders’ thinking, decision making

and problem solving skills and their peer networks, all of which are strongly linked to recidivism

reduction.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Reentry refers to the process of a prisoner transitioning to the community after a period

of secure confinement in a state or federal prison or county jail1. Reentry is one of the most

popular topics in the corrections field (Petersilia, 2003). Research on reentry includes evaluations

of prisoner reentry programs, as well as more basic research on how individual offenders

navigate the process of reentry. Most of the national reentry research has focused on the urban

context of reentry, with relatively less focus on rural reentry. Even within Pennsylvania, reentry

research has focused heavily on urban settings (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009; Latessa, et al, 2009;

Smith & Suttle, 2008). Successful reentry hinges on pre-release planning, continuity of treatment

and services into the community, and following the known principles of effective intervention—

for example, targeting key treatment needs (such as antisocial attitudes and substance use), using

evidence-based programs, and providing community-based aftercare services (Andrews &

Bonta, 2003; LaVigne, et al, 2008; Lowenkamp, et al, 2006; MacKenzie, 2006).

Risk and protective factors are an important part of the discussion of offender reentry,

with risk factors being variables that jeopardize successful reentry, and protective factors being

variables that facilitate reentry. These factors can operate at the level of society (e.g. economic

opportunities and other structural issues) and the level of the individual offender (e.g. offender

attitudes towards law abiding behavior). Societal level structural factors widely cited as being

critical to reentry include jobs, housing, and community-based social services (e.g. drug

programs) (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005). For example, employment is often seen as one of the

1 As a note on terminology used in this report, while the RFP that lead to this study used the term “prisoner”, this report generally substitutes the term “inmate” as the latter is what is used by the state corrections agencies in Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole). Terminology varies between county jails. Scholarly and practitioner writings on reentry use the terms prisoner, inmate and offender interchangeably, thus, there is no standard as far as which term is most acceptable. Offender is often used to refer to those with a criminal conviction, whether or not currently incarcerated.

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most important structural protective factors, with some studies finding employed parolees are up

to three times as likely to remain arrest free (Meredith, et al, 2007), although other studies find

employment to be less central to reentry success (O’Reilly, et al, 2001; Tripodi, et al, 2010).

Research also points to the importance of individual level factors, such as offender anti-social

attitudes and criminal peers (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009; MacKenzie, 2006; O’Reilly, et al, 2001).

For example, studies have identified key individual level protective factors, such as prosocial

attitudes, coping and decision-making skills, as very important to success on parole (Bucklen &

Zajac, 2009). While there is little research on how these structural and individual level risk and

protective factors influence the reintegration of prisoners specifically into rural communities,

there is some evidence that issues related to transportation, housing, social service availability,

employability, and cultural barriers are especially salient in rural areas (Family Justice, 2009;

Wodahl, 2006). Furthermore, research suggests that increased interagency collaboration, along

with regionalization of resources, is particularly valuable to rural prisoner reintegration

(Solomon, et al, 2008).

Reentry is the process of an inmate returning to the community after having served a

period of incarceration in a state prison or county jail. While reentry has always been a feature

of correctional systems, the last decade has seen a surge of scholarly and practitioner interest in

the broad topic of prisoner reentry and the impact of over 700,000 prisoners hitting the streets

annually (Petersilia, 2003). Many corrections agencies have established special offices and

assigned staff to the task of prisoner reentry. National organizations such as the Council of State

Governments and the National Governors Association, have established working groups such as

the Reentry Policy Council. The federal Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

(SVORI) in 2003 awarded over $100 million to 69 jurisdictions to establish reentry programs.

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Reentry found its way into the 2004 State of the Union address with a promise of federal support

for reentry efforts. Over $13 million was granted to 20 states in 2006 through the Prisoner

Reentry Initiative Award program. And the Second Chance Act of 2007 resulted in the award of

nearly $8 million to 15 program grantees in FY2009.

There is a critical need to examine reentry in the context of rural communities in

Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania led the nation in 2009 with the largest absolute increase in its state

prison population (Pew Center on the States, 2010). The overall recidivism rate - the total

number of inmates who returned to prison for a new crime or parole violation - for state

prisoners in Pennsylvania is 62% at three years post release, suggesting significant challenges to

successful reentry (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2013). Moreover, while statewide

reentry programs operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PADOC) have been

evaluated (Latessa, et al, 2009; Smith & Suttle, 2008), very little is known about county jail

reentry efforts, further reinforcing the timeliness and importance of the proposed study. Finally,

Pennsylvania spent nearly $1.9 billion on corrections at the state level in Fiscal Year 2011-12, a

40% increase over the past five years, reflecting an increase in the prison population of over 20%

during that time (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2012a). The financial and policy

implications of successful reentry are highly significant and timely.

Thus, reentry is a primary focus of the criminal justice system, yet research related to the

rural context of reentry—a significant element of Pennsylvania’s corrections environment—is

sorely lacking. As will be discussed in greater depth later, much of the extant reentry research

has focused on urban areas - which admittedly receive the bulk of returning offenders – at the

cost of understanding the challenges faced by offenders returning to rural areas. The current

study attempts to build a knowledge-base for the understanding of rural reentry.

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The Center for Rural Pennsylvania defines 48 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties (72%) as

rural.2 Thus, Pennsylvania’s rural landscape is extensive, presenting many opportunities for

prisoners to return to rural communities from state prisons and county jails. The PADOC

currently operates 27 correctional facilities (26 State Correctional Institutions and 1 Boot Camp).

Nineteen of these 27 facilities are in rural counties, although inmates from any county (rural or

urban) may be housed in any correctional facility (rural or urban). Five of the ten counties with

the highest per capita state incarceration rates are rural (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections,

2012b).

As of the writing of this report, 43 rural counties operated their own jails.3 The system-

wide average annual total rural jail population (2004-2011) was 7,520 inmates per year, which is

22 percent of the total Pennsylvania county jail population of 34,489 as of the end of 2011 (that

is, all 62 county jails combined). The rural county jail population has grown by 17 percent during

this period. There is significant variation in the size of the rural county jails, with the smallest

rural jail housing only 26 inmates per year on average, and the largest rural jail housing 421

inmates per year on average. Thus, the largest rural jail houses more than fifteen times the

number of inmates as the smallest (Zajac and Kowalski, 2012). As discussed in greater detail in

the report on rural county jails recently prepared for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania by the

Principal Investigator of the current study, county jails in general face a unique set of challenges

that impact prisoner reentry, including large proportions of inmates who spend only a very short

2 The Center for Rural Pennsylvania defines a county as rural when the number of persons per square mile within the county is less than 284. Counties that have 284 persons or more per square mile are considered urban. Accordingly, there are 48 rural and 19 urban counties in Pennsylvania.

3 According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, the five rural counties that do not operate their own jails are Cameron, Forest, Fulton, Juniata and Sullivan. Juniata County closed its jail in July of 2012 (during the course of this study), with those inmates being transferred to the Mifflin County Jail.

Per personal conversation with the former warden of the Juniata County Jail, this jail was closed primarily due to the small number of inmates (c. 25 at any given time) and the deterioration of the jail’s physical plant.

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time in custody, difficulty in classifying and assessing a short-term inmate population, challenges

in providing treatment services to inmates who may be in custody for only a short period, and

financial issues related strained county budgets (Zajac & Kowalski, 2012). Unlike state prisons,

which typically house only sentenced inmates, county jails are responsible for a complex mix of

sentenced offenders, presentenced detainees, and others. Detainees can make up half of a jail’s

population at any given time (Zajac & Kowalski, 2012). Due to the large proportion of detainees,

the population of county jails is often less predictable and more transient than is the case with

state prisons, posing challenges for proper inmate classification and reentry preparation.

Moreover, the typical sentenced county jail inmate serves a relatively short time (less than a

year), making it difficult to deliver meaningful treatment, educational, and other services.

Further, it is often difficult to know what sort of reentry services to provide to the

presentenced detainees (i.e. offenders who have been convicted but are waiting to be sentenced,

as well as those charged with a crime and awaiting trial), given that some of them may be

released on bail at any moment, and it is difficult to mandate programming for those who have

not been convicted yet since their status as “offenders” is not yet established. Finally, for the

purposes of better understanding the findings and discussion presented later in this report, it is

important to recognize that while the PADOC does conduct annual inspections of county jails,

and does provide training for many county jail staff, county jails operate under policies and

procedures promulgated by the local county government.4 Thus, Pennsylvania rural county jails

represent 43 separate correctional systems, with their own reentry challenges.

4 For more information about the county jail inspection process, see http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/hide\_county\_jails/11433

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**GOALS** **AND** **OBJECTIVES**

This project examined the challenges and issues related to prisoner reentry to rural

Pennsylvania, including release trends and projections, using a mix of original data collected

from surveys and interviews with state and local corrections officials, as well as secondary data

runs and other information obtained from their agencies. There were four primary research goals.

The first primary research goal was to estimate the number and characteristics of state

prison and county jail prisoners likely to be released into rural communities in Pennsylvania over

the next five years. Within the first primary research goal were four specific research objectives:

(1a) estimate the number of state prison prisoners likely to be released from the Pennsylvania

Department of Corrections to Pennsylvania’s 48 rural counties over the next five years; (1b)

estimate the number of county jail prisoners likely to be released from Pennsylvania’s 43 rural

county jails over the next five years; (1c) create a demographic profile of state prison prisoners

likely to be released from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to Pennsylvania’s 48 rural

counties over the next five years; and (1d) create a demographic profile of county jail prisoners

likely to be released from Pennsylvania’s 43 rural county jails over the next five years.

The second primary research goal was to review the risk and protective factors affecting

successful prisoner reintegration in rural Pennsylvania. Within the second primary research goal

were two specific research objectives: (2a) review what the general criminological literature

reports about key risk and protective factors influencing offender reentry, as well as challenges

and issues surrounding reentry in general and specifically in rural settings; and (2b) examine and

document the critical rural reentry challenges as indicated by key corrections officials at the state

and county levels in Pennsylvania.

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The third primary research goal was to identify and document reentry programs and

services available to released state and local prisoners in rural Pennsylvania. Within the third

primary research goal were two specific research objectives: (3a) identify reentry programs that

are offered by the PADOC, PBPP and county jails to prisoners prior to or during the release

process; and (3b) identify community-based programs in rural counties that are available to

returning prisoners.

The fourth primary research goal was to conduct a gap analysis of reentry services

available in rural Pennsylvania for successful reentry. Within the fourth primary research goal

were two specific research objectives: (4a) identify any gaps that exist between the numbers of

prisoners returning to each rural county and service capacity available in those counties; and (4b)

identify any gaps that exist between the types of services needed by prisoners returning to rural

areas and community programs available to returning prisoners.

Finally, public policy considerations are examined in light of the findings and

conclusions derived from this study.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized existing administrative data sources and also collected original data by

means of interviews and surveys in order to address the research objectives identified above.

The methods used for each research goal were rather distinct, so the following methodological

discussion is organized by research goal. All research activity was conducted under the approval

of the Pennsylvania State University Institutional Review Board, governing protection of human

subjects. This approval was granted on May 14, 2012.

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Methodology for First Research Goal – Release Trends and Demographics

Projections of inmates releases to the 48 rural counties during the period 2012-2017 were

based upon inmate release trends for the preceding five years. Data on releases of state prisoners

was collected from the PADOC and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP).

These combined datasets provided information on all state inmate releases during the period

2007-2011, showing essential demographics (race, gender, age) as well as the county that they

had been committed to prison from, the county that they were first paroled to, and the county that

they were currently residing in as of the time the data run was conducted. For inmates who were

released as “max-outs” (i.e. not onto parole supervision, but at the completion of their maximum

sentence without any supervision), no data is tracked on which county they reentered to. Thus,

the county that they were committed from was used as a proxy for the county to which they

returned. National reentry research has found residential stability among returning inmates to be

quite high, with 72% of released inmates in one study residing at the same address two years

after release, and just 10% having moved more than once since release, with the average distance

between first and last known residence being 2.79 miles (La Vigne & Parthasarathy, 2005). Thus,

committing county is a reasonable estimation of release county for max-outs. While the PADOC

does conduct its own populations projections, it does not estimates releases per county; thus, this

study was not able to simply use the PADOC’s projections.

Data on releases of county inmates and their demographics over the past five years was

abstracted from the study of county jails that the Principal Investigator for the current study

recently completed for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania (Zajac & Kowalski, 2012). That

report contains a detailed discussion of the methodology used to collect the county jail dataset

As part of the county jail wardens survey discussed below, the wardens were asked if their jails

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conduct any formal populations projections of their own, in the hope that their analysis could

supplement the analysis conducted here. None of the rural county jails reported doing any sort

of projections.

By analyzing the changes in population over time for each county, the slope of a line was

calculated using the least squares method. This “line of best fit” represents the number of

releases in each county. Projection numbers were generated by extending the line of best fit

through 2017.

While the line is not expected to accurately predict exact numbers, it can forecast

reasonable estimates given recent trends. The reliability of the forecast can be estimated by

using the r2 statistic which is reported for each county. This number ranges from 0 to 1 where 1

represents a perfectly predictable trend. The predictability of the trend for each county is

impacted by the direction of recent trends (increasing, decreasing, or both increasing and

decreasing over time) and the size of recent trends (small growth vs. large growth). Thus, while

a county with consistent growth is easy to predict, the line for a county with large fluctuations of

growth and decline is less reliable. Naturally, as the projection goes further in time, it will

become less accurate.

Methodology for Second Research Goal – Risk & Protective Factors for Reentry

This study conducted a review of the literature on “what works” in reentry, as well as on

factors that are found in national criminology research literature to be important to the

understanding of offender reentry. These factors include those at the level of the individual

offender (i.e. offender characteristics such as substance use) and at the level of society (e.g. labor

markets and housing options). The researchers also reviewed the available literature on offender

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reentry specific to rural communities. This literature review included key sources such as

scholarly journals and books, and drew upon the extensive work that the Principal Investigator

has already done on the topic of reentry. This literature review lays the groundwork for further

exploration of risk and protective factors and specific reentry services with key corrections

officials in Pennsylvania, as discussed next.

At the state level, the researchers solicited key corrections officials to participate in

structured, in-person interviews to examine key needs and challenges facing prisoners returning

to rural Pennsylvania, as well as how state corrections agencies in Pennsylvania respond to those

challenges. Targeted state agencies were the PADOC, PBPP, and the Pennsylvania Commission

on Sentencing (PCS). The researchers had previously secured support from each of these

agencies for this study. For the PADOC, we targeted the following 8 positions for interviews:

Secretary of Corrections, Executive Deputy Secretary, Deputy Secretary for Specialized

Facilities and Programs (who oversees all treatment and reentry programs), the PADOC reentry

program manager, the Director of the Bureau of Planning, Research, Statistics and Reentry, the

Director of the Bureau of Community Corrections and the Director of the Bureau of Treatment

Services, as well as the Chief of Treatment Services within that Bureau.

For the PBPP, we targeted the following 12 positions for interviews: all 9 Parole Board

members (including the Board Chair), the Director of the Bureau of Offender Reentry

Coordination, Board Secretary, and Assistant to the Board Secretary.

For the PCS (a relatively small agency), we targeted the Executive Director.

While human subjects guidelines prohibit the disclosure of which specific individuals

agreed to be interviewed, we were able to secure consent and interview 13 of the 21 targeted

subjects, for a response rate of 62 percent.

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The state officials were interviewed using a 48 item structured interview protocol that

asked them to discuss various challenges and issues related to offender reentry in Pennsylvania,

based upon their professional work experience in corrections in Pennsylvania. Topics were

drawn from the aforementioned literature review, and covered the following reentry topics:

employment, housing, family support, life skills, availability of community services, health

issues (including mental health), criminogenic needs, and other. Respondents were asked to rate

items on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating that the issue in question is not a significant reentry

challenge, and 10 indicating it is a very significant challenge. Respondents were also given the

opportunity to make open ended comments in any of the areas. All interviews were conducted

by the Principal Investigator in the respondents’ offices, with each interviews taking between one

and two hours. In addition, a key informant was identified in the PADOC and PBPP to respond

to an additional eight questions about the specific reentry programs in operation or in

development in those two agencies (the PCS does not delivery reentry services directly). A copy

of the full interview instrument is found in Appendix A.

In order to get input from Pennsylvania’s rural county jails, a survey was mailed to the 44

wardens/sheriffs5 of each rural county jail along with a cover letter that explained the purpose of

the study and the voluntary nature of the survey. A self-addressed, post-marked reply envelope

was also provided. The basic Dillman Tailored Design Method approach was followed, which is

widely used in survey research (Dillman, et al, 2009). Survey participants’ names and addresses

were acquired from PADOC (PADOC conducts annual inspections of county jails and maintains

a database of contacts for each jail), and then confirmed based on information available on the

jails’ websites. This survey was a variation on the previously discussed interview schedule,

5 In most states, jails are run by the sheriff’s office. Pennsylvania jails, however, are typically run by wardens, who are not associated with the sheriff’s office, except for McKean and Potter County jails, which are run by the dually titled Warden/Sheriff.

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modified to fit a self-administered format, but exploring the same issue set. A copy is found in

Appendix B. Based upon responses reported from surveys using this the Tailored Design

Method approach (including numerous surveys previously conducted by Principal Investigator

for this project), as well as the response to date from the county jail survey undertaken in Zajac

and Kowalski (2012), a response rate of approximately 70% was hoped for. After the initial

survey distributions and two rounds of follow-up contact with non-responders (recommended by

the Dillman method), the final response rate was 55%, or 24 out of the 44 jails surveyed. It is

unclear why more counties did not respond, nor does there appear to be any clear geographic or

other pattern to the non-responders. One possible explanation is that the researchers learned

after the fact that another survey on a different topic had been sent to the county wardens by

another group of researchers at Penn State shortly before the survey for this project was sent.

Thus, the non-responding wardens may have thought that the survey for this project was related

to the other survey that they had recently received from Penn State and felt that they did not need

to respond again. It was made clear during the follow-ups that the two surveys were independent

of each other. Respondent fatigue may have also been a factor, as the wardens have a limited

amount of time to dedicate to responding to surveys.

Methodology for Third Research Goal – Identification of Rural Reentry Services

For Research Goal 3, we utilized information about in-prison corrections reentry

programs collected through the interviews/focus groups/surveys discussed above. As part of the

interviews conducted with the PADOC, the researchers learned that PADOC has over the past

several years compiled detailed directories of community-based services available in

Pennsylvania’s counties. The PADOC reentry program staff had contacted each of the county

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human services departments to compile lists of all human services providers in each county,

supplemented by searches of county web sites to learn about additional programs. This

information is compiled into a resource directory for the counties, which are available on the

PADOC website6. While it is unclear how often these directories may be updated by the

PADOC, as noted earlier the current versions were prepared within the past one to three years

and thus should be reasonably current. The researchers downloaded and analyzed these

directories and coded the programs into eight service categories, as described in the findings

section below. While these directories do not provide detailed information relating to the quality

of these programs (e.g. staff qualifications, numbers of clients that can be served, fees for

service), or how they coordinate services among themselves, they do provide valuable

information on the numbers and types of programs in operation in the rural counties. It should

be noted that the programs listed are available to any member of the community, regardless of

their status as ex-offenders, but these programs do represent resources that are available to

returning offenders. The PBPP also maintains a similar database of programs that can be used

by parole agents as they seek to link parolees to community servers. The county wardens were

also asked to list programs to which they refer released county inmates to, as part of the wardens’

survey discussed above.

Methodology for Fourth Research Goal – Gap Analysis

The gap analysis compared the number of state and local inmates returning to each

county to the total number of programs available in each county to compare the number of

released inmates who may need services to the service capacity (i.e. total number of programs) in

each county. As noted earlier, the total number of programs does not provide insight into the

6 See: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/directory/resource\_guides/155964?DirMode=1

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quality of these programs or into their true capability to serve the needs of returning offenders,

but given the large number of programs in operation across all the rural counties, it was beyond

the capacity of this study to do any sort of evaluation of these programs. It is not possible to

estimate how many community programs may be in operation over the next five years, thus this

study simply used the current number of such programs, and returning inmates, to create a

snapshot of the current match between returning offenders and service capacity in each county.

To delve into the match between released inmate needs and community service capacity,

data was also collected from the PADOC on several types of treatment needs for released state

inmates, so that those specific needs could be compared to specific types of treatment programs

available in the counties. Data was acquired from PADOC on the need for drug treatment,

educational services and mental health needs, based upon assessments conducted by the PADOC

on state inmates. More information on this assessment information is provided below in the

results section. This analysis allows for a more detailed examination of how the numbers of

released state inmates with specific needs in those areas match up to the number of available

programs that target those needs in each county. Detailed needs assessment data was not

available for county inmates, and as discussed in the introduction, many small jails lack the

capability to conduct in-depth needs assessments on their inmate populations.

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**RESULTS**

**First Research Goal: Estimate the number and characteristics of state prison and county**

**jail prisoners likely to be released into rural communities in Pennsylvania over the next five**

**years.**

*Research* *Objective* *1A:* *Estimate* *the* *number* *of* *state* *prison* *prisoners* *likely* *to* *be* *released* *from*

*the* *Pennsylvania* *Department* *of* *Corrections* *to* *Pennsylvania’s* *48* *rural* *counties* *over* *the* *next*

*five* *years.*

Data for state releases were gathered from the PA Department of Corrections.

Projections were constructed using the same methods outlined above with the number of releases

into each county. Based on trends from 2007-2011, the number of overall releases from the state

prison system is projected to increase at a rate of about 380 releases per year across all rural

counties for the period 2012 through 2017.

Table 1 below presents the estimates of changes in the numbers of state prison inmates to

be released to each of the 48 rural counties over the period 2012 through 2017. This table shows

the actual number of releases for the period 2007 through 2011, upon which the projections are

based, the projections for 2013 through 2017, plus the projection for 2012 which was the year in

which the researchers were conducting the analysis. Thus, there are five base years, five future

years, plus the intermediate year when the analysis was being conducted. As discussed in the

methodology section, the r2 statistic (last column) provides a measure of the goodness of fit of

the projection, which speaks to the extent to which changes in the numbers of inmates released to

a given county is stable and thus projectable going forward (see page 9 for an explanation of r2).

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Looking at Table 1, the number of state inmates released to some counties, such as

Adams and Blair, is relatively stable, and thus greater confidence can be had in their populations

projections. Other counties, such as Armstrong and Susquehanna, have significant changes in

the number of state inmates released there from year to year and thus one can have somewhat

less confidence in the populations projections there. For example, although Armstrong

fluctuated only between 38 and 45 inmates, these fluctuations represented a very large proportion

of the jail’s total population. More importantly, the fluctuations changed directions, neither

consistently decreasing nor increasing. The projected releases in Armstrong still reflect the

average number of inmates one would expect in a given year, but the low r2 value means that

this projection will likely have more “error”—a larger proportional difference between the

projection and the actual population in any individual year. In general, year-to-year trends are

more difficult to predict for jails with smaller populations due to greater proportional changes in

their populations over short period of time. A related example might be the difficulty inherent in

attempting to project near term changes in the stock market during periods of high market

volatility. Conversely, counties such as Adams show a consistent change (increase in this case)

in their population over the study period, thus presenting a more plausible case for prediction,

which is what the r2 statistic represents.

**Table** **1:** **Projected** **Releases** **from** **State** **Prison** **to** **Rural** **Counties** **–** **2012-2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual** **Releases** | | | | | **Projected** **Releases** | | | | | |  |
| **County** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **r2** |
| Adams | 96 | 106 | 137 | 146 | 193 | 206 | 229 | 253 | 276 | 299 | 323 | 0.94 |
| Armstrong | 39 | 46 | 38 | 45 | 38 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 39 | 39 | 39 | 0.01 |
| Bedford | 34 | 38 | 44 | 62 | 84 | 90 | 102 | 114 | 127 | 139 | 152 | 0.90 |
| Blair | 158 | 158 | 221 | 243 | 251 | 288 | 315 | 342 | 369 | 396 | 423 | 0.89 |
| Bradford | 98 | 66 | 72 | 93 | 107 | 101 | 105 | 110 | 114 | 119 | 123 | 0.17 |
| Butler | 134 | 141 | 161 | 184 | 170 | 193 | 204 | 216 | 227 | 239 | 250 | 0.78 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual** **Releases** | | | | | **Projected** **Releases** | | | | | |  |
| **County** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **r2** |
| Cambria | 95 | 65 | 69 | 83 | 98 | 89 | 92 | 94 | 96 | 99 | 101 | 0.07 |
| Cameron | 3 | 4 | 16 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 17 | 19 | 21 | 0.23 |
| Carbon | 27 | 20 | 30 | 28 | 44 | 42 | 47 | 51 | 55 | 59 | 63 | 0.57 |
| Centre | 60 | 64 | 64 | 73 | 79 | 82 | 87 | 92 | 96 | 101 | 106 | 0.91 |
| Clarion | 26 | 24 | 45 | 39 | 50 | 56 | 62 | 68 | 75 | 81 | 87 | 0.75 |
| Clearfield | 176 | 162 | 191 | 194 | 204 | 212 | 221 | 229 | 238 | 247 | 256 | 0.71 |
| Clinton | 30 | 36 | 47 | 42 | 41 | 48 | 50 | 53 | 56 | 59 | 62 | 0.47 |
| Columbia | 36 | 36 | 43 | 58 | 36 | 48 | 51 | 53 | 55 | 57 | 59 | 0.13 |
| Crawford | 78 | 102 | 94 | 97 | 92 | 100 | 102 | 104 | 106 | 109 | 111 | 0.16 |
| Elk | 20 | 23 | 20 | 33 | 30 | 34 | 37 | 40 | 43 | 46 | 49 | 0.63 |
| Fayette | 321 | 295 | 324 | 353 | 384 | 391 | 409 | 427 | 446 | 464 | 483 | 0.73 |
| Forest | 8 | 17 | 5 | 15 | 9 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 0.00 |
| Franklin | 197 | 196 | 211 | 250 | 235 | 257 | 270 | 283 | 296 | 309 | 322 | 0.74 |
| Fulton | 26 | 31 | 28 | 36 | 34 | 37 | 39 | 42 | 44 | 46 | 48 | 0.65 |
| Greene | 37 | 39 | 53 | 60 | 64 | 73 | 81 | 88 | 96 | 103 | 111 | 0.95 |
| Huntingdon | 26 | 28 | 25 | 45 | 52 | 56 | 63 | 70 | 77 | 84 | 90 | 0.77 |
| Indiana | 52 | 49 | 58 | 74 | 72 | 81 | 87 | 94 | 100 | 107 | 113 | 0.81 |
| Jefferson | 81 | 79 | 100 | 113 | 115 | 128 | 138 | 149 | 159 | 169 | 179 | 0.89 |
| Juniata | 14 | 9 | 17 | 22 | 19 | 23 | 25 | 28 | 30 | 32 | 35 | 0.54 |
| Lawrence | 91 | 121 | 111 | 134 | 124 | 140 | 148 | 156 | 164 | 172 | 179 | 0.59 |
| Lycoming | 286 | 253 | 270 | 273 | 289 | 282 | 285 | 287 | 290 | 292 | 295 | 0.08 |
| McKean | 37 | 47 | 62 | 50 | 66 | 71 | 77 | 83 | 89 | 95 | 101 | 0.68 |
| Mercer | 155 | 144 | 129 | 153 | 146 | 143 | 142 | 141 | 140 | 139 | 138 | 0.02 |
| Mifflin | 45 | 38 | 50 | 76 | 91 | 99 | 112 | 125 | 138 | 151 | 164 | 0.83 |
| Monroe | 81 | 86 | 129 | 155 | 179 | 206 | 232 | 259 | 285 | 312 | 338 | 0.96 |
| Montour | 12 | 14 | 20 | 25 | 28 | 33 | 37 | 41 | 46 | 50 | 54 | 0.98 |
| Northum-berland | 155 | 122 | 111 | 130 | 362 | 303 | 345 | 387 | 429 | 471 | 514 | 0.40 |
| Perry | 29 | 16 | 42 | 43 | 57 | 62 | 71 | 79 | 87 | 96 | 104 | 0.71 |
| Pike | 29 | 32 | 42 | 48 | 59 | 65 | 72 | 80 | 88 | 95 | 103 | 0.97 |
| Potter | 8 | 17 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 0.00 |
| Schuylkill | 87 | 93 | 154 | 174 | 180 | 218 | 244 | 271 | 298 | 325 | 351 | 0.90 |
| Snyder | 73 | 55 | 66 | 70 | 72 | 71 | 72 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 78 | 0.08 |
| Somerset | 92 | 85 | 67 | 66 | 89 | 72 | 70 | 67 | 65 | 62 | 60 | 0.10 |
| Sullivan | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 0.53 |
| Susquehanna | 31 | 24 | 29 | 27 | 39 | 36 | 38 | 40 | 41 | 43 | 45 | 0.28 |
| Tioga | 25 | 29 | 29 | 39 | 38 | 43 | 46 | 50 | 54 | 57 | 61 | 0.85 |
| Union | 58 | 38 | 59 | 61 | 74 | 75 | 80 | 86 | 91 | 97 | 102 | 0.45 |
| Venango | 164 | 131 | 138 | 139 | 158 | 145 | 144 | 144 | 144 | 143 | 143 | 0.00 |
| Warren | 48 | 61 | 62 | 75 | 78 | 87 | 94 | 102 | 109 | 117 | 124 | 0.94 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual** **Releases** | | | | | **Projected** **Releases** | | | | | |  |
| **County** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **r2** |
| Washington | 132 | 140 | 165 | 228 | 233 | 267 | 296 | 325 | 354 | 383 | 412 | 0.91 |
| Wayne | 79 | 59 | 77 | 93 | 86 | 93 | 98 | 103 | 108 | 112 | 117 | 0.36 |
| Wyoming | 39 | 30 | 32 | 28 | 48 | 40 | 42 | 43 | 45 | 47 | 48 | 0.10 |
| Total | 5640 | 5482 | 5986 | 6510 | 7035 | 7282 | 7659 | 8045 | 8424 | 8806 | 9188 | 0.89 |

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP.

*Research* *Objective* *1B:* *Estimate* *the* *number* *of* *county* *jail* *prisoners* *likely* *to* *be* *released* *from*

*Pennsylvania’s* *43* *rural* *county* *jails* *over* *the* *next* *five* *years.*

County jail release projections were created by analyzing release data from 2007 through

2011 collected by researchers from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Office of

County Inspection and Services. Overall, releases from rural county jails in Pennsylvania are

predicted to increase at a slow pace of about 220 releases per year across all rural county jails for

the period 2012 through 2017.

Table 2 below basically replicates Table 1 above, albeit for county jail inmates released

to each county. These county-by-county projections are based upon the inmates released from

each county jail, for that county. Several conditions should be noted. First, as documented in

Zajac and Kowalski (2012), there is some small degree of movement of inmates between county

jails (i.e. a county jail may house some inmates for another county), but detailed data on such

movement was not available. Thus, for the purposes of these projections, each county jail’s

releases are taken as belonging to that county. Second, as noted earlier, Cameron, Forest,

Fulton, and Sullivan counties do not have their own jails, and have not had them over the time

period of this study. Thus, no county jail release projections are made for those counties. There

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are presumably a very small number of county inmates from those four counties (which is why

they do not operate their own jails) so the inability to account for their releases should introduce

little error into the overall picture of rural county inmate reentry. Juniata county closed its jail

midway through this study (July 2012), with its inmates being transferred to Mifflin County jail.

Since data were available on prior releases from Juniata County jail (which were among the

smallest of all the counties), the researchers decided to conducted a county jail projection for

Juniata anyway, as their inmates will presumably return to Juniata county after their release from

Mifflin County jail. Finally, data were missing for some counties for some years, and were

available for Potter county for only one year, thus no projection could be made for Potter county.

Looking at Table 2, some counties show relative stability in the trend of the number of

county inmates released (the r2 statistic), such as Adams and Bradford, and thus greater

confidence can be had in their populations projections. For other counties, such as Carbon and

Elk, release trends are less clear and thus one can have somewhat less confidence in the

populations projections there.

**Table** **2:** **Projected** **Releases** **from** **Rural** **County** **Jails** **–** **2012-2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual** **Releases** | | | | | **Projected** **Releases** | | | | | |  |
| **County** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **r2** |
| Adams | 1771 | 1844 | 1852 | 1965 | 2036 | 2048 | 2099 | 2149 | 2200 | 2251 | 2302 | 0.95 |
| Armstrong | 1215 | 1407 | 1323 | 1117 | 1022 | 1106 | 1074 | 1042 | 1010 | 977 | 945 | 0.48 |
| Bedford | 713 | 673 | 662 | 640 | 593 | 554 | 518 | 482 | 445 | 409 | 373 | 0.96 |
| Blair | 2310 | 2208 | 2244 | 2094 | 2292 | 2377 | 2436 | 2496 | 2556 | 2615 | 2675 | 0.08 |
| Bradford | 928 | 927 | 973 | 1089 | 1134 | 1146 | 1190 | 1234 | 1278 | 1322 | 1366 | 0.90 |
| Butler | 2306 | 2615 | 2270 | 2384 | 2494 | 2517 | 2559 | 2600 | 2642 | 2683 | 2725 | 0.03 |
| Cambria | 3450 | 4481 | 3725 | 3476 | 3350 | 3996 | 4149 | 4302 | 4456 | 4609 | 4762 | 0.17 |
| Carbon | 1016 | 919 | 931 | 904 | 988 | 1013 | 1040 | 1066 | 1093 | 1119 | 1146 | 0.05 |
| Centre | 1200 | 1211 | 1164 | 1173 | 1155 | 1189 | 1196 | 1202 | 1209 | 1216 | 1223 | 0.72 |
| Clarion | 685 | 754 | 643 | 630 | 568 | 617 | 610 | 603 | 596 | 589 | 582 | 0.67 |
| Clearfield | 1420 | 1584 | 1585 | 1392 | 1359 | 1441 | 1438 | 1435 | 1432 | 1429 | 1426 | 0.21 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual** **Releases** | | | | | **Projected** **Releases** | | | | | |  |
| **County** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **r2** |
| Clinton | 3170 | 3043 | 2138 | 1829 | 1890 | 1587 | 1339 | 1092 | 845 | 597 | 350 | 0.86 |
| Columbia | 1053 | 1385 | 1562 | 1408 | 1187 | 1514 | 1589 | 1663 | 1738 | 1812 | 1886 | 0.05 |
| Crawford | 1410 | 1323 | 1357 | 1392 | 1424 | 1395 | 1399 | 1403 | 1407 | 1411 | 1415 | 0.14 |
| Elk | 310 | 389 | 370 | 326 | 351 | 350 | 350 | 350 | 350 | 350 | 350 | 0.01 |
| Fayette | 2573 | 2217 | 2791 | 3150 |  | 3095 | 3200 | 3305 | 3410 | 3515 | 3620 | 0.58 |
| Franklin | 2467 | 2444 | 2528 | 2595 | 2580 | 2624 | 2659 | 2694 | 2730 | 2765 | 2800 | 0.80 |
| Greene | 576 | 570 | 573 | 653 | 698 | 692 | 716 | 740 | 764 | 788 | 811 | 0.78 |
| Huntingdon | 373 | 471 | 470 | 510 | 537 | 568 | 599 | 629 | 660 | 690 | 721 | 0.87 |
| Indiana | 844 | 926 | 984 | 1136 | 1199 | 1212 | 1270 | 1328 | 1386 | 1444 | 1502 | 0.98 |
| Jefferson | 1176 | 817 | 663 | 700 | 820 | 711 | 680 | 648 | 616 | 585 | 553 | 0.42 |
| Juniata | 294 | 305 | 265 | 283 | 297 | 292 | 293 | 294 | 295 | 296 | 297 | 0.03 |
| Lawrence | 2317 | 2043 | 1847 | 1632 | 1634 | 1511 | 1393 | 1274 | 1156 | 1037 | 919 | 0.93 |
| Lycoming | 2406 | 2520 | 2511 | 2362 | 2335 | 2397 | 2392 | 2387 | 2382 | 2377 | 2371 | 0.31 |
| McKean | 842 | 781 | 614 | 648 | 681 | 736 | 754 | 773 | 792 | 810 | 829 | 0.57 |
| Mercer | 2135 | 2129 | 1879 | 1940 | 1859 | 1907 | 1889 | 1871 | 1853 | 1834 | 1816 | 0.76 |
| Mifflin | 1251 | 1188 | 1248 | 1162 | 1061 | 1195 | 1206 | 1216 | 1227 | 1238 | 1248 | 0.68 |
| Monroe | 1820 | 2246 | 2386 | 2567 | 2666 | 2732 | 2848 | 2964 | 3081 | 3197 | 3313 | 0.92 |
| Montour | 279 | 246 | 258 | 267 | 256 | 268 | 270 | 273 | 275 | 278 | 280 | 0.10 |
| Northumberland | 1470 | 1529 | 1580 | 1419 | 1487 | 1540 | 1561 | 1582 | 1603 | 1624 | 1645 | 0.04 |
| Perry | 665 | 760 | 748 | 615 | 709 | 708 | 711 | 715 | 718 | 721 | 725 | 0.02 |
| Pike | 1275 | 1244 | 1711 | 1771 | 2092 | 2034 | 2158 | 2282 | 2407 | 2531 | 2655 | 0.91 |
| Potter |  |  |  |  | 226 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Schuylkill | 1908 | 1872 | 1810 | 1833 | 1747 | 1903 | 1938 | 1973 | 2009 | 2044 | 2079 | 0.87 |
| Snyder | 773 | 669 | 593 | 578 | 485 | 453 | 398 | 343 | 288 | 234 | 179 | 0.96 |
| Somerset | 776 | 765 | 706 | 698 | 627 | 554 | 495 | 436 | 377 | 318 | 259 | 0.93 |
| Susquehanna | 695 | 465 | 446 | 428 | 468 | 444 | 427 | 411 | 394 | 378 | 362 | 0.50 |
| Tioga | 450 | 469 | 419 | 432 | 487 | 426 | 415 | 405 | 394 | 384 | 373 | 0.05 |
| Union | 522 | 445 | 375 | 391 | 408 | 378 | 363 | 348 | 333 | 319 | 304 | 0.58 |
| Venango | 1437 | 1334 | 1257 | 1250 | 1229 | 1216 | 1192 | 1168 | 1144 | 1120 | 1096 | 0.85 |
| Warren | 833 | 779 | 818 | 754 | 762 | 784 | 786 | 788 | 790 | 793 | 795 | 0.57 |
| Washington | 2650 | 3027 | 3038 | 3176 | 49 | 1531 | 1291 | 1052 | 812 | 572 | 332 | 0.37 |
| Wayne | 581 | 439 | 539 | 533 | 532 | 510 | 503 | 497 | 491 | 485 | 478 | 0.00 |
| Wyoming | 387 | 367 | 365 | 421 | 449 | 403 | 401 | 399 | 397 | 395 | 393 | 0.60 |
| Total | 56732 | 57829 | 56220 | 55723 | 50223 | 55674 | 55794 | 55914 | 56041 | 56161 | 56281 | 0.65 |

Source: County jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology.

Total admissions and discharges from the county jails in rural Pennsylvania from 2007-

2010 were highly correlated (r = 0.93 where r ranges from -1 to 1 and 1 means perfect positive

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correlation). This indicates that discharges increase when admissions increase and discharges

decrease when admissions decrease. One must interpret this correlation with some degree of

caution due to the small number of years of data (i.e. data points) available; three or four more

years of data would provide more concrete evidence in terms of statistical significance.

However, this correlation is consistent with the high turnover in the county jail system. Thus,

the annual number of releases in the rural county jails seems to be closely related to the annual

number of admissions. Admissions data for the state prisons was not available, thus this analysis

was conducted only for the county jails.

Figure 1 below summarizes the projections for state and county releases for the study

period, across all rural counties combined. This figure shows a basically flat projected trend in

releases of rural county jail inmates over the next five years. Thus, there are no dramatic

changes projected in releases of rural county jail inmates. Turning to state prison inmates, the

projected trend is for a slow but steady increase in releases of state inmates to rural counties.

This continues the documented trend of increases in releases of state prison inmates to rural

counties over the previous five years, upon which these projections were based. The most

plausible explanation for this increase is that the approval rate of state inmates applying for

parole has shown a similar slow but steady increase. The parole approval rate had dipped to 52%

in 2008 and 51% in 2009 due to the moratorium on parole imposed by then Governor Rendell in

response to the murder of a Philadelphia police officer by a parolee in September 20087. Since

then, the parole approval rate has increased to 61% in 20128. PADOC and PBPP have also been

7 See: “Pa. ends moratorium on parole for violent felons.” USA Today. December 1, 2008. http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-12-01-2116996479\_x.htm

8 Data and explanation on parole decisional rates supplied by Fred Klunk, Director, Statistical Reporting and Evidence-Based Program Evaluation Office, PA Board of Probation and Parole.

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making efforts to expedite the actual release of inmates from state prison once they have been

approved for parole. While these parole approval rates are statewide and are not available

county by county, it remains a reasonable conclusion that the increase in state prison releases to

rural counties can be attributed at least in part to this shift in parole decisional processes and the

“rebound” in parole rates after the moratorium.

**Figure** **1:** **Projected** **State** **and** **County** **Inmate** **Releases** **to** **Rural** **Counties** **-** **2012-2017**

60000 55674 55794 55914 56041 56161 56281

50000

40000

30000 County State

20000

10000 7282

0

2012

7659 8045 8424

2013 2014 2015

8806 9188

2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology.

The projected steady state for rural county jail releases, and the projected increase in the

release of state prison inmates to rural areas, signals that rural reentry will remain a significant

issue in Pennsylvania. It bears repeating that prison/jail populations projections is fraught with

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challenges, and can be susceptible to unforeseen (and perhaps unforeseeable) shifts in criminal

justice policy and sentencing practices that can have significant downstream impacts on the

numbers of inmates sentenced to prison/jail and thus released. The rural reentry projections

conducted here represent a rudimentary start to this endeavor, and as noted later in the policy

considerations, an investment in a more formal populations projections system for rural releases

may yield better insight into how the rural reentry burden may evolve over the coming years.

The overall r2 statistic for the state prison releases (0.89) is much larger than for the county jails

(0.65), suggesting that one can more confidently project release trends for state prisons than for

county jails. Recalling the discussion of the difference between state prisons and county jails

presented in the introduction and in Zajac and Kowalski (2012), this is perhaps not surprising as

county jails hold a large number of pre-sentence detainees who are liable to be released on short

notice, whereas state prisons primarily hold inmates sentenced to known terms. Thus, release

trends are less stable and predictable for county jails than for state prisons.

Finally, the researchers had available to them data from the PBPP on which county state

inmates were committed from, which county they were first paroled to, and their county of

residence as of the time the PBPP conducted their data run for this study (summer of 2012). This

data provides some insight into the extent to which state inmates from urban counties are paroled

to rural counties, and vice versa. Figure 2 below summarizes this. As can be seen, in the vast

majority of cases, a state inmate who was committed from an urban county is first paroled back

to an urban county, and remains in an urban county (although there may be transfers between

urban counties not accounted for here). Similarly, most state inmates committed from a rural

county are initially paroled back to a rural county, and remain in a rural county (although there

may be transfers between rural counties not accounted for here). Moreover, there are far more

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cases of state inmates committed from rural counties being paroled to urban counties than of

state inmates committed from urban counties being paroled to rural counties. This analysis

indicates that rural reentry is a relatively self-contained process, with state inmates being paroled

to the same type of county from which they came (of course, the same could be said for urban

reentry). It should be noted that this analysis applies only to state parole releases, not to state

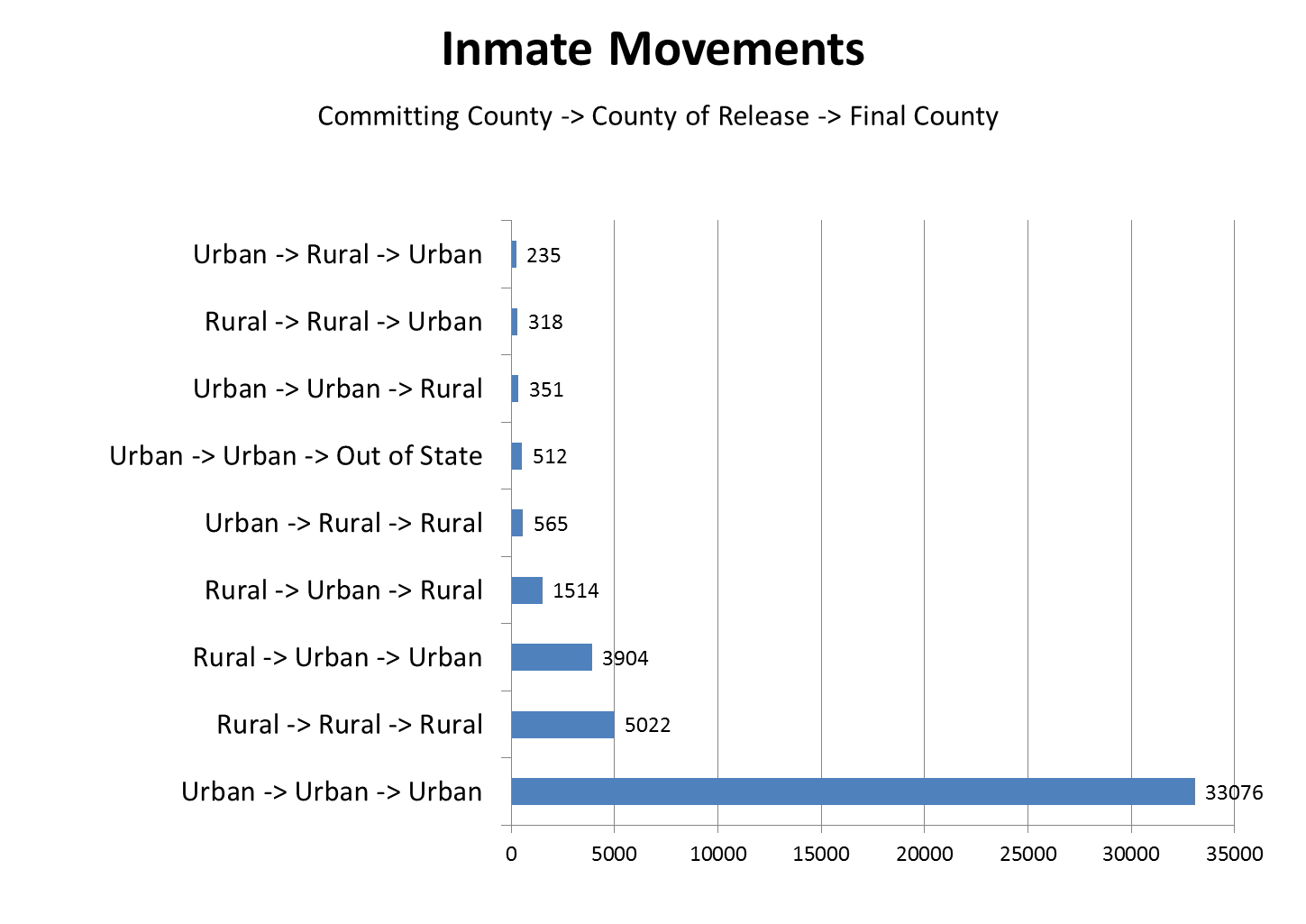
inmates who are maxing out (no data is available on exactly where they return to). Also, the

county from which a state inmate is committed is not always the county where the inmate was

living, but instead is the county where the inmate was convicted.

**Figure** **2:** **Parolee** **Movement** **Between** **Rural** **and** **Urban** **Counties** **–** **2007-2011**

Source: Data supplied by PADOC & PBPP



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*Research* *Objective* *1C:* *Create* *a* *demographic* *profile* *of* *state* *prison* *inmates* *likely* *to* *be*

*released* *from* *the* *Pennsylvania* *Department* *of* *Corrections* *to* *Pennsylvania’s* *48* *rural* *counties*

*over* *the* *next* *five* *years.*

The demographic trends for released state prison inmates were projected for the period

2012 through 2017, based upon the known age, race and gender demographics of released state

inmates for the period 2007-2011. The resulting table contains over 50 data fields and is

too large to include in the body of this report, and thus is presented in Appendix C. But, the key

trends from this table are summarized in the following paragraph and in Figures 3 through 7

below.

The percentage of minority releases is projected to continue its steady decline since its

peak in 2008 at about 22.5% at a rate of about 0.5% per year. The proportion of female inmates

has steadily climbed since a 2007 low of 12% at a rate of about 0.7% per year. Similar to the jail

trends, the proportion of state prison releases over age 44 is expected to increase at about 0.5%

per year.

*Research* *Objective* *1D:* *Create* *a* *demographic* *profile* *of* *county* *jail* *inmates* *likely* *to* *be* *released*

*from* *Pennsylvania’s* *43* *rural* *county* *jails* *over* *the* *next* *five* *years.*

Unlike with the state prison data, for the county jail data there was no information available on

the demographic breakdowns of actual inmate releases per year. Thus, the demographic trends

for released county jail inmates were projected for the period 2012 through 2017, based upon the

age, race and gender demographics of the in-house jail population for the period 2007-2011.

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Given the high turnover of the jail population discussed earlier, it is a working assumption that

inmates in jail in a given year (*population*) would be demographically similar to the inmates

*released* from that jail that year. In any event, given the absence of detailed demographics on

released county jail inmates, extrapolating from annual population demographics was the most

feasible approach to estimating annual release demographics. The resulting table contains over

50 data fields and is too large to include in the body of this report, and thus is presented in

Appendix C. But, the key trends from this table are summarized in the following paragraph and

in Figures 3 through 7 below.

Based on trends since 2007, county jail releases will be increasingly composed of

minority inmates, increasing at a rate of about half of 1 percent per year. The proportion of

female releases is projected to remain stable, decreasing at a rate of less than 0.1% per year.

According to recent trends, the age of persons released from jail will proportionally increase in

the future. The proportion of county inmates under 30 is expected to decrease at about 3.5% per

year while the proportion of older county inmates increases.

Taking state and county releases together, the figures below highlight several key

demographic findings across all rural counties. Looking at gender, the projection is for a notable

increase in the proportion of state inmates released to rural areas who are female, from 16% of

all releases to 20%. The gender make-up of county jail inmates remains relatively stable. Thus,

there may be a greater need for gender specific reentry services, such as child care and medical

services.

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**Figure** **3:** **Females** **as** **a** **Percent** **of** **all** **Projected** **Rural** **Releases** **–** **2012-2017**

**%** **Female** **in** **Rural** **PA** **Releases** 25.0%

20.0%

16.3% 17.0%

15.0%

12.3% 12.3%

10.0%

17.7% 18.5% 19.2% 20.0%

12.3% 12.2% 12.2% 12.1% County

State

5.0%

0.0%

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology. Full dataset from which this chart is derived is shown in Appendix C.

Turning to race, Figure 4 below shows the projected change in proportion of non-white

state and county releases to rural counties over the period 2012-2017. While more fine grained

data on the racial make-up of released inmates was available and is presented in Appendix C

(e.g. White, African-American, Asian, Hispanic), the vast majority of inmates returning to the

rural counties are white, and most non-white racial categories other than African-American are

very small in most rural counties. Thus, showing the proportion of non-white releases in Figure

4 was the most parsimonious ways of representing changes in racial demographics of state prison

and county jail releases to rural counties over the next five years. As shown in Figure 4, the

projection is for a small *increase* in the proportion of non-white county jail inmates released to

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rural counties, accompanied by a small *decrease* in the proportion of non-white state prison

inmates released to rural counties. These trends may appear to offset one another, but given that

there are more county jail releases than state prison releases in any particular time period, this

likely points to a slight increase in the proportion of non-white inmates being released to rural

counties in the coming years. The practical implications of this trend are unclear, given that

most of the inmates returning to these rural counties likely came from those same counties (see

Figure 2 above).

**Figure** **4:** **Non-Whites** **as** **a** **Percent** **of** **all** **Projected** **Rural** **Releases** **–** **2012-2017**

**%** **Non-white** **in** **Rural** **PA** **Releases**

30.0%

25.6% 25.0%

20.0% 20.0%

26.1% 26.6%

19.5% 18.9%

27.0% 27.5% 27.9%

18.4% 17.9% 17.3%

15.0% County State

10.0%

5.0%

0.0%

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology. Full dataset from which this chart is derived is shown in Appendix C.

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Turning to age demographics, the following three figures present a profile of the

projected changes in the ages of state and county inmates returning to rural counties. Again, as

shown in Appendix C, the researchers grouped age into nine categories, which as driven by the

age categories which were available for the county jail inmates (specific dates of birth were not

available for this dataset). The age demographics for the state prison inmates were computed

from the dates of birth supplied by the PADOC and fitted to these nine categories. These nine

categories were then reduced to the three groupings shown in Figures 5 through 7 below,

representing a younger (under age 30), middle range (age 30 to 44) and older (age 45 and above)

groups of inmates.

As shown in these three figures, there is a projected slight decrease in the proportion of

younger inmates to be released from both state prisons and local jails over the next five years.

Looking at the middle age range, there is a projected very slight decrease in the proportion of

state inmates in this age group being released over the next five years, combined with a very

slight increase in the number of county jail inmates being released. Thus, in the middle age

range the projection is for a steady state in releases over the next five years. Looking at the older

age grouping, the projection is for a steady increase in the number of older inmates being

released from both state prisons and county jails. This corresponds to the growing concern that

is expressed over the aging of the prison population nationally, with increasing numbers of older

individuals behind bars (Human Rights Watch, 2012). From the point of view of reentry, this

may speak to the need for additional services focused on the needs of older populations, such as

advanced medical care, specialized job training, housing support and assistance with activities of

daily living.

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**Figure** **5:** **Under** **Age** **30** **as** **a** **Percent** **of** **all** **Projected** **Rural** **Releases** **–** **2012-2017**

**%** **Under** **Age** **30** **in** **Rural** **PA** **Releases** 60.0%

50.0% 48.5%

40.0% 40.0%

48.1% 47.8%

39.9% 39.7%

47.4% 47.1% 46.7%

39.6% 39.5% 39.3%

30.0% County State

20.0%

10.0%

0.0%

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology. Full dataset from which this chart is derived is shown in Appendix C.

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**Figure** **6:** **Ages** **30** **to** **44** **as** **a** **Percent** **of** **all** **Projected** **Rural** **Releases** **–** **2012-2017**

**%** **Between** **Age** **30** **and** **44** **in** **Rural** **PA** **Releases**

45.0%

40.0% 38.9%

35.0% 36.3%

30.0%

38.5% 38.2%

36.4% 36.5%

37.8% 37.4% 37.0%

36.6% 36.7% 36.8%

25.0%

County

20.0% State

15.0%

10.0%

5.0%

0.0%

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology. Full dataset from which this chart is derived is shown in Appendix C.

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**Figure** **7:** **Over** **Age** **44** **as** **a** **Percent** **of** **all** **Projected** **Rural** **Releases** **–** **2012-2017**

**%** **Over** **Age** **44** **in** **Rural** **PA** **Releases**

25.0%

21.1% 21.6%

20.0%

15.2% 15.4% 15.0%

10.0%

22.1% 22.6% 23.1% 23.6%

15.7% 15.9% 16.2% 16.4%

County

State

5.0%

0.0%

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology. Full dataset from which this chart is derived is shown in Appendix C.

In sum, with the exception of releases of female state inmates and older inmates from

both the state and county levels, both of which are projected to show a modest increase, there are

few remarkable trends in the projected demographics of inmates to be released to rural areas over

the next five years. For most demographic categories, few if any changes are projected, and

most changes are projected to be gradual.

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**Second Research Goal: Review the risk and protective factors affecting successful prisoner**

**reentry in rural Pennsylvania.**

*Research* *Objective* *2A:* *Review* *what* *the* *general* *criminological* *literature* *reports* *about* *key* *risk*

*and* *protective* *factors* *influencing* *offender* *reentry,* *as* *well* *as* *challenges* *and* *issues* *surrounding*

*reentry* *in* *general* *and* *specifically* *in* *rural* *settings.*

**Introduction**

The following literature review aims to provide an overview both of what is known about

the return of inmates to the community, especially rural communities, and a discussion of

effective, evidence-based approaches to reentry regardless of rural or urban setting. This review

begins with a discussion of basic principles of offender rehabilitation and reentry, including a

discussion of some of the key findings from some major evaluations of reentry programs. Next

is a discussion of key factors that promote or hinder offender reentry. Finally, this section

reviews the relatively more limited literature on reentry within rural communities.

Reentry can be defined as the process of leaving jail or prison and returning to the

community (Soloman, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow, & Mukamal, 2008). This process begins at

intake/admission and extends past the inmate’s time of release to assist inmates with a successful

long-term post-release (LaVigne, Davies, Palmer, & Halberstadt, 2008). There are several

principles which have been deemed effective in promoting successful reentry and decreasing re-

offense rates, such as assessing actuarial risks and needs, targeting interventions according to the

risk, needs, and responsivity principles, using cognitive-behavioral methods, and more.

**Assessing** **and** **Treating** **Risk** **and** **Needs.**

When assessing offenders, the focus should be on their criminogenic (“crime-producing”)

needs. Criminogenic needs are factors related to offending which can be changed. These

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include anti-social attitudes, beliefs, and values (e.g. rationalization- “everybody does it, so

what’s the problem”, minimization- “nobody got hurt, so it’s OK), criminal thinking/self-

efficacy (e.g. “I’m too smart to get caught”), anti-social associates (e.g. “my buddy knew a store

that didn’t lock its doors, so we decided to rob the place”), poor decision making/problem

solving skills (e.g. “I need money to send my kid to a private school, so I sold drugs”), low levels

of educational/vocational achievement, poor self-control/self-regulation (e.g. “I got frustrated

with my probation officer, so I said to hell with it, I don’t care about nothin’ anymore.”), and

substance abuse.

Risk is the probability that offender will commit additional offenses. Risk in this context

does not attend to the potential danger represented by a given act of reoffending (i.e. murder

versus a simple theft), but simply estimates the likelihood that an offender will commit *any* new

offense. Criminogenic needs are the specific problems or issues that contribute to an offender’s

criminally deviant behavior. Research indicates that correctional treatment programs that

conduct thorough, rigorous and objective assessment of offenders and use the assessment

information to inform treatment planning decisions have much better outcomes than programs

that do not do such assessment. Research also shows that using objective instruments to assess

risk and needs is much better than unaided clinical judgment alone in making treatment decisions

(Andrews & Bonta, 2006). Assessment allows programs to target treatment resources where

they will produce the best outcomes. Risk assessment provides a measure of the risk principle,

which states that higher risk offenders will likely reoffend if not treated, and that low risk

offenders are not likely to reoffend even without treatment (Andrews & Bonta, 2006). Low risk

offenders should receive minimal, if any, treatment because treatment is usually wasted on them

and high intensity treatment may increase a low-risk offender’s risk level through association

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with more serious offenders in the program setting and disruption of established protective

factors such as a job that a released offender may already have in the community.

Programs that are effective work within context of empirically established theories of

criminal behavior and evidence-based treatment models. Such theories of criminal behavior

include social learning and self-control theories. Evidence-based treatment models include

cognitive-behavioral approaches (Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Latessa, Cullen, & Gendreau,

2002; Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006). Cognitive-behavioral models focus on how thinking and

behavior are linked. These models emphasize problem solving, decision making, reasoning, self-

control and behavior modification through role playing, graduated practice, and behavioral

rehearsal. Those cognitive-behavioral programs that are effective attempt to alter an offender’s

cognitions, values, attitudes, and expectations that maintain anti-social behavior (Latessa, Cullen,

& Gendreau, 2002). Those good cognitive-behavioral programs not only teach offenders more

socially appropriate behaviors, but also provide them with extensive opportunity to practice,

rehearse, and pattern these behaviors in increasingly difficult situations since good behaviors are

often just habits. Rewards for pro-social behavior are important; therefore, rewards should

greatly outweigh punishers. Every social interaction within the prison and in the community

(offender-offender, offender-staff, staff-staff) provides an opportunity to model, teach, and

practice pro-social skills.

Non-behavioral approaches that do not work are drug prevention/education classes (e.g.

‘Just say No!’), bibliotherapy/videotherapy (including Bible study), non-directive, client centered

approaches, self-help programs (e.g. AA/NA), unstructured “talking cure” programs,

introspective programs (e.g. yoga, sweat lodges), and shaming offenders (MacKenzie, 2006;

MacKenzie & Zajac, 2013). Other ineffective treatment models, such as, traditional “Freudian”

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psychodynamic and nondirective or client-centered therapies (e.g. talking cures, blaming

parents/society), medical model approaches (e.g. changes in diet, pharmacological approaches),

subcultural/labeling approaches (e.g. overcoming disadvantaged or stigmatized status within

society), “punish smarter” strategies (e.g. pure military boot camps, shock incarceration), and

almost any program targeting low risk offenders or non-criminogenic needs. Some famous

programs that also do not work are “Scared Straight” (e.g. deterrence theory; make them fear

prison), “Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)” (e.g. kids don’t know drugs are bad for

them, show them what their brain looks like on drugs), and “Boot Camps” (e.g. deterrence

theory; build “character” and make them hate prison at the same time). The preceding

overview of evidence based approaches to offender rehabilitation is well documented in the

literature and is most cogently summarized by Andrews and Bonta (2003), MacKenzie (2006)

and most recently by MacKenzie and Zajac (2013).

Therefore, when offenders receive inadequate treatment this can lead to struggles upon

reentry. Garland, Wodahl, and Mayfield (2011) found that psychosocial adjustment was the

most identified challenge for their participants within three months of their release. Psychosocial

adjustment includes: a) general uneasiness or disorientation with living in the community, b)

difficulties interacting with others, like family members, and c) issues adjusting to new

environment. Garland et al. (2011) suggested that reentry programs need to address

psychosocial adjustment since psychosocial needs follow the principles of “What Works”

literature. This literature stresses how offender treatment programs are the most successful when

offenders’ criminogenic needs are the focus with a cognitive-behavioral approach (Cullen &

Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, 1996; Taxman, Young, Byrne, Holsinger, & Anspach 2002).

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**Offender** **Rehabilitation:** **Risk,** **Need,** **&** **Responsivity** **(RNR).**

A key component of reentry is the treatment the offender received while incarcerated.

Whether offenders’ risks and needs were addressed during incarceration significantly influences

the offenders’ risk of recidivating (Austin, Hardyman, & Irwin, 2002; Burke & Tonry, 2006).

The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model is the most well-known for assessing and treating

offenders (Blanchette & Brown, 2006; Ward, Mesler, & Yates, 2007). The RNR model was

developed by Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge in 1990 (Andrews & Bonta, 2006). There are three core

principles of the model. The first is the risk principle which matches the level of service to the

offender’s risk of recidivating. Second is the need principle and this principle assesses the

offender’s criminogenic needs and targets them in treatment. Lastly is the responsivity principle

where the goal is to provide cognitive-behavioral treatment which focuses on the learning style,

motivation, abilities, and strengths of the offender (Andrews & Bonta, 2006).

Criminogenic needs are dynamic risk factors that are connected to the offender’s criminal

behavior. Compared to static risk factors (e.g. criminal history, age), dynamic risk factors (e.g.

employment, substance abuse, companions) are changeable and thus are appropriate targets for

treatment programs. The eight major criminogenic risk factors identified by Andrews and Bonta

(2006) are referred to as “The Central Eight”. The first of these – criminal history – is by itself a

very powerful predictor of reoffending, but it is also a static (i.e. unchangeable) factor and thus

cannot be addressed through treatment. The remaining seven key risk factors are dynamic

factors, and thus are amenable to being changed through treatment. These are: (1) antisocial

personality pattern, (2) procriminal attitudes, (3) social supports for crime/anti-social peer

associates, (4) substance abuse, (5) family/marital relationships, (6) school/work performance,

and (7) prosocial recreational activities. The first four out of these eight criminogenic factors –

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history, anti-social personality, criminal attitudes, anti-social peers - are called the “Central

Four”, because they are the most powerful predictors of recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2006).

These factors typically form the core of recidivism risk prediction instruments, such as the Risk

Screen Tool currently used by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the Level of

Service Inventory, currently used by the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

The first factor is criminal history which is the comprehensive history of the offenders’

criminal activity. Second is an antisocial personality pattern which is identified by impulsive,

adventurous pleasure seeking activities that can be treated through building the offender’s self-

management skills and teaching anger management. Third are procriminal attitudes that are

indicated by the offender providing rationalizations for crime and negative attitudes towards the

law. Fourth is social supports for crime which is identified by the number of criminal friends

and isolation from prosocial friends (Andrews & Bonta, 2006). Fifth is substance abuse

indicated by the offender’s abuse of alcohol and/or drugs which can be addressed by discussing

alternatives to substance abuse. Sixth are family/marital relationships which are identified by the

offender’s inappropriate parental monitoring and disciplining, as well as poor family

relationships. Seventh is school or work indicated by the offender’s poor performance and

employers’ dissatisfaction. The last major criminogenic need is prosocial recreational activities

which are identified by the offender’s lack of involvement in prosocial recreational activities

(Andrews & Bonta, 2006).

The seven dynamic risk factors, or needs, can be addressed using cognitive behavioral

therapy (CBT). For these needs, CBT would focus on restructuring the offenders’ thinking by

practicing thought stopping and replacement (e.g. cutting off antisocial and dysfunctional

thinking), having offenders’ write thinking reports to help them understand thinking errors, and

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flexible thinking (e.g. disrupting rigid thought patterns). CBT would also address these needs by

focusing on how offenders’ think through building their cognitive skills by role playing and

behavioral rehearsal (e.g. new attitudes and skills must be practiced), focusing on high risk

people, places, situations, and things, developing social skills (e.g. communication and

interpersonal skills), focusing on antisocial associates (e.g. disrupt the delinquency network), and

providing reinforcements and punishments for offenders’ behavior. In sum, the RNR model has

been successfully applied to female offenders (Blanchette & Brown, 2006; Dowden & Andrews,

1999a), mentally disordered offenders (Andrews, Dowden, & Rettinger, 2001; Bonta et al.,

1998), offenders from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds (Andrews et al., 2001), young

offenders (Dowden & Andrews, 1999b), and sex offenders (Hanson, 2006; Hanson & Bourgon,

2007).

**Cognitive** **Behavioral** **Treatment** **(CBT).**

There are two main approaches found with cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) programs

in general: cognitive restructuring and cognitive skills development. First, cognitive

restructuring is concerned with the *content* of thinking- *what* the offender thinks and values (e.g.

their attitudes towards their own criminal behavior). The primary focus is on anti-social

attitudes, values, and beliefs. Programs that target cognitions include widely used, well-

established models such as: *Criminal* *Attitudes* *Program*, *Rational* *Emotive* *Therapy*, and *Moral*

*Reconation* *Therapy* (Simourd, 1997; Ellis, 1962; Little & Robinson, 1986). Cognitive

restructuring programs are more introspective and challenge the personality of the offender.

These approaches can be more confrontational, but recent advances with Motivational

Interviewing offer a more subtle approach. Second, cognitive skill building concerns the *process*

of thinking - *how* the offender think. The primary focus here is on problem solving, decision

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making, coping, and self-regulation. Programs that target skills development include widely

used, well-established models such as: *Problem* *Solving*, *Reasoning* *and* *Rehabilitation,*

*Changing* *Offender* *Behavior*, and *Aggression* *Replacement* *Therapy* (Taymans & Parese, 1998;

Ross & Fabiano, 1985; Lowenkamp, Spruance, & Latessa, 2003; Goldstein, Glick, & Gibbs,

1998).

The most common elements of CBT programs are role playing & behavioral rehearsal

(e.g. new attitudes and skills must be practice), thinking reports (e.g. helps offender to

understand thinking errors), thought stopping & replacement (e.g. cutting off antisocial and

dysfunctional thinking), focus on high risk people, places, and situations and things, special

focus on antisocial associates (e.g. disrupt the delinquency network), social skills (e.g.

communication and interpersonal skills), flexible thinking (e.g. disrupting rigid thought patterns),

role modeling (e.g. staff provide behavioral examples), and contingency management (e.g.

reinforcers and punishers). CBT programs are effective, several meta-analyses show positive

effects with both juvenile and adult offenders and reductions in recidivism is upwards of 20%

(Landenberger and Lipsey, 2005; Wilson, et al., 2005).

**Risk** **and** **Protective** **Factors.**

Risk and protective factors are an important part of the discussion of offender reentry,

with risk factors being variables that jeopardize successful reentry, and protective factors being

variables that facilitate reentry. These factors can operate at the level of society (e.g. economic

opportunities and other structural issues) and the level of the individual offender (e.g. offender

attitudes towards law abiding behavior). Societal level structural factors widely cited as being

critical to reentry include jobs, housing, and community based social services such as drug

treatment (Petersilia, 2003; Solomon et al., 2008). For example, offenders who return home are

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more likely to commit crimes if they do not find housing upon release (Center for Housing

Policy, 1996). Research also points to the importance of individual level factors, such as

offender anti-social attitudes and criminal peers (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009). For example, studies

have identified key individual level protective factors, such as prosocial attitudes, coping and

decision-making skills, as very important to success on parole (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009;

MacKenzie, 2006; O’Reilly, Dean, & Moreno, 2001).

Therefore, each inmate needs his or her own individualized release plan in order to have

higher reentry success rates (Burke & Tonry, 2006). A release plan is a piece of the broader

process of reentry planning that concerns the inmate’s success at the time of release and the days

that follow (LaVigne, Davies, Palmer, & Halberstadt, 2008). There are several components of

the release plan: basic needs (e.g. transportation, food and clothing), housing, employment and

education, health care (e.g. substance abuse, mental illness), and support systems.

**Employment.**

Employment is posited as perhaps the most critical variable in the reentry equation, with

some studies finding employed parolees are up to three times more likely than unemployed

parolees to remain arrest free (Meredith, Speir, & Johnson, 2007). Some program evaluations

have found that employment success interacts significantly with treatment program effects to

reduce recidivism (Welsh, 2007). Given the importance of work, numerous reentry studies and

reports have expanded upon the extreme difficulty of securing employment during the reentry

process (Brooks, et al., 2006; Center for Policy Research, 2006; Good and Sherrid, 2005; La

Vigne and Kachnowski, 2005; La Vigne, et al., 2004; Petersilia, 2003; Solomon, et al., 2006;

Travis, 2005; Visher and Courtney, 2006). This literature also typically argues that when

employment is found, it is primarily low-skilled, low-wage, “dead-end” work (Heinrich, 2000;

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Holzer, et al, 2003). Some studies have found unemployment rates of upwards of 50% for

recently released offenders (La Vigne, et al., 2004; Visher and Kachnowski, 2007). More often,

though, little empirical data is offered. Instead, the difficulty of securing employment seems to

be taken a priori as a key reentry challenge (Good and Sherrid, 2005). While some attribution for

low employment rates is given to offender attitudes, behaviors and other individual attributes

such as low education levels and mental health status (Blitz, 2006), factors external to the

offenders themselves are often identified as prime determinants of employment outcomes

(Independent Committee on Reentry and Employment, 2006; Kaplan, 2007; Pawasarat, 2007;

Stafford, 2006). These factors include lack of available jobs, reluctance of employers to hire

convicted felons, laws barring felons from working in various fields (e.g. health care, law, child

care, cosmetology and other professions) inadequate prison-based programs designed to prepare

offenders for the job search, poor public transportation and even prosaic issues such as lack of a

drivers license or other photo ID. Essentially, the ex-offender employment problem is

characterized largely as one of resource deprivation – there simply are not enough jobs and

related support services available to meet the demands of inmates reentering society (Brooks, et

al., 2006; Center for Policy Research, 2006).

Given that explanations for the reentry employment problem typically center around

structural issues of job availability, employer attitudes and vocational training, policy responses

offered as solutions tend to center on initiatives designed to create jobs, to offer incentives to hire

ex-offenders and to provide job training either inside prison or immediately after release.

Specific proposals include subsidies for employers to hire ex-offenders, federal funds to support

transitional jobs, revisions of legislation barring offenders from certain occupations, prohibitions

on asking about criminal history on job applications and enhanced vocational training and job

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readiness programs for currently incarcerated and ex-offenders (Henry and Jacobs, 2007;

Independent Committee on Reentry and Employment, 2006; Kaplan, 2007; Pawasarat, 2007;

Petersilia, 2003; Stafford, 2006; Travis, 2005).

**Housing.**

Housing is seen as another key need for re-entering offenders. As with employment,

much of the writing on reentry posits extreme difficulties faced by ex-offenders in finding safe,

affordable housing (Brooks, et al., 2006; Clark, 2007; Good and Sherrid, 2005; Petersilia, 2003;

Solomon, et al., 2006; Travis, 2005; Visher and Courtney, 2007). Estimates of parolee

homelessness have ranged from 12% to upwards of 50% (Metraux and Culhane, 2004; Roman

and Travis, 2004). Once again, barriers to ex-offender housing are commonly seen as structural,

such as lack of affordable housing stock, reluctance of landlords to rent to former prisoners,

community opposition (especially in the case of sex offenders) and most notably legal

restrictions on felons seeking public housing. Other researchers, though, acknowledge that much

remains to be learned about the housing situation of released offenders, and that estimates of

homelessness among this population are not well established (Petersilia, 2003).

The reentry research also notes the importance of family and friends in providing housing

for ex-offenders, especially in the immediate post-release period. This too has its limitations, as

parole officials may block parolees from residing with family and friends who themselves have

criminal records. Indeed, considering that association with criminal others is a primary risk

factor for recidivism (Andrews and Bonta, 2003), such housing arrangements may objectively

not be in the best interests of the parolee, even with homelessness as the primary alternative.

Policy responses to the problem of ex-offender homelessness, in spite of the imprecision of the

understanding of this problem, have included supportive housing placements for returning

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prisoners and efforts to assist families in their attempts to provide housing and support to ex-

offenders, exemplified in the La Bodega de la Familia program in New York City (Travis, 2005).

States such as California have also implemented efforts such as the Preventing Parolee Crime

Program (PPCP). Again, these responses focus largely on addressing structural barriers to

housing for released offenders. The PPCP is a multi-dimensional program that’s goal is to

reduce the recidivism rates of parolees by providing them with services to facilitate a successful

reintegration for them (Office of Justice Programs, 2013).

There have been very few reentry programs that have been evaluated as stringently as

Project Greenlight. Based on the “What Works” literature, Project Greenlight was a short-term

prison-based reentry program run through the New York State Department of Correctional

Services and New York State Division of Parole (Wilson, 2007). The program was eight weeks

long that included cognitive-behavioral skills, training, employment, housing, drug education

and awareness, family counseling, and more (Wilson et al., 2005). Surprisingly, participants of

Project Greenlight performed worse on all measures of recidivism at both 6 months and 12

months after release compared to the other two groups with one of those groups not receiving

any pre-release services (Wilson, 2007). Overall, the problems identified with Project

Greenlight were shortcomings in how well the program was implemented, failure to identify

high-risk offenders through valid risk and needs assessments, and the program was attempting to

accomplish too many goals in too short a time frame (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006; Marlowe,

2006, p.342; Rhine, Mawhorr, & Parks, 2006; Wilson & Davis, 2006). The evaluation of Project

Greenlight demonstrates how reentry programs still have many areas to improve upon, such as

promoting high quality implementation and providing adequate time to cover the topics included

in the program (i.e. not rushing clients through the program).

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**Rural** **Reentry**

Compared to offenders reentering urban areas (Brooks et al., 2005; LaVigne et al., 2004;

Visher, Kachnowski, LaVigne, & Travis, 2004), the offenders reentering rural areas have

different challenges to overcome. Wodahl (2006) described how rural areas do not have access

to certain private and public services like those available in urban areas (e.g. health care services,

government services; Murray & Keller, 1991), are economically limited due to relying on

farming or tourism (Ghelfi & McGranahan, 2004), tend to have higher levels of acquaintance

density (average number of people in a community known by everyone in the community;

Freudenburg, 1986), have more physical privacy than social privacy (Weisheit & Wells, 1996,

p.384), and have distinct cultural characteristics, such as not wanting the government involved in

their lives (Conger, 1997; Weisheit & Donnermeyer, 2000). In turn, jails located in rural areas

tend to contribute to these challenges. Rural jails are funded by a disadvantaged tax base, which

leaves the jails with fewer resources to operate, hire and retain employees, and provide

programming (Zajac & Kowalski, 2012; Ruddell & Mays, 2006; Wodahl, 2006). Therefore,

these rural jails tend to lack referral services for mental health treatment, employment, housing,

and more (Solomon et al., 2008).

Rural reentry in Pennsylvania is no different. Not only do the offenders have few

services to choose from, but offenders also face restrictions when looking for a job or place to

live. In Pennsylvania, there are employment restrictions for those with criminal records. In

several occupations, a criminal background check is required, but in other occupations’

employers can utilize a criminal background check at their discretion. One major restriction in

Pennsylvania for returning offenders is “working with children”. The Child Protective Services

Law (CPSL) states that anyone who has a “significant likelihood of regular contact with

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children” is required to have a background check (23 Pa. C. S. § 6344.2). Offenses prohibited

under the CPSL are

“Individuals with founded child abuse reports within the last five years or with

convictions for homicide, aggravated assault, kidnapping, rape, various sex crimes, prostitution

felonies, concealing death of child, endangering welfare of child, or pornography ever, or for

drug felonies within the last five years (Community Legal Services Inc., 2011, p.9).”

In addition, there are several occupations where employers are prohibited by law from hiring

offenders in Pennsylvania, such as, aircraft/airport employees, bank employee, nursing home

worker, private detective, and more (see Appendix D). There are also certain occupations which

require a license to work and several licensing boards are required to consider convictions when

making their final licensing decisions. In Pennsylvania, the following licensing boards may or

do consider convictions: accountant, barber, casino employee, dental hygienist, funeral director,

mortgage broker, occupational therapist, and more (see Appendix D). Overall, offenders being

released from urban jails also face similar employment restrictions, so the issue of employment

restrictions applies to all offenders.

Along with employment restrictions, there are also housing restrictions in Pennsylvania

which offenders returning from rural jails face too. In Pennsylvania, each county has its own

restrictions for returning offenders and offenders can learn about these restrictions by calling

their county’s housing authority office (Pennsylvania Association of Housing & Redevelopment

Agencies, http://www.pahra.org/housing.html). However, all counties utilize Title 24 of the

Code of Federal Regulations, the Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Part 5-General

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HUD Program Requirements/Waivers as a guide; specifically Subpart I *Preventing* *Crime* *in*

*Federally* *Assisted* *Housing-Denying* *Admission* *and* *Terminating* *Tenancy* *for* *Criminal* *Activity*

*or* *Alcohol* *Abuse* and Subpart J *Access* *to* *Criminal* *Records* *and* *Information*. The statues in

these sections outline the process for screening and evicting those with criminal backgrounds or

found engaging in criminal activity at the residence; for instance, in Subpart I statue 5.855 ‘*When*

*am* *I* *specifically* *authorized* *to* *prohibit* *admission* *of* *individuals* *who* *have* *engaged* *in* *criminal*

*activity?’* states “a) you may prohibit admission of a household to federally assisted housing

under your standards if you determine that any household member is currently engaging in, or

has engaged in during a reasonable time before the admission decision: 1) drug-related criminal

activity, 2) violent criminal activity, 3) other criminal activity that would threaten the health,

safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents, and more” (Electronic

Code of Federal Regulations, 2012, http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/textidx?c=ec

fr&tpl=ecfrbrowse/Title24/24cfr5\_main\_02.tpl).

There are also certain restrictions for sex offenders, such as Subpart I statue 5.856 ‘*When*

*must* *I* *prohibit* *admission* *of* *sex* *offenders?’* states “you must establish standards that prohibit

admission to federally assisted housing if any member of the household is subject to a lifetime

registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program. In the screening of

applicants, you must perform necessary criminal history background checks in the State where

the housing is located and in other States where the household members are known to have

resided” (Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, 2012,

http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/textidx?c=ecfr&tpl=ecfrbrowse/Title24/24

cfr5\_main\_02.tpl).

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**The** **Unknown** **of** **Rural** **Reentry**

Due to the minimal research available on rural reentry, there are still gaps to be filled on

rural reentry (Garland et al., 2011; Wodahl, 2006). The existing literature on rural offender

reentry is still often silent about services (e.g. transportation, education, health care) are actually

available in rural areas for offenders. As presented later, though, the current contributes to filling

in some of these gaps in knowledge for rural reentry in Pennsylvania.

Transportation is a major gap that needs to be filled in rural reentry. The majority of the

research on reentry focuses on employment and housing being the two main objectives for

offenders when they are released (Solomon et al., 2008). However, in order to visit an apartment

that is available to rent or to go to work, transportation is needed for those offenders to achieve

goals such as employment and housing. Without transportation, the offender is left with minimal

options. Garland et al. (2011) described how their participants still did not have transportation 3

months after release and had to either rely on a friend or use a bicycle to navigate around town.

Overall, transportation could be described as the key to an offenders’ post-release success

because an offender needs to be able to get to and from work, meet with his or her parole officer,

attend substance abuse meetings, go to the doctor, go to the grocery store, etc.

Education is another gap in the rural reentry research. Many offenders reenter society

and find themselves lacking educational skills that are critical for most jobs (Richie, 2001). If

GED classes were unavailable to offenders in rural jails, what resources would rural areas have

available to the offender upon release? Would there be a GED testing center available in the

offender’s town or would the offender need to travel? These and related questions need to be

addressed in rural reentry research.

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Healthcare is yet another gap in the rural reentry research. The healthcare resources

available to offenders in rural areas range from none to a few (Wodahl, 2006). Leukefeld et al.

(2002) described how rural areas tend to be more isolated from mental health treatment centers

which leaves residents to continue to struggle with their mental illnesses. Cruser, Sperry, and

Harper (2000) suggested utilizing technology to access rural areas, such as conducting

counseling sessions through interactive video technology. It has been reported that residents of

rural areas live, on average, 13 miles from mental health centers (Drug and Alcohol Services

Information System, 2002). Therefore, when an offender is released after consistently being

medicated while incarcerated, how well will he or she function without medication or treatment

due to resource issues? The issue of healthcare needs to be addressed in rural reentry, especially

when many healthcare services are unavailable in rural areas and a large number of offenders

need continued medication and/or treatment post-release to be successful (Wodahl, 2006).

Homelessness is another issue in rural reentry which needs more attention. There are

several factors which may cause rural homelessness, such as low wages, poverty, lack of

affordable housing, and more (Family Justice, 2009). The Rural Poverty Research Center

described how the homeless in rural areas tend to be white, female, married, and employed

compared to the homeless in urban areas (Fisher, 2007). How homelessness is defined (e.g.

living on the streets, having to live with family or friends, living in a shelter, or living in

substandard housing) tends to effect offenders the most since this influences what resources can

be made available to them (Family Justice, 2009). Rural homelessness is “often precipitated by a

structural or physical housing problem jeopardizing health or safety” (Family Justice, 2009,

p.12). Therefore, the issue of homelessness in rural reentry still needs to be explored, such as

what resources, if any, are available to the homeless in rural areas?

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Overall, even though employment and housing tend to be the most researched areas in

reentry, these two issues still need to be explored in rural reentry. In the national context, rural

areas tend to rely on one major economic source, such as farming, which leaves offenders with

even fewer employment options (Wodahl, 2006). Housing is also a prevailing issue in rural

areas because affordable and quality rental properties are usually unavailable (Housing

Assistance Council, 2003). It has been suggested that rural areas will need to work with local

government agencies and community organizations to create housing options for offenders

reentering into their communities (Wodahl, 2006). Therefore, employment and housing still

need to be explored in rural reentry in order to discover better options for offenders post-release.

In sum, offenders reentering rural areas experience unique challenges compared to

offenders reentering urban areas. However, rural jails and/or prisons are capable of making

improvements to provide a better transition for their offenders (Wodahl, 2006). Overall, these

challenges can be alleviated as research in rural reentry progresses over time.

*Research* *Objective* *2B:* *Examine* *and* *document* *the* *critical* *rural* *reentry* *challenges* *as* *indicated*

*by* *key* *corrections* *officials* *at* *the* *state* *and* *county* *levels* *in* *Pennsylvania.*

As discussed in the Methodology section, this study conducted interviews with key state

corrections officials asking for their input about key reentry challenges facing inmates being

released from state custody, using the interview schedule contained in Appendix A. A similar

self-administered survey was used for the 44 county jails wardens, using the survey contained in

Appendix B. Both the interview schedule and survey instrument asked about reentry challenges

in key domains including employment, housing, family support, health services, treatment

services, transportation and other key areas.

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Table 3 next presents the mean scores for each item, reported for all respondents pooled

together, and also broken out by the state corrections officials and county wardens. Following

this table is discussion of highlights from these findings.

**Table** **3:** **State** **Corrections** **Officials** **and** **County** **Jail** **Wardens** **Ratings** **of** **Rural** **Reentry** **Topic** **Areas** **as** **Key** **Challenges** **(1** **=** **No** **Challenge;** **10** **=** **Very** **Significant** **Challenge)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reentry** **Topic** | **County** **Mean** | **State** **Mean** |
| Job opportunities available to returning inmates | 7.17 | 7.69 |
| Wages available to returning inmates | 6.46 | 7.42 |
| Employer receptivity to hiring returning inmates | 6.13 | 7.17 |
| Employment restrictions for “hard to place” offenders | 8.00 | 9.54 |
| Job training provided & available to returning inmates | 6.71 | 7.55 |
| “Soft skills” of employment (i.e. find & keep a job) | 5.71 | 6.75 |
| Availability of housing for returning inmates | 6.48 | 6.08 |
| Cost of housing | 6.52 | 6.00 |
| Housing restrictions for “hard to place” offenders | 7.79 | 8.50 |
| Ability of families to provide support | 4.96 | 5.08 |
| Support given to families to assist returning inmates | 5.46 | 7.25 |
| Parenting duties facing returning inmates | 5.71 | 7.00 |
| Deficits in key life skills (e.g. time/money management) | 6.42 | 6.42 |
| Availability of treatment services and programs in your county | 5.13 | 8.50 |
| Availability of & access to medical health services | 4.56 | 5.30 |
| Availability of & access to mental health services | 4.96 | 7.92 |
| Ability to pay for health services in rural areas | 5.27 | 8.13 |
| Transportation availability | 5.81 | 8.75 |
| Thinking errors (e.g., antisocial attitudes) & emotional readiness | 6.59 | 7.33 |
| Antisocial peers | 6.39 | 6.40 |

Source: Interviews with 13 state corrections officials and survey administered to 24 rural jail wardens. Note: Shaded columns indicate a statistically significant difference (at least p<0.05)

The first thing to note about the findings presented in Table 3 is the considerable degree

of consistency between the responses provided by state and local levels of corrections. The

shaded rows in Table 3 indicate items where there was a statistically significant difference

between the ratings given by the state officials and the ratings given by the county jail wardens

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(at least at the p<0.05 level). They agreed in their ratings on 14 out of the 20 (70%) reentry

topics included in Table 3. This suggests that the state officials and the county wardens share a

common understanding of the challenges related to rural reentry, and that this likely reflects a set

of core rural reentry issues that cut across all levels of corrections in Pennsylvania. If instead

this study had found little or no agreement between the state and county levels, conclusions

about what are the challenges surrounding rural reentry would have been more murky, likely

requiring the creation of two separate models of rural reentry in Pennsylvania.

Looking first at areas of agreement, the most critical challenges facing rural reentry

according both state corrections officials and county wardens are housing restrictions for hard to

place offenders, and job opportunities available to returning inmates. Both of these items were

rated as at least a 7 by both state corrections officials and county wardens. It should be noted

that these two areas – employment and housing – are also the two areas most commonly

discussed in the literature on reentry, as explained earlier in the literature review. Conversely,

the reentry topics rated as least challenging by both groups of respondents were the ability of

families to provide support to their returning loved ones, and the availability of and access to

medical health services (note this is distinct from mental health services, which was rated as a

more important issue). The national reentry literature is somewhat more mixed on these topics,

although some studies have found that returning inmates do in fact rely heavily on their families

for housing and help with employment and finances (Bucklen and Zajac, 2009).

Turning to the six topic areas where the state corrections official and the wardens

disagree significantly in their ratings – (1) employment restrictions for hard to place offenders,

(2) support given to families to assist returning inmates, (3) availability of treatment services and

programs in your county, (4) availability of and access to mental health services, (5) ability to

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pay for health services in rural areas, (6) and transportation availability – it stands out that in all

six cases, the state officials rate the topic as more of a problem than do the county wardens. As

far as why this might be the case, one explanation is that the state officials have a statewide

perspective on reentry, and may see issues that cut across any one particular county. Moreover,

they are presumably better able to make comparisons between rural and urban reentry issues,

than are rural wardens who are working only within a single county. In addition, state corrections

(PADOC & PBPP) seems to operate more reentry programs than do county jails (see other

sections of this report), thus, the state corrections officials may have explored these issues more

closely. A competing explanation is that the county wardens are “closer to the ground” and may

have a more finely tuned perspective on local reentry conditions. In any event, even though the

state corrections officials consistently rate these six issues higher than the county wardens, the

wardens’ scores nonetheless round to at least a 5 on all of these issues, suggesting that they do

feel they are important.

In addition to the quantitative, forced choice questions asked of the state corrections

officials during the interviews, they were also given the opportunity to discuss challenges to

reentry in an open ended manner. The wardens’ survey also afforded the respondents the

opportunity to write in open ended comments in addition to answering the forced choice

questions. This qualitative data was subjected to basic content analysis to identify common

themes that emerged from respondents’ open ended comments. These themes also inform to a

large degree the policy recommendations discussed at the end of this report.

One of the strongest themes to emerge centered on the notion of stigma. Respondents

argued that offenders returning to rural areas often face stigmatization for their status as ex-

offenders, and that this influences their ability to secure employment and housing (landlords

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refuse to rent to them). Sex offenders, especially, have significant issues in securing housing

because landlords do not want to rent to them, and they can even face great difficulties in getting

jobs due to negative attitudes of potential employers. While the respondents acknowledged that

stigma can be an issue even in urban reentry, the relative anonymity of urban life and the greater

density of ex-offenders in many urban areas may make the mark of a criminal record less of an

issue there. But in rural areas, released inmates’ status as ex-offenders’ is often widely known

and seen as a violation of community norms. Thus, the released inmate “stands out” as the

subject for disapproval. On a related point, several respondents did note that the close ties within

many rural communities can actually work in the favor of ex-offenders who were highly

regarded prior to incarceration and thus make reentry easier for these higher status individuals.

But, respondents argued that this is not the case for most offenders returning to rural areas, thus,

stigma emerges as a key issue for them. As will be discussed in the policy recommendations

section, stigmatization is a difficult issue to address with a policy response, as it is unclear how

to legislate general public attitudes, but stigma does appear to be an issue deserving further

exploration in the context of rural reentry.

Closely related to the issue of stigma was the challenge presented by the so called “hard-

to-place” ex-offenders. These include the mentally ill, violent offenders and most especially sex

offenders. As discussed elsewhere in this report, sex offenders in particular can face significant

restrictions on where they can live, and in rural areas with already limited housing options,

finding housing for such offenders can be a significant challenge. Most respondents made a

point of emphasizing that reintegration of “hard to place” offenders is one of the most significant

challenges for reentry for their agencies.

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Transportation was also universally identified as a key rural reentry issue, as it received a

high rating on the forced choice question dealing with this topic (see Table 3), but was the

subject of some degree of discussion by nearly all respondents. Respondents noted that limited

transportation in rural areas intersects with many other reentry challenges, making it more

difficult for released offenders to search for and get to work, attend treatment groups and even to

make meetings with their parole agents. Respondents also widely agreed that transportation is

much more of an issue for rural reentry than for urban.

As noted in the quantitative findings, respondents endorsed lack of treatment programs in

rural communities as a key issue, but they also widely noted in discussion that programs

specifically addressing the core criminogenic needs such as anti-social attitudes and poor

decision making skills were almost entirely absent in rural areas. While there is also a deficit of

such programs in urban areas, the Community Corrections Centers/Facilities operated by the

PADOC do run some such programming, and most of these centers are clustered in urban areas,

thus providing some options for ex-offenders in urban areas needing such services. Of course,

these centers serve only state inmates paroled from State Correctional Institutions, so do not

represent a resource for inmates released from county jails, nor for the 21% of state inmates who

are released at the completion of their sentence with no parole supervision (“max-outs”), which

represents nearly 21% of all state releases (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2012b).

Respondents also widely noted that mental health services are often lacking in rural areas.

They especially note that some rural counties may not even have a practicing psychiatrist, thus

making continuity-of-care a significant impediment to reentry for seriously mentally ill ex-

offenders. The respondents noted that this is much less of an issue in urban areas, where there is

a greater density of mental health clinics and providers.

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There was some disagreement between the state corrections officials and county jail

wardens on the issue of family support. The state level respondents felt that family support was

often stronger in rural areas, and that offenders returning to these areas often rely heavily upon

family to fulfill needs that might be met by community or public agencies in rural areas, such as

housing and employment assistance. County wardens, on the other hand, were less sanguine in

their observations about the assistance that families can or do provide during reentry, noting that

the families themselves are often struggling with their own issues and problems. Respondents

did indicate, though, that there are few support services for families themselves in rural areas as

they try to help their loved ones who are returning from prison.

As noted in the quantitative interview/survey findings above, employment is endorsed by

most respondents as a key challenge, both in rural and urban areas, but especially in rural.

Closely related to this was their frequent observation that there are very few opportunities for

vocational training for ex-offenders in rural areas, although respondents from the PBPP did note

that their agency is working to develop training opportunities for ex-offenders at local

community colleges, but that this effort was just beginning.

Finally, the respondents also frequently commented that criminogenic needs (see

discussion earlier) such as antisocial attitudes and poor coping skills are a challenge for rural

reentry, but also equally for urban reentry. There was some disagreement over whether

antisocial peers were more of an issue for rural reentry than urban, with some respondents

arguing that the urban environment offers a more dense network of deviant peers, but with other

respondents arguing that isolation in rural areas can leave ex-offenders with few alternative

social outlets besides their old antisocial peers (and even family). Still, respondents seemed to

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agree that the core criminogenic needs discussed earlier are a challenge for reentry regardless of

the setting.

**Third Research Goal: Identify and document reentry programs and services available to**

**released state and local prisoners in rural Pennsylvania.**

*Research* *Objective* *3A:* *Identify* *reentry* *programs* *that* *are* *offered* *by* *the* *PADOC,* *PBPP* *and*

*county* *jails* *to* *prisoners* *prior* *to* *or* *during* *the* *release* *process.*

During the interviews with the state level corrections officials, they were asked about the

reentry programs that the agencies operate. While it is frequently said within the corrections

field that all prison programming is directed towards preparing inmates for reentry (Petersilia,

2003), this study specifically inquired into programing that is directly and proximally oriented

towards preparing inmates for release from prison and return to the community. Other programs,

such as drug treatment, may often be delivered early in an inmate’s sentence, and thus is more

distally oriented towards reentry preparation.

For the PADOC, this is presently a time of flux for their reentry programming. For much

of the past ten years, the PADOC’s core reentry preparation program was known as the

Community Orientation Reintegration, or COR, program. Originally developed in 2001, COR

was a two phased reentry initiative. Phase 1 involved two weeks of full time services delivered

in an SCI near the expected time of the inmate’s release. The specific services included in Phase

1 of COR focused heavily on job readiness, such as job hunting skills, resume writing and

practice interviews. Other services delivered in Phase 1 covered issues such as money

management, finding housing, family reunification and accessing social services in the

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community. Phase 2 of COR was delivered in a Community Corrections Center/Facility after an

inmate was released, and typically also covered approximately two weeks. The content of

services delivered in Phase 2 was somewhat more amorphous, and not as codified as with the

services delivered in Phase 1. Services in Phase 2 could include family issues and on-going job

readiness.

The PADOC undertook a comprehensive evaluation of the COR program, which was

completed in 2008 (this evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluator and was led by

the Principal Investigator for the current study – Zajac). This evaluation employed a rigorous

experimental design (random assignment) and found that the COR program was not producing

any significant reductions in recidivism among the inmates who participated in COR (Smith and

Suttle, 2008). While a full discussion of the reasons for this outcome is beyond the scope of the

current report, this evaluation found that all components of COR were being given to all released

inmates (aside from those inmates randomly assigned to the control group during the study

enrollment period), regardless of their actual need for a given component. And, while the job

readiness component did occupy approximately one week of the two week period of COR Phase

1, the remaining week covered a wide variety of topics (e.g. money management, family

reunification), which resulted in some topics receiving less than an hour of coverage. Moreover,

while COR conveyed a great deal of *information* to inmates, there was relatively little time for

inmates to acquire and practice new skills that they would need during reentry. Thus, COR was

primarily a didactic program, rather than employing the more effective cognitive-behavioral

approach as discussed earlier in the literature review. Thus, this evaluation concluded that COR

was attempting to deliver too many services in too short a period of time to too many inmates,

using ineffective techniques. This is a problem that has plagued other attempts to deliver brief,

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broad-based reentry preparation programs to soon-to-be-released inmates, as was discovered in

the contemporaneous evaluation of New York’s Project Greenlight, which operated in a manner

similar to COR and which also found no program effects (Wilson and Davis, 2006).

As a result of the evaluation of COR, the PADOC decided to gradually phase out this

program and replace it with new reentry services. As of the time when the researchers conducted

the interviews with PADOC officials for this study (summer of 2012) the new reentry programs

were not yet fully in place and thus were something of a work in progress. The following

discussion of these programs represents the best attempt to convey the direction that these

programs will take over the next several years. It should be noted that the programs and

initiatives discussed below are intended to serve the entire state inmate population, and are not

geared specifically towards either rural or urban areas.

The core PADOC reentry programs currently unfolding are referred to as Reentry Units.

The Reentry Unit concept is being pilot tested in 2013 in four State Correctional Institutions

(SCI’s Albion, Camp Hill, Graterford and Muncy; the first three SCI’s are male facilities), with

the eventual goal of having a Reentry Unit at all SCI’s. The ultimate intended design of the

Reentry Unit is for inmates to be placed into the Reentry Units at the SCI nearest to their home

six months prior to their expected parole or other release date. The Reentry Units may be

residential (i.e. where the participating inmates live together in a dedicated housing block

separate from the general population) or “unit-based” (i.e. where the participating inmates live

intermixed with the general population, but receive dedicated reentry services together); both

approaches will be included in the pilot test. The Reentry Units will serve both inmates being

paroled, and those who are being released without supervision at the end of their sentence (“max-

outs”). Following the principles of effective offender intervention (discussed earlier), the

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Reentry Units will primarily target inmates at a medium to high risk of recidivating, and will

tailor services to the specific needs of individual inmates. Thus, not all inmates will be served

(only those who can most likely benefit from the Reentry Units) and not all inmates served by

the Reentry Units will receive all program components (only those that they need). The design

of the Reentry Units, then, attends to several of the key weakness implicated in the poor

outcomes of the earlier COR program.

One of the central design components of the Reentry Units will be community in-reach,

where representatives from various community based agencies and services, such as Career Link,

family programs, veterans agencies, and housing agencies, will be brought in to work with

inmates in preparing their plan for reentry. Inmates will also meet with parole agents to plan for

the requirements of parole supervision (this does not apply to inmates who are maxing out).

Again, it must be stressed that the Reentry Unit concept is still in development as of the

preparation of this report, and specific details may change as a result of lessons learned from the

pilot test.

In addition to the nascent Reentry Unit initiative, there are other elements to the

PADOC’s reentry process. PADOC presently operates 53 Community Corrections Centers and

Contract Facilities statewide. Fourteen of these are operated directly by PADOC (Community

Corrections Centers, or CCCs), with the remaining 39 operated by private providers on behalf of

the state (Community Contract Facilities, or CCFs), although some of the Community Contract

Facilities may also house offenders for other clients, such as the federal Bureau of Prisons)9. The

primary reentry purpose served by the CCC/F’s is to provide inmates who have just been paroled

with transitional housing and other basic reentry assistance for up to several months after their

9 See the following link for a complete listing of these CCC/F’s: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=14823&mode=2

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release. Some of the CCC/F’s limit their services largely to housing and monitoring, whereas

others provide more in-depth rehabilitative services, up to and including residential drug

treatment. The CCC/F system is also presently in a period of flux. The PADOC had recently

conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the entire CCC/F system which was completed in 2009

(this evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluator and was also led by the Principal

Investigator for the current study – Zajac). This evaluation included every CCC/F in operation at

the time and compared outcomes for inmates sent to the CCC/F’s to outcomes for similar

inmates paroled directly to the street. This evaluation employed a very large sample of inmates

(over 7,000) and also conducted a rigorous assessment of the quality of the treatment programs

offered in each CCC/F. This evaluation found that overall the CCC/F’s were not producing any

reductions in recidivism, and in many case individual CCC/F’s were actually showing increased

recidivism rates compared to control parolees (Latessa, et al, 2009). This evaluation also found

that the quality of treatment programs offered in most CCC/F’s was low. As a result of this

study, the PADOC announced in March 2013 a decision to suspend the contracts for all privately

run CCF’s and require rebidding under a new performance based contracting system10.

Payments to the new vendors selected will be tied to the recidivism rates of the facilities that

they operate11. Thus, it is difficult for the researchers at this point to project exactly what the

“new” community corrections system will look like when the new contracts take effect later in

2013 (anticipated to be by July).

10 “Prison reform ties contractors’ profits to public safety.” *The* *Patriot-News*, March 3, 2013, p. A5.

11 As an aside, Latessa and colleagues had also conducted a very similar evaluation of the Ohio halfway house system prior to their evaluation of the PADOC CCC/F system, with results very similar to what was found here. Ohio also moved to a performance based contracting system for their halfway houses in the wake of that evaluation. See: Lowenkamp, C.T., & Latessa, E.J. (2005). *Evaluation* *of* *Ohio’s* *CCA* *programs.* Cincinnati, OH: Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati.

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PADOC is also undertaking several other smaller initiatives and experiments designed to

improve reentry. Within the state run Community Correction Centers, Corrections Counselors

who work within these Centers will become oriented more towards serving as outreach agents,

working with local community organizations and employers to leverage resources and

opportunities for released inmates. Another initiative involves training specially selected

inmates within some SCI’s to become Certified Peer Specialists, which is a relatively new but

rapidly growing initiative within the mental health field that allows individuals who themselves

have been diagnosed with some sort of mental disorder to become certified as para-professionals,

providing support and ancillary services to their peers who are undergoing treatment. The goal

of the Certified Peer Specialist initiative is to better prepare inmates with mental disorders of

return to the community, and also to provide the inmates who are trained as the Certified Peer

Specialists themselves to acquire a marketable skill and experience that may lead to employment

opportunities in the community upon release. Finally, the PADOC has recently received a grant

from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, to revamp and expand reentry

services provided to female inmates who are diagnosed with co-occurring mental disorder and

substance abuse. As with the Reentry Units and other new initiatives discussed above, the co-

occurring disorder program is still unfolding, but will involve enhanced training for staff, revised

treatment protocols for these women while in prison, and better efforts to link them to mental

health and other services upon release12.

Thus, as of the writing of the current report, PADOC is undergoing several significant

revisions to its portfolio of reentry programs and practices, thus limiting the researcher’s ability

to provide more information about the exact nature or effectiveness of these initiatives, beyond

12 The Principal Investigator for the current study – Zajac – is leading an evaluation of this co-occurring disorder initiative, but results will not be available in time for the current report.

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what has been already discussed. In any event, reentry appears to be a major current focus

within the PADOC, signaling a strong interest in this topic within the agency. There is also

evidence that PADOC has been responsive to the findings from recent evaluations of earlier

reentry initiatives.

The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) is also presently undergoing

changes to its reentry practices. The PBPP traditionally has relied heavily on programs and

services offered through the aforementioned CCC/F system, run by the PADOC. The PBPP in

large part has typically brokered services for parolees in the community, such as through the

Single County Authorities. Given that the PBPP’s mission is centered on supervising released

inmates in the community, it can be said that everything they do is focused on reentry. Core

elements of this mission include processing inmate applications for parole and delivering parole

orientation sessions to inmates prior to parole. The development of the parole “home plan” is

also a critical piece of the PBPP’s reentry strategy. The home plan must be developed by the

inmate, with assistance from institutional parole staff, prior to approval for parole. The home

plan codifies key conditions of parole release, such as living arrangements, family support,

employment options, and ongoing treatment and human services in the community if needed.

Once paroled, parolees are also supervised by parole agents, including mandated visits by the

parolees to their local parole office, as well as visits by the parole agent to the parolees’ homes or

other relevant venues (e.g. places of work). In addition, many parolees also undergo random

drug testing for at least some period of their parole.

Turning to specific reentry initiatives operated by the PBPP, the *Reentry* *Program* is akin

to a reentry or drug court, where selected parolees who have a history of substance use will be

enrolled in a 12-18 month program involving regular meetings (usually monthly) at the county

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courthouse with a PBPP Board Member, Judge, Parole Agent, county drug and alcohol service

personnel and other staff as needed. The purpose of these meetings is to assess the parolee’s

compliance and progress with the individualized plan for supervision (including random drug

testing), substance abuse treatment, and other recommended treatment services that was

developed for him or her prior to release and to administer rewards or corrections based upon

that progress. The Reentry Program can be used in any county if there are parolees in need of

this service in that county. The exact nature of the Reentry Program can vary from county to

county, and also from one parolee to another, but the overarching goal is to provide a structured

and supportive reentry process for seriously addicted parolees.

More recently, PBPP has developed a new initiative geared towards more direct

provision of reentry services to parolees in the community, both rural and urban. The “ASCRA”

initiative was introduced in 2009, and stands for Assessment, Sanctioning, and Community

Resource Agents. These are specialized parole agents who do not “carry a caseload” (i.e. do not

maintain a regular list of parolees whom they are responsible for supervising), but instead focus

specifically on reentry planning and assistance for parolees in the community. ASCRAs work to

develop ties with providers and potential employers in the community to assist parolees with

needed services and employment leads. They also serve as referral resources for other parole

agents, assisting them in connecting parolees on their caseloads with needed services.

ASCRAs themselves also run treatment groups for selected parolees focusing on

employment, cognitive skills training, substance use, family education, violence prevention and

life skills (other parole agents in general do not run treatment groups, so ASCRA does represent

a new direction in the direct provision of treatment services to parolees in the community).

ASCRAs typically run 2 groups per week. For sessions focusing on criminal thinking issues and

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substance use, they use a structured, manualized, cognitive-behavioral curriculum developed by

the National Curriculum & Training Institute (NCTI) in partnership with the American Probation

and Parole Association. NCTI provides training to ASCRAs on this curriculum. Following the

principles of effective offender intervention discussed earlier, parolees are referred to the

ASCRA-run groups based upon their risk and needs scores - high risk and high needs parolees

are directed to these groups. ASCRA appears to still be somewhat in the testing stage, as there

were only 17 ASCRA agents as of the summer 2012 (when interviews were conducted with state

parole officials). ASCRA employs more of a “social work” model of parole, contrasted with a

“law enforcement model” which commonly dominates parole (Latessa and Smith, 2011).

According to state parole officials interviewed for this study, preliminary research by PBPP

seems to find recidivism reductions associated with the ASCRA initiative, although no report

was available.

The researchers also explored the reentry programs offered by the 43 rural county jails.

As part of the self-administered survey mailed to county jail wardens (described earlier), the

wardens were asked to discuss any reentry programs that they offer to their inmates as part of the

release process. Appendix B presents the full survey sent to the wardens; the survey item

referred to here was Question 2 in Part 2 of the survey. Table 4 below presents a summary of

the types of reentry programs that the county wardens report operating. It should be noted that

this table does not include those counties that simply did not respond to the survey at all, nor

those counties that did send in a response but did not answer Question 2 in Part 2. Thus, this

table represents only those county jails that provided some sort of direct answer to that question.

Finally, recall from discussion earlier in this report that Juniata county closed its jail midway

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through this study. While they did respond to this survey, their information is not included in

this table since any programs they may have been running are obviously no longer in existence.

**Table** **4:** **Reentry** **Programs** **Reported** **by** **County** **Jails**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **&** **Drugs** **Services** | **Life** **Skills** | **Employment** **&** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance** **/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **&** **Family** **Related** | **Other** |
| **Blair** | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Carbon** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Clearfield** | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| **Clinton** | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| **Columbia** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Crawford** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Elk** | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| **Franklin** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| **Greene** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| **Lycoming** | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **Mercer** | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| **North-umberland** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Pike** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| **Schuylkill** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Tioga** | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Union** | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Venango** | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| **Warren** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Wayne** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Total** | **18** | **3** | **17** | **4** | **3** | **10** | **8** | **27** |

Source: County jail wardens survey

Based upon responses provided by the jails to this question, the researchers grouped their

programs into the eight program categories shown in Table 4. These categories were used to be

congruent as far as possible with the other categories of reentry programs discussed in the next

section. Note that some counties may offer more than one program within a given category (e.g.

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4 alcohol and drug services programs at Mercer county jail). The “Other” category includes a

wide variety of miscellaneous services, such as veterans programs and gender specific services.

Based upon the column totals, drug and alcohol programs are the most common type of

reentry program reported by the jails. Employment and vocational guidance are almost as

common, which is perhaps not surprising in light of the finding noted earlier in the literature

review about the primacy of employment in discussions of reentry. The other program

categories are much less in evidence, most notably housing and financial assistance. Unlike with

the state-wide reentry programs run by the PADOC discussed earlier, the researchers had no

information available to them about the quality of these programs, or their effects on recidivism.

As part of the wardens survey, the county jails were also asked for information about any new

reentry initiatives that they might be developing. Only six of the jails indicated that they had any

new reentry initiatives underway. These initiatives focused on creating drug courts (Carbon,

Columbia), parenting programs (Carbon, Lycoming), housing assistance (Franklin), expanding

jobs assistance efforts (Lycoming, Pike) and efforts to study what they are currently doing with

entry to inform future planning (Clinton).

The data collected through this survey suggests a relative dearth of reentry programs

being offered by rural county jails. As noted earlier, and in Zajac and Kowalski (2012), county

jails often lack the resources and staff capacity to offer extensive programming, and this is

exacerbated when dealing with very small jails. Clearly, there is much greater capacity within

the state prison system to provide formal, structured reentry services. As a corollary to that,

though, there may be a greater *need* for such services for state inmates, as they typically have

been incarcerated for longer periods than county jail inmates (Zajac and Kowalski, 2012) and

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thus have suffered more disruption of their social capital (e.g. positive peer networks,

connections to previous or potential employers, family support, etc).

*Research* *Objective* *3B:* *Identify* *community-based* *programs* *in* *rural* *counties* *that* *are* *available*

*to* *returning* *prisoners.*

As discussed in the Methodology section, this study gathered information, largely from

the community resource directories maintained by the PADOC, about programs in the rural

counties that offered services which can assist released inmates in the reentry process. Before

this report begins the discussion of these community resources, several limitations and

conditions should be noted.

First, the results presented below represent simply a discussion of the number and types

of programs available in each county. It was beyond the resources available to this report to do

any sort of assessment of the quality or capacity of these programs, given that there are nearly

2900 programs listed for the rural counties. For example, this report does not present any

information on the qualifications of the staff working in these programs, details of their treatment

model and approach (e.g. do they use a cognitive-behavioral approach?), information about how

they screen and assess clients, or the number of clients they can serve at one time. So, while

Table 5 below may show that one county has more programs than another, this says nothing

about the relative quality of these programs. On a related point, it was not always clear from the

program description whether a given program provider is public, private, or non-profit, what

sorts of fees may be charged for service, or how these disparate programs coordinate their

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services among one another. These are important issues, but would have required a

comprehensive survey of all programs that was beyond the capacity of the current study to

accomplish. Still, the analysis presented below does offer some indication of the social service

menu available to ex-offenders in rural Pennsylvania.

Second, it should be noted that these community programs are for the most part available

to anyone in the community, regardless of their offender status. Thus, ex-offenders must share

access to these services with non-offenders. Again, this study was not able to collect information

on the client mix that is served by each program. On a related point, it is also important to note

that these community programs are not necessarily geared specifically towards addressing the

core criminogenic needs of ex-offenders, such as anti-social attitudes and association with

criminal peers. While the researchers could not conduct an actual evaluation of each program,

they did review the brief program descriptions (if provided) found in the PADOC community

resource directories from which much of the information for this analysis is drawn. No evidence

was found that any of these programs was delivering offender specific services, as would be

found in a prison setting. The one exception are the sex offender programs offered in 11

counties, which by definition are oriented towards those who have committed sex crimes. But,

there are very few such programs and again they are targeted specifically to sex offenders, thus

not applying to the large number of non-sex offenders in the ex-offender population. As

discussed earlier this dearth of community programs that specifically address key criminogenic

needs (e.g. anti-social attitudes, peers) was noted as an issue during the interviews and surveys

with state corrections official and county wardens.

Finally, it is unclear how often released inmates take advantage of the community

services that are in theory available to them. Some programs charge fees which released inmates

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may be unable to meet. Transportation to programs in rural areas was also noted as an issue.

The researchers learned during interviews with the PADOC that the PADOC does make the

community resource directories available in the prison libraries for inmates to use, and inmates

may request a copy. The PADOC Bureau of Treatment Services will also provide copies to

family members of inmates upon request, and of course these directories are freely available on

the PADOC website, as discussed in the methodology section. During interviews with PBPP

staff, it was noted that the specialized ASCRA agents (see earlier discussion of PBPP reentry

programs) do also work with parolees to direct them towards appropriate community programs.

And, as discussed in more detail below, several of the responding rural county jails did provide

some information about specific community programs to which they refer their inmates. Thus,

while the state and local corrections agencies in Pennsylvania are taking care to make released

inmates aware of available programs in the community, it is unclear how these resources are

being used by the released inmates themselves.

Table 5 below provides a simple count of the number of community-based programs in

each rural county that could be accessed by released inmates, grouped into eight categories:

Alcohol and Drug Services; Employment and Vocational Guidance; Financial Aid and

Insurance/Medical Assistance; Food Assistance; Transportation Assistance; Mental Health

Assistance; Parenting Services and Education; and Sex Offender Programs; as well at a Total

category showing the sum of all types of programs available in each county.

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**Table** **5** **–** **Programs** **in** **Pennsylvania’s** **Rural** **Counties**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **and** **Drugs** **Services** | **Employment** **and** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **and** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Adams | 3 | 10 | 11 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 49 |
| Armstrong | 4 | 7 | 14 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 0 | 52 |
| Bedford | 3 | 4 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 35 |
| Blair | 11 | 12 | 22 | 10 | 13 | 8 | 15 | 0 | 91 |
| Bradford | 5 | 8 | 11 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 47 |
| Butler | 8 | 8 | 13 | 23 | 10 | 7 | 15 | 2 | 86 |
| Cambria | 7 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 63 |
| Cameron | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 30 |
| Carbon | 15 | 12 | 30 | 10 | 14 | 19 | 16 | 0 | 116 |
| Centre | 7 | 7 | 23 | 10 | 12 | 4 | 12 | 1 | 76 |
| Clarion | 3 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 27 |
| Clearfield | 2 | 7 | 17 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 59 |
| Clinton | 9 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 50 |
| Columbia | 11 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 40 |
| Crawford | 3 | 10 | 34 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 0 | 83 |
| Elk | 2 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 29 |
| Fayette | 5 | 9 | 13 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 50 |
| Forest | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 18 |
| Franklin | 6 | 0 | 24 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 22 | 0 | 92 |
| Fulton | 6 | 5 | 14 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 49 |
| Greene | 10 | 10 | 18 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 67 |
| Huntingdon | 1 | 5 | 12 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 43 |
| Indiana | 5 | 15 | 19 | 8 | 15 | 10 | 11 | 0 | 83 |
| Jefferson\* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | - |
| Juniata | 3 | 9 | 24 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 20 | 0 | 77 |
| Lawrence | 5 | 9 | 14 | 0 | 13 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 52 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **and** **Drugs** **Services** | **Employment** **and** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **and** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Lycoming | 15 | 12 | 30 | 13 | 25 | 16 | 39 | 0 | 150 |
| McKean | 2 | 8 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 40 |
| Mercer | 11 | 6 | 21 | 8 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 74 |
| Mifflin | 2 | 3 | 21 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 15 | 0 | 58 |
| Monroe | 9 | 7 | 19 | 9 | 15 | 7 | 17 | 0 | 83 |
| Montour | 9 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 51 |
| Northumberland | 6 | 10 | 5 | 8 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 0 | 57 |
| Perry | 3 | 7 | 12 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 43 |
| Pike | 6 | 10 | 31 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 16 | 0 | 89 |
| Potter | 2 | 10 | 13 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 44 |
| Schuylkill | 4 | 9 | 17 | 13 | 12 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 71 |
| Snyder | 9 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 51 |
| Somerset | 2 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 31 |
| Sullivan | 4 | 6 | 26 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 62 |
| Susquehanna | 3 | 7 | 13 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 49 |
| Tioga | 8 | 7 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 49 |
| Union | 10 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 50 |
| Venango | 5 | 6 | 17 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 58 |
| Warren | 6 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 49 |
| Washington | 18 | 13 | 21 | 7 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 0 | 95 |
| Wayne | 9 | 11 | 37 | 11 | 16 | 12 | 27 | 0 | 123 |
| Wyoming | 9 | 5 | 13 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 51 |
| Total | 294 | 349 | 725 | 333 | 414 | 301 | 462 | 14 | 2892 |

Source: Data collected from the PADOC and PBPP, supplemented by searches of county websites. \*Data was not available for most program categories for this county.

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While the absolute number of programs in each rural county is a prerequisite for

understanding the service capacity in these counties, the absolute numbers themselves do not

reveal how these programs are spread across the population which might be using these services.

A large county may have a larger absolute number of programs than a smaller county, but may

still have a lower rate of programs per population. Thus, the number of programs per capita (rate

per 10,000) was calculated for the programs in each rural county. This was done to provide a

better representation of the density of services available each county, accounting for how the

program base with each county is spread across the population. For this analysis, the researchers

used the rate for the entire population of the county, rather than the population of released

inmates, because as discussed earlier, these community programs are open to everyone in the

community, not just released inmates. Thus, using the overall county population for this

calculation provides a better picture of the demand that theoretically could be placed upon these

programs, which has a bearing on the capacity of these programs to serve released inmates.

Moreover, while this study collected data on numbers of inmates released to each rural county

for each of the past five years, the researchers did not have any data on the total number of

released inmates living in each county at any one time (i.e. including inmates who were released

prior to the time period covered by this study).

Table 6 below shows the per capita rate for all rural counties. This table provides some

sense of which rural counties are in a stronger position to provide services to offenders returning

to these counties. For alcohol and drug services, Cameron had the highest density of programs,

and Huntingdon the lowest. For employment and vocational services, Sullivan had the highest

density of programs, and Franklin the lowest. For financial aid and medical assistance services,

Sullivan once again had the highest density of programs, and Northumberland the lowest. For

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food assistance, Cameron had the highest density of programs and Lawrence the lowest. For

transportation assistance, Sullivan had the highest density of programs, and Somerset the lowest.

For mental health services, Cameron had the highest density of programs, and Somerset the

lowest. For parenting and family services, Sullivan had the highest density of programs, and

Clarion the lowest. For sex offender services, there were so few such programs, and the vast

majority of counties (77%) did not offer any such programs, that comparisons between counties

are pointless. Finally, looking at all categories of community programs combined, Sullivan had

the highest density of programs, and Fayette the lowest. Thus, Sullivan and Cameron counties

appear to be consistently in the best position in terms of the density of programs in their counties

to support reentry. There is no clear pattern in terms of which counties have the lowest density

of programs across the various categories.

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**Table** **6** **–** **Programs** **Per** **Capita** **(rate** **per** **10,000)** **in** **Pennsylvania’s** **Rural** **Counties**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **&** **Drug** **Services** | **Employ.** **&** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **&** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Adams | 0.30 | 0.99 | 1.08 | 0.39 | 0.79 | 0.30 | 0.99 | 0.00 | 4.83 |
| Armstrong | 0.58 | 1.02 | 2.03 | 0.87 | 0.58 | 0.87 | 1.60 | 0.00 | 7.54 |
| Bedford | 0.60 | 0.80 | 2.01 | 1.21 | 1.41 | 0.40 | 0.60 | 0.00 | 7.03 |
| Blair | 0.87 | 0.94 | 1.73 | 0.79 | 1.02 | 0.63 | 1.18 | 0.00 | 7.16 |
| Bradford | 0.80 | 1.28 | 1.76 | 0.96 | 1.12 | 0.80 | 0.80 | 0.00 | 7.51 |
| Butler | 0.44 | 0.44 | 0.71 | 1.25 | 0.54 | 0.38 | 0.82 | 0.11 | 4.68 |
| Cambria | 0.49 | 0.63 | 0.77 | 0.56 | 0.63 | 0.42 | 0.77 | 0.14 | 4.38 |
| Cameron | 11.80 | 7.87 | 9.83 | 7.87 | 5.90 | 7.87 | 7.87 | 0.00 | 59.00 |
| Carbon | 2.30 | 1.84 | 4.60 | 1.53 | 2.15 | 2.91 | 2.45 | 0.00 | 17.78 |
| Centre | 0.45 | 0.45 | 1.49 | 0.65 | 0.78 | 0.26 | 0.78 | 0.06 | 4.94 |
| Clarion | 0.75 | 1.00 | 0.75 | 2.75 | 0.75 | 0.50 | 0.25 | 0.00 | 6.75 |
| Clearfield | 0.24 | 0.86 | 2.08 | 0.73 | 1.22 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.12 | 7.23 |
| Clinton | 2.29 | 1.53 | 2.04 | 1.78 | 2.29 | 1.02 | 1.53 | 0.25 | 12.74 |
| Columbia | 1.63 | 0.59 | 1.04 | 0.59 | 1.04 | 0.45 | 0.59 | 0.00 | 5.94 |
| Crawford | 0.34 | 1.13 | 3.83 | 0.45 | 0.79 | 1.01 | 1.80 | 0.00 | 9.35 |
| Elk | 0.63 | 1.57 | 2.50 | 0.31 | 0.94 | 0.63 | 1.88 | 0.63 | 9.08 |
| Fayette | 0.37 | 0.66 | 0.95 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.37 | 0.29 | 0.00 | 3.66 |
| Forest | 2.59 | 3.89 | 6.48 | 1.30 | 3.89 | 2.59 | 2.59 | 0.00 | 23.33 |
| Franklin | 0.40 | 0.00 | 1.60 | 0.87 | 0.94 | 0.87 | 1.47 | 0.00 | 6.15 |
| Fulton | 4.04 | 3.37 | 9.43 | 2.69 | 2.69 | 5.39 | 5.39 | 0.00 | 33.01 |
| Greene | 2.58 | 2.58 | 4.65 | 2.58 | 2.33 | 1.29 | 1.29 | 0.00 | 17.32 |
| Huntingdon | 0.22 | 1.09 | 2.61 | 1.31 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.09 | 0.00 | 9.37 |
| Indiana | 0.56 | 1.69 | 2.14 | 0.90 | 1.69 | 1.13 | 1.24 | 0.00 | 9.34 |
| Jefferson |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.00 | ------ |
| Juniata | 1.22 | 3.65 | 9.74 | 2.03 | 3.25 | 3.25 | 8.12 | 0.00 | 31.26 |
| Lawrence | 0.55 | 0.99 | 1.54 | 0.00 | 1.43 | 0.33 | 0.77 | 0.11 | 5.71 |
| Lycoming | 1.29 | 1.03 | 2.58 | 1.12 | 2.15 | 1.38 | 3.36 | 0.00 | 12.92 |
| McKean | 0.46 | 1.84 | 2.53 | 0.46 | 1.15 | 2.07 | 0.69 | 0.00 | 9.21 |
| Mercer | 0.94 | 0.51 | 1.80 | 0.69 | 1.03 | 0.51 | 0.77 | 0.09 | 6.34 |
| Mifflin | 0.43 | 0.64 | 4.50 | 0.86 | 1.29 | 1.50 | 3.21 | 0.00 | 12.42 |
| Monroe | 0.53 | 0.41 | 1.12 | 0.53 | 0.88 | 0.41 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 4.89 |
| Montour | 4.93 | 4.38 | 3.83 | 4.38 | 2.74 | 4.38 | 3.28 | 0.00 | 27.92 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **&** **Drug** **Services** | **Employ.** **&** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **&** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Northumberland | 0.63 | 1.06 | 0.53 | 0.85 | 1.27 | 0.53 | 1.16 | 0.00 | 6.03 |
| Perry | 0.65 | 1.52 | 2.61 | 1.09 | 1.52 | 0.87 | 1.09 | 0.00 | 9.35 |
| Pike | 1.05 | 1.74 | 5.40 | 1.22 | 1.74 | 1.57 | 2.79 | 0.00 | 15.51 |
| Potter | 1.15 | 5.73 | 7.45 | 4.01 | 2.86 | 2.29 | 1.72 | 0.00 | 25.20 |
| Schuylkill | 0.27 | 0.61 | 1.15 | 0.88 | 0.81 | 0.34 | 0.67 | 0.07 | 4.79 |
| Snyder | 2.27 | 1.51 | 1.76 | 1.76 | 1.51 | 2.02 | 2.02 | 0.00 | 12.85 |
| Somerset | 0.26 | 0.26 | 1.03 | 1.16 | 0.39 | 0.26 | 0.51 | 0.13 | 3.99 |
| Sullivan | 6.22 | 9.33 | 40.45 | 7.78 | 14.00 | 6.22 | 12.45 | 0.00 | 96.45 |
| Susquehanna | 0.69 | 1.61 | 3.00 | 2.08 | 1.85 | 0.46 | 1.61 | 0.00 | 11.30 |
| Tioga | 1.91 | 1.67 | 2.38 | 0.95 | 1.91 | 1.19 | 1.67 | 0.00 | 11.67 |
| Union | 2.22 | 1.78 | 1.33 | 1.11 | 1.78 | 1.56 | 1.33 | 0.00 | 11.12 |
| Venango | 0.91 | 1.09 | 3.09 | 0.91 | 1.27 | 1.45 | 1.64 | 0.18 | 10.55 |
| Warren | 1.43 | 1.43 | 2.39 | 1.91 | 1.91 | 0.96 | 1.67 | 0.00 | 11.72 |
| Washington | 0.87 | 0.63 | 1.01 | 0.34 | 0.58 | 0.53 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 4.57 |
| Wayne | 1.70 | 2.08 | 7.00 | 2.08 | 3.03 | 2.27 | 5.11 | 0.00 | 23.29 |
| Wyoming | 3.18 | 1.77 | 4.60 | 1.77 | 3.18 | 1.77 | 1.77 | 0.00 | 18.04 |
| Total | 0.88 | 1.04 | 2.17 | 1.03 | 1.28 | 0.90 | 1.36 | 0.04 | 8.67 |

Source: Data collected from the PADOC and PBPP, supplemented by searches of county websites. \*Data was not available for most program categories for this county.

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While an examination of program capacity in urban counties was not a part of the

mandate of this study, the researchers had available to them the same community program data

for urban counties as for rural, thus allowing them to test the assertion made by the state

corrections officials during the interviews that rural counties have less program capacity than

urban. Table 7 below shows that across the board, the rural counties actually seem to have equal

or even greater program capacity than the urban counties. Thus, this data seems to contradict

that impression held by the state corrections officials interviewed for this study that the rural

counties overall are more challenged in their ability to offer human services to returning

offenders. Once again, it should be noted that the data presented in Tables 5 through 7 do not

account for program quality or the actual ability of returning offenders to take advantage of these

programs. Thus, the state corrections officials may have been reporting on more nuanced aspects

of service capacity within these counties than is indicated by the data in these two tables.

**Table** **7** **-** **Programs** **Per** **Capita** **(rate** **per** **10,000)** **in** **Rural** **and** **Urban** **Counties**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Rural** | **Urban** |
| **Alcohol** **&** **Drug** **Services** | 0.79 | 0.25 |
| **Employment** **&** **Vocational** **Guidance** | 0.93 | 0.28 |
| **Financial** **Aid** **and** **Insurance/Medical** **Assistance** | 1.94 | 0.43 |
| **Food** **Assistance** | 1.13 | 0.28 |
| **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | 0.80 | 0.27 |
| **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | 1.21 | 0.31 |
| **Parenting** **Services** **&** **Education** | 0.04 | 0.04 |
| **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | 7.75 | 2.25 |

Source: Data collected from the PADOC and PBPP, supplemented by searches of county websites.

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The data presented above was gathered primarily from state officials in response to a

question during the interviews about what programs exist in the community for inmates being

released from state custody. In addition, as part of the self-administered survey mailed to county

jail wardens (described earlier), the researchers asked what community services the jails referred

their released inmates to, if any. Appendix B presents the full survey sent to the wardens; the

survey item referred to here was Question 3 in Part 2 of the survey. Table 8 below presents a

summary of the community services that the county wardens report referring their inmates to. It

should be noted that this table does not include those counties that simply did not respond to the

survey at all, nor those counties that did send in a response but did not answer Question 3 in Part

2. Thus, this table represents only those 17 rural county jails that provided some sort of direct

answer to that question. Finally, recall from discussion earlier in this report that Juniata county

closed its jail midway through this study. While they did respond to this survey, their

information is not included in this table since they obviously are no longer in a position to make

any community referrals.

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**Table** **8** **-** **Community** **Services** **to** **Which** **County** **Jails** **Refer** **Released** **Inmates**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **&** **Drugs** **Services** | **Life** **Skills** | **Employment** **&** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance** **/** **Medical**  **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **&** **Education** | **Other** |
| **Adams\*** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |  |
| **Bradford** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **Carbon** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Clinton** | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| **Columbia** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Elk** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| **Greene** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Franklin** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **Lycoming** | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| **Mercer** | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| **Northumberland** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Pike** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| **Schuylkill** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Sullivan** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Tioga** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Warren** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Wayne** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **8** | **1** | **4** | **4** | **1** | **6** | **6** | **16** |

Source: County jail wardens survey

\*Note: Adams county attached an extensive directory of programs available in the multi-county area surrounding Adams County.

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Based upon responses provided by the jails to this question, the researchers grouped their

community referral targets into the eight service categories shown in Table 8. These categories

were used to be congruent as far as possible with the categories of reentry programs discussed

earlier in this section and in the previous section. Note that some counties may offer more than

one program within a given category (e.g. Mercer county reports 4 separate alcohol and drug

services referral targets).

Based upon the column totals, drug and alcohol programs are the most common type of

services to which the jails are referring released inmates. Recall from Table 4 earlier that alcohol

and drug services were also the most common type of reentry program reported to be delivered

*within* the jails. Other common referral targets include employment services, parenting and

mental health. What does seem to stand out from this data is that the county jails report making

relatively few referrals to reentry services in the community. Indeed, the counties that responded

to this question report a mean of only 3 community program to which they make referrals. It

may be that the relatively short-term nature of most county jail stays, and the challenge of

rigorously classifying inmates under these conditions, limits the perceived need or capacity of

the jails to make community service referrals in many cases (Zajac and Kowalski, 2012).

**Fourth Research Goal: Conduct a gap analysis of reentry services available in rural**

**Pennsylvania for successful reentry.**

*Research* *Objective* *4A:* *Identify* *any* *gaps* *that* *exist* *between* *the* *numbers* *of* *prisoners* *returning*

*to* *each* *rural* *county* *and* *service* *capacity* *available* *in* *those* *counties.*

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Table 9 below relates the number of combined state prison and county jail inmates

released to each rural county in 2011 to the number of programs available in each service

category from Table 5 above as well as total number of programs in each county for 2011. This

is expressed as the number of programs per 1000 inmate releases. The year 2011 was chosen as

this is the most recent year for which release data is available, thus providing the most current

snapshot of programs available versus potential need for those programs by released inmates.

The researchers chose to examine to most recent year as a snapshot as opposed to using the

cumulative releases over the five year period of release data available since it is not known how

many of the inmates released in earlier years might still be living in each county. In addition, the

program availability data is current to 2011, thus there is a logical match with the 2011 release

data.

Table 9 below provides some sense of which rural counties are in a stronger position to

provide services to inmates returning to these counties. Unlike Table 6 above which shows

program density across the entire population of each county (i.e. including non-offenders), Table

9 below specifically relates program availability to the number of released inmates, thus allowing

for some conclusions about potential gaps in services for rural released inmates. For alcohol and

drug services, Washington County had the highest density of programs, and Clearfield the

lowest. For employment and vocational services, Washington again had the highest density of

programs, and Franklin the lowest. For financial aid and medical assistance services, Juniata had

the highest density of programs, and Northumberland the lowest. For food assistance, Potter had

the highest density of programs and Lawrence the lowest. For transportation assistance,

Washington had the highest density of programs, and Cambria the lowest. For mental health

services, Washington had the highest density of programs, and Adams the lowest. For parenting

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and family services, Juniata had the highest density of programs, and Clarion the lowest. For sex

offender services, there were so few such programs, and the vast majority of counties (77%) did

not offer any such programs, that comparisons between counties are pointless. Finally, looking

at all categories of community programs combined, Washington had the highest density of

programs, and Adams the lowest. Thus, Washington county appears to be consistently in the

best position in terms of the density of programs per returning inmate, and thus would

presumably be in the best position to provide support services to returning inmates. There is no

clear pattern in terms of which counties have the lowest density of programs across the various

categories.

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**Table** **9** **-** **Program** **Availability** **per** **1000** **State** **and** **County** **Inmates** **Released** **into** **Rural** **Counties** **in** **2011**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **and** **Drugs** **Services** | **Employment** **and** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **and** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Adams | 1.35 | 4.49 | 4.93 | 1.79 | 3.59 | 1.35 | 4.49 | 0.00 | 21.98 |
| Armstrong | 3.77 | 6.60 | 13.21 | 5.66 | 3.77 | 5.66 | 10.38 | 0.00 | 49.06 |
| Bedford | 4.43 | 5.91 | 14.77 | 8.86 | 10.34 | 2.95 | 4.43 | 0.00 | 51.70 |
| Blair | 4.33 | 4.72 | 8.65 | 3.93 | 5.11 | 3.15 | 5.90 | 0.00 | 35.78 |
| Bradford | 4.03 | 6.45 | 8.86 | 4.83 | 5.64 | 4.03 | 4.03 | 0.00 | 37.87 |
| Butler | 3.00 | 3.00 | 4.88 | 8.63 | 3.75 | 2.63 | 5.63 | 0.75 | 32.28 |
| Cambria | 2.03 | 2.61 | 3.19 | 2.32 | 2.61 | 1.74 | 3.19 | 0.58 | 18.27 |
| Carbon | 14.53 | 11.63 | 29.07 | 9.69 | 13.57 | 18.41 | 15.50 | 0.00 | 112.40 |
| Centre | 5.67 | 5.67 | 18.64 | 8.10 | 9.72 | 3.24 | 9.72 | 0.81 | 61.59 |
| Clarion | 4.85 | 6.47 | 4.85 | 17.80 | 4.85 | 3.24 | 1.62 | 0.00 | 43.69 |
| Clearfield | 1.28 | 4.48 | 10.88 | 3.84 | 6.40 | 5.12 | 5.12 | 0.64 | 37.75 |
| Clinton | 4.66 | 3.11 | 4.14 | 3.63 | 4.66 | 2.07 | 3.11 | 0.52 | 25.89 |
| Columbia | 8.99 | 3.27 | 5.72 | 3.27 | 5.72 | 2.45 | 3.27 | 0.00 | 32.71 |
| Crawford | 1.98 | 6.60 | 22.43 | 2.64 | 4.62 | 5.94 | 10.55 | 0.00 | 54.75 |
| Elk | 5.25 | 13.12 | 21.00 | 2.62 | 7.87 | 5.25 | 15.75 | 5.25 | 76.12 |
| Fayette | 13.02 | 23.44 | 33.85 | 18.23 | 18.23 | 13.02 | 10.42 | 0.00 | 130.21 |
| Franklin | 2.13 | 0.00 | 8.53 | 4.62 | 4.97 | 4.62 | 7.82 | 0.00 | 32.68 |
| Greene | 13.12 | 13.12 | 23.62 | 13.12 | 11.81 | 6.56 | 6.56 | 0.00 | 87.93 |
| Huntingdon | 1.70 | 8.49 | 20.37 | 10.19 | 11.88 | 11.88 | 8.49 | 0.00 | 73.01 |
| Indiana | 3.93 | 11.80 | 14.95 | 6.29 | 11.80 | 7.87 | 8.65 | 0.00 | 65.30 |
| Jefferson\* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.00 |  |
| Juniata | 9.49 | 28.48 | 75.95 | 15.82 | 25.32 | 25.32 | 63.29 | 0.00 | 243.67 |
| Lawrence | 2.84 | 5.12 | 7.96 | 0.00 | 7.39 | 1.71 | 3.98 | 0.57 | 29.58 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Alcohol** **and** **Drugs** **Services** | **Employment** **and** **Vocational** **Guidance** | **Financial** **Aid** **&** **Insurance/** **Medical** **Assistance** | **Food** **Assistance** | **Housing** **&** **Transportation** **Assistance** | **Mental** **Health** **Assistance** | **Parenting** **Services** **and** **Education** | **Sex** **Offender** **Programs** | **Total** |
| Lycoming | 5.72 | 4.57 | 11.43 | 4.95 | 9.53 | 6.10 | 14.86 | 0.00 | 57.16 |
| McKean | 2.68 | 10.71 | 14.73 | 2.68 | 6.69 | 12.05 | 4.02 | 0.00 | 53.55 |
| Mercer | 5.49 | 2.99 | 10.47 | 3.99 | 5.99 | 2.99 | 4.49 | 0.50 | 36.91 |
| Mifflin | 1.74 | 2.60 | 18.23 | 3.47 | 5.21 | 6.08 | 13.02 | 0.00 | 50.35 |
| Monroe | 3.16 | 2.46 | 6.68 | 3.16 | 5.27 | 2.46 | 5.98 | 0.00 | 29.17 |
| Montour | 31.69 | 28.17 | 24.65 | 28.17 | 17.61 | 28.17 | 21.13 | 0.00 | 179.58 |
| Northumberland | 3.24 | 5.41 | 2.70 | 4.33 | 6.49 | 2.70 | 5.95 | 0.00 | 30.83 |
| Perry | 3.92 | 9.14 | 15.67 | 6.53 | 9.14 | 5.22 | 6.53 | 0.00 | 56.14 |
| Pike | 2.79 | 4.65 | 14.41 | 3.25 | 4.65 | 4.18 | 7.44 | 0.00 | 41.38 |
| Potter | 8.51 | 42.55 | 55.32 | 29.79 | 21.28 | 17.02 | 12.77 | 0.00 | 187.23 |
| Schuylkill | 2.08 | 4.67 | 8.82 | 6.75 | 6.23 | 2.59 | 5.19 | 0.52 | 36.84 |
| Snyder | 16.16 | 10.77 | 12.57 | 12.57 | 10.77 | 14.36 | 14.36 | 0.00 | 91.56 |
| Somerset | 2.79 | 2.79 | 11.17 | 12.57 | 4.19 | 2.79 | 5.59 | 1.40 | 43.30 |
| Susquehanna | 5.92 | 13.81 | 25.64 | 17.75 | 15.78 | 3.94 | 13.81 | 0.00 | 96.65 |
| Tioga | 15.24 | 13.33 | 19.05 | 7.62 | 15.24 | 9.52 | 13.33 | 0.00 | 93.33 |
| Union | 20.75 | 16.60 | 12.45 | 10.37 | 16.60 | 14.52 | 12.45 | 0.00 | 103.73 |
| Venango | 3.60 | 4.33 | 12.26 | 3.60 | 5.05 | 5.77 | 6.49 | 0.72 | 41.82 |
| Warren | 7.14 | 7.14 | 11.90 | 9.52 | 9.52 | 4.76 | 8.33 | 0.00 | 58.33 |
| Washington | 63.83 | 46.10 | 74.47 | 24.82 | 42.55 | 39.01 | 46.10 | 0.00 | 336.88 |
| Wayne | 14.56 | 17.80 | 59.87 | 17.80 | 25.89 | 19.42 | 43.69 | 0.00 | 199.03 |
| Wyoming | 18.11 | 10.06 | 26.16 | 10.06 | 18.11 | 10.06 | 10.06 | 0.00 | 102.62 |
| Total | 5.13 | 6.10 | 12.66 | 5.82 | 7.23 | 5.26 | 8.07 | 0.24 | 50.51 |

Source: Data runs supplied by PADOC & PBPP; and county jail data compiled by Zajac and Kowalski (2012). See note in methodology.

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*Research* *Objective* *4B:* *Identify* *any* *gaps* *that* *exist* *between* *the* *types* *of* *services* *needed* *by*

*prisoners* *returning* *to* *rural* *areas* *and* *community* *programs* *available* *to* *returning* *prisoners.*

The data presented in Table 9 above may in some sense be seen as artificial, in that not

all released inmates will require assistance in all categories of service. The researchers had no

data about specific services needs of released county jail inmates, and only some data for the

specific needs of released state inmates. Thus, for Table 9 above, the Total column may be the

most revealing, as most released inmates will likely require help in at least some area from social

and human services agencies in the county.

To examine the relationship between available programs in each county and the *specific*

*needs* of released inmates, the researchers were able to use data provided by the PADOC on the

needs of released state inmates in three categories of service. Again, no detailed information

about specific needs of county inmates was available. First, PADOC supplied data on the

number of released state inmates who lacked a high school diploma, and thus presumably would

benefit from continued educational and vocational services upon release. Second, PADOC

supplied data on the number of released inmates who were diagnosed with some sort of mental

disorder while incarcerated, and thus would presumably benefit from ongoing mental health

services after release. Finally, PADOC supplied data on the number of released inmates who

were diagnosed as being potentially substance dependent, which is the highest level of addiction,

and thus presumably would benefit from ongoing drug and alcohol treatment after release.

Table 10 below shows the number of released inmates in 2011 in each category of service

need per the available programs in each category, by county. For example, there were 90 state

inmates released to Adams county in 2011 who lacked a high school degree, and there were 10

85

education/vocational programs listed for that county; thus, there were 9 inmates for each

educational/vocational program in Adams county. It must be noted that this analysis draws

inferences about possible need for services in each of the three categories based upon known

diagnostic information supplied by the PADOC. But, recommendations for ongoing service are

made on a case by case basis, individualized to each client. Thus, the analysis presented here

represents a best estimate at the relationship between specific services needed and services

available in each county. Second, this detailed diagnostic information is available only for state

inmates; no comparable data was available for county jail inmates.

Looking at Table 10, the rural counties varied in the number of released state inmates for

each available community program. As a general rule, effective correctional programs maintain

a ratio of no more than 10 participants for each program/group (Latessa, 2005; Van Voorhis, et

al, 2009). With larger participant ratios, it becomes more difficult to maintain the integrity of

program implementation and client service delivery. With this in mind, the mean ratio across all

rural counties for education/vocational programs is 9, which is ideal. For mental health

programs, the mean ratio is 13, which is close to the ideal of 10 or less. The ratio for alcohol and

drug treatment programs is 22, which is considerably higher than the ideal.

Looking at individual counties, some are in a better position than others to provide

aftercare services to released inmates. Fayette county is in worst situation overall for in terms of

county programs available for specific inmate needs. It would be in the bottom percentiles for

proportional program availability for all three areas of service. It has roughly double the

offenders per program than the average for rural PA for all three areas. Adams county is also has

high ratios of returning inmates with specific needs to programs available in the county. While it

has average availability for educational/vocational programs relative to offenders with less than

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12 years of education, it has the lowest rate of mental health programs for returning inmates in

rural PA and also fares poorly for alcohol/drug programs. Some of the smaller counties, such as

Sullivan, Potter, Juniata, Cameron and Carbon, have much better ratios of returning inmates with

specific service needs to available community programs. This may simply be a function of the

relatively small number of state inmates returning to those counties. Again, the important caveats

to this discussion are (1) that these figures do not account for the needs of returning county jail

inmates (for which no data was available), and (2) non-offenders in these communities are also

presumably competing with released inmates for these services. Thus, the “true” ratios of

returning inmates needing specific services to programs available in rural counties may likely be

higher than those reported in Table 10.

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**Table** **10** **–** **Density** **of** **Programs** **for** **State** **Prison** **Inmates** **Released** **in** **2011** **Needing** **Specific** **Services** **in** **Rural** **Counties**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Education** | | **Mental** **Health** | | **Alcohol** **and** **Drug** **Addiction** | |
| **County** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **<12th** **Grade** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **with** **MH** **Needs** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **with** **Substance** **Abuse** **Problems** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** |
| Adams | 90 | 9 | 85 | 28 | 145 | 48 |
| Armstrong | 13 | 2 | 21 | 4 | 21 | 5 |
| Bedford | 26 | 7 | 35 | 18 | 62 | 21 |
| Blair | 92 | 8 | 86 | 11 | 196 | 18 |
| Bradford | 34 | 4 | 36 | 7 | 79 | 16 |
| Butler | 41 | 5 | 83 | 12 | 127 | 16 |
| Cambria | 36 | 4 | 29 | 5 | 66 | 9 |
| Cameron | 6 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 1 |
| Carbon | 18 | 2 | 27 | 1 | 26 | 2 |
| Centre | 23 | 3 | 35 | 9 | 58 | 8 |
| Clarion | 12 | 3 | 17 | 9 | 31 | 10 |
| Clearfield | 57 | 8 | 92 | 12 | 157 | 79 |
| Clinton | 15 | 3 | 17 | 4 | 30 | 3 |
| Columbia | 17 | 4 | 17 | 6 | 26 | 2 |
| Crawford | 36 | 4 | 43 | 5 | 58 | 19 |
| Elk | 8 | 2 | 13 | 7 | 24 | 12 |
| Fayette | 154 | 17 | 127 | 25 | 258 | 52 |
| Forest | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| Franklin | 86 | - | 97 | 7 | 172 | 29 |
| Fulton | 16 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 26 | 4 |
| Greene | 30 | 3 | 19 | 4 | 45 | 5 |
| Huntingdon | 20 | 4 | 22 | 3 | 47 | 47 |
| Indiana | 23 | 2 | 18 | 2 | 48 | 10 |
| Jefferson | 31 | - | 50 | - | 89 | - |
| Juniata | 6 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 12 | 4 |

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Source: Data runs and other information supplied by PADOC

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Education** | | **Mental** **Health** | | **Alcohol** **and** **Drug** **Addiction** | |
| **County** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **<12th** **Grade** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **with** **MH** **Needs** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** | **#** **of** **Inmates** **with** **Substance** **Abuse** **Problems** | **Ratio** **of** **Inmates** **Needing** **Service** **to** **Community** **Programs** |
| Lawrence | 55 | 6 | 56 | 19 | 80 | 16 |
| Lycoming | 79 | 7 | 117 | 7 | 219 | 15 |
| Mckean | 28 | 4 | 43 | 5 | 53 | 27 |
| Mercer | 39 | 7 | 69 | 12 | 97 | 9 |
| Mifflin | 26 | 9 | 37 | 5 | 72 | 36 |
| Monroe | 67 | 10 | 70 | 10 | 124 | 14 |
| Montour | 7 | 1 | 14 | 2 | 21 | 2 |
| Northum-Berland | 51 | 5 | 59 | 12 | 101 | 17 |
| Perry | 22 | 3 | 27 | 7 | 44 | 15 |
| Pike | 19 | 2 | 27 | 3 | 42 | 7 |
| Potter | 2 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 4 |
| Schuylkill | 77 | 9 | 82 | 16 | 149 | 37 |
| Snyder | 28 | 5 | 34 | 4 | 54 | 6 |
| Somerset | 27 | 14 | 38 | 19 | 72 | 36 |
| Sullivan | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Susquehanna | 13 | 2 | 20 | 10 | 25 | 8 |
| Tioga | 16 | 2 | 15 | 3 | 29 | 4 |
| Union | 27 | 3 | 31 | 4 | 51 | 5 |
| Venango | 50 | 8 | 71 | 9 | 124 | 25 |
| Warren | 28 | 5 | 33 | 8 | 63 | 11 |
| Washington | 63 | 5 | 78 | 7 | 190 | 11 |
| Wayne | 28 | 3 | 42 | 4 | 63 | 7 |
| Wyoming | 20 | 4 | 17 | 3 | 36 | 4 |
| **Total** | 1668 | 9 | 1988 | 13 | 3534 | 22 |

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**CONCLUSIONS**

Reentry is the process of leaving jail or prison and returning to the community (Soloman

et al., 2008). A key component of reentry is the treatment the offender received while

incarcerated. Whether all of the offenders’ risks and needs were addressed during incarceration

significantly influences the offenders’ risk of recidivating (Austin et al., 2002; Burke & Tonry,

2006). The needs that should be addressed during treatment are criminogenic needs, those

factors related to offending which can be changed. There are eight criminogenic risk factors that

contribute to reoffending and thus to reentry outcomes: criminal history, antisocial personality

pattern, procriminal attitudes, social supports for crimes, substance abuse, family/marital

relationships, school/work, and prosocial recreational activities (Andrews & Bonta, 2006).

Programs that are effective work within the context of sound theories of criminal behavior and

evidence-based treatment models. Cognitive-behavioral treatment (CBT) programs are the most

effective in reducing recidivism by focusing on what and how the offender is thinking. Overall,

the two most challenging factors in the reentry equation are employment and housing.

Those offenders reentering rural areas tend to face more challenges compared to

offenders reentering urban areas. Rural areas are limited in their access to vital resources (e.g.

mental health, drug and alcohol services, transportation). Also, rural jails are funded by a

disadvantaged tax base, which leaves the jails with fewer resources to operate, hire and retain

employees, and provide programming (Zajac & Kowalski, 2012; Ruddell & Mays, 2006;

Wodahl, 2006). In Pennsylvania, there are restrictions in both employment and housing that

offenders’ must face upon reentry. Since rural areas often tend to rely on one major economic

source, such as farming, this leaves offenders in rural areas of Pennsylvania at even more of a

disadvantage with the added employment restrictions (Wodahl, 2006). Also, in rural areas,

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housing is a prevailing issue because affordable and quality rental properties are typically

unavailable (Housing Assistance Council, 2003). Therefore, offenders are restricted even more

in finding housing in Pennsylvania with quality housing being unavailable and the added housing

restrictions. Offenders who have committed a sexual offense face even greater challenges in

finding housing and employment in Pennsylvania. In sum, along with the challenges of finding

employment and housing, there are gaps in rural reentry that still need further exploration, such

as transportation, education, and homelessness.

Based upon the findings of this study, rural reentry will continue to be an important issue,

as the projection is for a slight increase over time in the number of inmates returning to rural

areas, especially inmates released from state prisons. Employment, housing, and transportation

emerge from this study as key challenges facing inmates returning to rural areas. The stigma of

the released inmate being an “ex-con” also contributes to difficulties in the areas of employment

and housing, as identified by the state corrections officials interviewed. There are several

restrictions for those with criminal records when trying to obtain employment and housing. For

employment, offenders are restricted from working with children, as well as prohibited to work

as aircraft/airport employees, nursing home worker, private detective, bank employee, and more

(see Appendix D). As for housing, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

has specific protocol for those with criminal records or suspected of conducting criminal activity

in the household which restricts offenders from obtaining housing, including guidelines for when

sex offenders should be prohibited from being given housing. Transportation in rural areas is an

important issue considering the dearth or even complete absence of public transit to aid released

inmates in getting to work, treatment appointments and meetings with their parole agents.

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This study found that social services for released inmates are unevenly distributed

between rural counties, with some counties being in a much better position than others to offer a

variety of human and social services to released inmates. Moreover, this study found that social

services *may* actually be more readily available in rural counties as opposed to urban areas,

although the evidence on this question is mixed. But, released offenders must compete with non-

offenders for community social services that are available. And, much more needs to be learned

about the actual capacity and quality of the programs that are available in rural Pennsylvania.

While there does appear to be a reasonably large number of programs in rural Pennsylvania

targeting needs such as substance abuse, there are very few if any cognitive-behavioral programs

that address key criminogenic needs such as anti-social attitudes (“criminal thinking”) and poor

decision making skills that are common to many offenders. There are also very few specialized

community reentry programs for returning sex offenders. The findings of this study suggest

several directions for public policy, discussed next.

**POLICY** **CONSIDERATIONS**

Based upon the data collected for this study, the researchers offer the following policy

considerations that may inform efforts to enhance reentry for state and county inmates being

released to rural areas of Pennsylvania.

First, one of the most salient themes to emerge from this study is the central role played

by transportation in the reentry experience of rural inmates. While there was some disagreement

between state level corrections officials and county jail wardens over the challenges posed by

transportation, it does appear that limited transportation (especially public transit) does present a

significant obstacle to inmates returning to rural areas, compared to urban areas. Returning

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inmates often do not have their own vehicles, especially when they are first released from prison

or jail. This can be especially acute for returning state inmates, who have typically been

incarcerated for longer periods than county inmates, and thus are more likely to have lost any

transportation resources they might have had prior to incarceration. Returning inmates have a

multitude of needs for transportation - to get to job interviews and jobs, to search for housing, to

attend treatment groups, to access health care (including mental health) and even to make

meetings with their parole agents. Public transit (busses, rail) is less common in rural areas than

in urban, and while cabs may be available, these are more expensive than mass transit. Given the

distances between venues in rural areas, walking is often not an option. Short of relying on

family or friends for rides to necessary appointments and venues, released inmates often have

few transportation options. This problem can be especially an issue for certain classes of

released inmates, such as sex offenders, who may be faced with restrictions on where they can

live, often ruling out residence in the more developed areas of rural counties where social

services and jobs are more available. Transportation, then, can be seen as the linchpin in the

reentry experience, as it ties together so many other elements of successful reintegration.

While the PADOC indicates that it has been making efforts to provide more

transportation for paroled inmates while they live in Community Corrections Centers/Facilities,

this does not help released inmates once they have left those CCC/F’s, nor does this provide any

help to inmates who have maxed out on their sentences and are under no supervision. It is also

unclear that either the PADOC, or the PBPP, have the resources to serve as the "one stop shop"

for the transportation needs of released inmates.

Transportation challenges faced by released inmates are of course embedded within the

larger problem of transportation infrastructure for all citizens living within rural areas. Indeed, a

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recent report by the American Society of Civil Engineers found that 45% of Americans have no

access to public transit of any sort, and that millions more have only limited access13 . This

report can offer no clear answers to the broader transportation challenges facing rural areas.

Clearly, though, any efforts made to enhance general mass transit systems within rural areas will

redound to the benefit of released inmates. Short of that, funding options may be made available

to the PADOC and PBPP to enhance their existing efforts to assist released inmates with

transportation. Families of released inmates can also be made more cognizant during the release

planning process of the importance of assisting their loved ones in getting to their appointments,

but the natural limiter here is the capacity and willingness of the families themselves to help out.

Better efforts may also be made to locate housing for released inmates nearer to centers of

employment and social services within rural counties, but ex-offenders often reside with family

who may themselves be dispersed in more remote areas. Thus, there is also a natural limiter here

to the ability to concentrate released inmates in the areas most convenient to jobs and services.

Clearly, though, transportation emerges as an important issue in the reentry process in

Pennsylvania, and should be included in any policy discussions surrounding reentry.

Second, interviews with state and local corrections officials also suggests that there is a

dearth of mental health services for returning inmates in rural areas. Most notably, interviewees

noted a lack of psychiatrists in these areas, requiring returning inmates with serious mental

illness to travel great distances for intensive mental health services. In addition, aftercare

programs for sex offenders, and support services for family members of returning inmates were

also noted as lacking. Indeed, referring back to Table 5, this study found only 14 programs for

sex offenders in the community across all of the 48 rural counties. Thus, efforts to expand the

13 See: “Engineering group gives nation a “D+” on infrastructure.” Post-Gazette.com March 19, 2013. http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/news/us/engineering-group-gives-nation-a-d-on-infrastructure-679915/

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capacity for community mental health services, sex offender programs, and family support

programs (i.e. counseling programs to assist families in meeting the needs of their returning

loved ones) would promote successful reentry within these rural communities. As with

transportation, it is beyond the scope of this report to suggest how to support the expansion of

such services, but the importance of such services for returning offenders is an important policy

consideration deriving from this study.

Third, this study has documented the almost complete absence of community programs

that directly and rigorously address the key criminogenic needs of offenders, such as antisocial

attitudes and peer associates, decision making and problem solving skills and coping skills. As

noted in the literature review above, attention to these needs is critical to the rehabilitation of

offenders and to the reduction of recidivism. Evidence-based program models attending to such

needs clearly exist, such as the *Thinking* *for* *a* *Change* program discussed earlier, and such

programs are commonly operated in many prison systems, including the PADOC (MacKenzie,

2006). While such programs are offered in some of the Community Corrections Centers and

Contract Facilties operated by the PADOC, these CCC/F's are widely dispered within rural

communities and do not serve all released offenders. As discussed earlier, the PBPP's new

ASCRA initiative may be one mechanism for delivering these services, at least to released

offenders under parole supervision. While the ASCRA initiative has not yet been rigorously

evaluated, expansion of the ASCRA initiative may be a policy consideration worth exploring to

meet these important crimingenic needs of ex-offenders and to build upon these services

delivered while in prison. As also noted earlier, the PADOC is revamping its entire system of

contracted CCF's, which may also become a vehicle for enhancing the provision of evidence-

based services targeting these criminogenic needs. It seems likely that any effort to expand such

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services in the community will require the involvement of the PADOC and PBBP, as well as

county jails and probation departments, as such services by their very nature are of use only to

offender populations. Once again, it is within the scope of this report to strongly suggest the

criticality of such services to the reentry process.

Fourth, on a related point, this study found that there are almost no community-based sex

offender programs in the rural counties. Indeed, only 11 of the 48 rural counties were found to

have any sort of sex offender program, and in most of those counties it was only a single

program. Moreover, most of these “programs” seemed to be simply individual counselors (often

psychologists or social workers) who were listed as providing some sort of services to sex

offender. Thus, there are few offense specific reentry services available to sex offenders

returning to rural Pennsylvania. One option for expanding reentry resources for sex offenders is

the nascent Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) model (Hannem and Petrunik, 2007).

The COSA approach is based on restorative justice principles and employs a network composed

primarily of volunteers guided by a professional counselor that provides support services to

returning sex offenders and establishes behavioral contracts with these offenders to enforce

accountability to agreed-upon standards of behavior. Typically, each COSA “circle” has

between five and ten support members around a given sex offender, with individualized support

services and assistance provided as needed. While COSA has been used more extensively in the

United Kingdom and Canada, it is relatively new to the United States. There is some preliminary

research suggesting that COSA does reduce recidivism rates, but it must be cautioned that while

this approach is promising, it is not yet fully proven (Elliott & Beech, 2012; Wilson, et al, 2009).

But, it may be worth exploring as an option for sex offenders returning to rural Pennsylvania.

The Principal Investigator for the current study (Zajac) is also presently involved with several

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other colleagues from Penn State in a preliminary national evaluation of COSA, funded by the

National Institute of Justice. One of the national COSA evaluation sites is in Lancaster County,

which may serve as a source of information for any efforts to replicate the COSA model in other

Pennsylvania counties14.

Fifth, this study provides evidence that rural county jails currently offer relatively few

reentry services prior to release. These jails should be supported in their efforts to enhance their

capacity to deliver reentry programming to soon-to-be-released inmates. Such programming can

and should include interventions addressing basic habilitative deficits such as job readiness and

life skills (e.g. money management), but must not ignore the underlying thinking errors and poor

decision making and problem skills that are so strongly related to reentry outcomes (Bucklen and

Zajac, 2009; MacKenzie, 2006). It is important that any new jail reentry programs do not simply

replicate approaches that have been found to be ineffective, such as the aforementioned COR

program. Moreover, the new reentry initiatives currently underway within the PADOC, and any

new programs that may be fostered within county jails, should undergo thorough program

evaluation to determine their effectiveness in promoting reintegration and reducing recidivism.

The design and development of effective reentry interventions is an ongoing and iterative

process that must be informed through feedback of knowledge about program performance into

policy and program development and to support organizational learning and planned change

(Zajac and Comfort, 1997; Welsh and Harris, 2012). This is to say that program development is

not a once and done process, and rigorous program evaluation is key to sustaining successful

reentry services.

Sixth, one of the more notable findings of this study is that none of the rural county jails

14 See the following link for more information on Lancaster County’s COSA program: http://www.ccp.org/ccpprograms/circlesofsupport.html

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reported undertaking any sort of populations projections estimations. The county jail

populations projections presented in this report represents only the most rudimentary start to

estimating changes in the population of these jails. Populations projections is an extremely

complex and technical activity. It is reasonable to suggest that the development of a rigorous

projections system is likely to be beyond the resources of any individual small jail. These jails

are not likely to have the in-house staff capacity, or the funds, to create such a system on their

own. The development of a county jail population projections “dashboard” (serving both rural

and urban counties) may be more feasibly supported by a statewide criminal justice planning

agency such as the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Such a dashboard

could show up-to-date projections for admissions, instant population and releases for each

county jail, out to whatever period is desired (e.g. 1 year, 5 years, 10 years) and including

projected inmate demographics. Such an undertaking can be informed and guided by the efforts

made by the PADOC over the past several years in the refinement of its own projections

system15. Another option may be for the rural county jails to collaborate collectively, or at least

regionally, on the development of the overall methodology and architecture for such a

projections system, which can then be tailored to the context of individual jails. It should be

noted that such systems come at some cost, with the PADOC having spent to date in excess of

$60,000 on the ongoing development of its own system16. But, populations projections is a

valuable component of any modern correctional system, given the importance of timely

estimates of population changes for jail and prison policymaking, planning and budgeting.

15 See the following link to the PADOC Key Indicators Dashboard as an example of how a dashboard could be structured: http://www.cor.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/major\_initiatives/21262

16 Communication with Bret Bucklen, Director of the Bureau of Planning, Research and Statistics, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, March 7, 2013.

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Seventh, while the PADOC and PBPP, and to a lesser extent the county jails, currently

make directories of community based services available to returning inmates and their families,

this approach may be less efficient than the evolving PA 2-1-1. PA 2-1-1 is a simple telephone

service that connects callers to information regarding health and human services available in

their community. 2-1-1 can link callers to any of the thousands of community agencies

represented in Table 5 above. 2-1-1 provides access to the following services: basic human

needs (e.g. food banks, clothing, shelters, rent assistance, utility assistance), physical and mental

health resources (e.g. medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups,

counseling, drugs and alcohol intervention, health insurance programs, Medicare and Medicaid),

employment support (e.g. unemployment benefits, financial assistance, job training,

transportation assistance, education programs), support for older Americans and persons with

disabilities (e.g. home health care, adult day care, Meals on Wheels, transportation), support for

children, youth and families (e.g. quality child care, after school programs, Head Start,

mentoring, tutoring, summer camps and recreation programs), and volunteer opportunities and

donations. Nationally, 2-1-1 reaches about 270 million people, covering all 50 states including

the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico (Pennsylvania 2-1-1 Central Region, 2012).

In Pennsylvania, the 2-1-1 program has been activated in 6 out of 7 regions in the state,

with the Northwest region of PA being the only region without a live 2-1-1 call center17. The PA

2-1-1 is administered by a state-wide board of directors. The board has the authority to award

Call Center status to units throughout the state. Most of the active regions are installing services

county by county with the projection that all counties will have 2-1-1 access by the end of 2013.

2-1-1 centers are funded by the following sources: local United Ways, community foundations,

17 The following link provides a map of the 7 call center regions statewide: http://www.pa211central.org/locations.html

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Federal, state, and local government funds. 2-1-1’s goal of providing vital information which

benefits individuals and communities reflects the mission of the 1,400 United Ways nationwide

to improve people’s lives (United Way & AIRS 2-1-1, 2012).

A cost-benefit analysis regarding 2-1-1 was conducted by the University of Texas Ray

Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources in December 2011. They found that when an

individual is looking for information or referral services, the individual tends to have little or no

prior knowledge or experience; therefore, dialing 2-1-1 is much easier compared to other

options, such as a handbook that may be given to ex-offenders. They also found that general

information systems, like 4-1-1, disseminate information that is too general and can have a fee.

A national service, such as 2-1-1, is predicted to provide $1.1 billion in net value nationally over

the next 10 years (United Way & AIRS 2-1-1, 2012).

PA 2-1-1 then affords to released inmates (or anyone in the community) a one stop shop

for information about and referral to a wide variety of community services and programs. It

may be easier to instruct inmates to take advantage of PA 2-1-1 than to expect them to self-

navigate a complex paper directory of community programs, which by its very nature is of

limited value to released inmates with low levels of literacy. Thus, an investment by the state in

the full development and utilization of PA 2-1-1 Direct may be an important advancement in the

reentry process.

Eighth, while the current study has explored rural reentry from a variety of angles, much

more research is needed on this topic. One aspect of this line of inquiry that was not included in

the present study is the exploration of released inmates perceptions of and personal experiences

with return to rural communities. Future research should gather data directly from released and

soon-to-be released inmates, to examine what they report as key challenges and concerns about

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their reentry. Data collection from offenders, especially those in the community, is more

difficult, expensive and time consuming than the work undertaken in this study. But, such

offender-focused research holds the potential to contribute greatly to our understanding of rural

reentry in Pennsylvania. Methodological guidance may be taken from the research on successful

and unsuccessful parolees in (primarily urban) Pennsylvania conducted by Bucklen and Zajac

(2009), albeit with a specific rural focus. Further, as alluded to earlier, several interviewees

noted that some rural counties are much more “rural” than others, and thus pose their own set of

challenges. Future research should take account of the variation not only between rural and

urban counties, but also between rural counties themselves. The category of “rural” may be too

broad to capture all the complexities of prisoner reentry to non–urban areas. This is to say, rural

reentry may fall out into several different typologies of “rural”, each with their own unique

challenges.

Finally, one of the other noteworthy findings of this study is the obstacle that stigma may

play in rural reentry. This was a recurrent themes coming out of the interviews and surveys with

corrections officials. To the extent that released inmates are simply not accepted by others

within their communities, or are viewed as second class citizens, their reentry experience is

jeopardized. It is of course difficult to legislate changes in prevailing attitudes. This report

cannot offer clear guidance on how to overcome the stigmatization of released inmates, but does

note that this may be an important challenge to reentry. Efforts may be made to better prepare

soon-to-be-released inmates on how to respond to challenges and suspicions by members of the

communities to which they return, much as some job readiness programs teach them how to

answer prospective employers' questions about their criminal records by offering candid

disclosure of their past mistakes and emphasizing the contributions that they can make as

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employees and citizens. Public educational campaigns can also be developed to better inform

community members of the contributions they can make to help released inmates succeed and

thus to reduce the risk of future crimes. Offender reentry is a community effort. The benefits of

successful reentry are enjoyed by the entire community, and conversely the costs of failed

reentry are borne by that same community.

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***An*** ***Examination*** ***of*** ***Rural*** ***Prisoner*** ***Reentry*** ***Challenges*** **Interview** **Protocol**

**Date**

**Agency**

**Interviewee** **(Job** **Title)**

**Introduction/Consent**

The purpose of our study is to gain a better understanding of the challenges, issues, programs, and services associated with inmate reentry, especially as it relates to reentry to rural communities. We are conducting this study on behalf of and with support from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, which is a legislative service agency that focuses on issues affecting the rural areas of the Commonwealth.

This interview will involve discussing key reentry topics and issues in terms of how they represent a challenge related to *rural* reentry. Later, we will also ask you to refer us to someone within your agency who can speak with us about the reentry services and programs provided by your agency.

Please note that you do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer, nor reveal any information you do not wish to. Please read the consent form and sign the bottom if you agree to participate.

Before we proceed, do you have any questions?

1

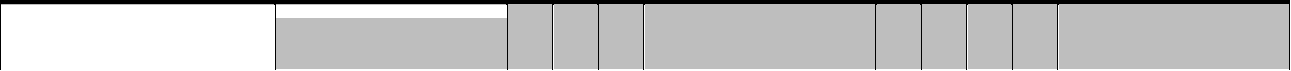
**Part 1: Key Reentry Challenges and Issues**

With each of our questions, please answer based on your experiences as an executive within a criminal justice agency/organization. We are not asking for your own, personal opinions about reentry, but simply the extent to which, based on your position or role, you rate these topics as a challenge or issue to reintegrating the former inmates under your agency’s custody.

1. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate **employment**, overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not an issue or challenge, 5 being a moderately significant issue or challenge, and 10 being a very significant issue or challenge (HAND OUT REMINDER CARD).

- There are also a number of sub-items related to employment. As I read each, please rate the extent to which it is a challenge, using the same scale, and then explain the rating.

2



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employment** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
|  | |  | | | | | | | | |
| ***Overall*** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| *Job* *opportunities* *available* *to* *returning* *inmates* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Wages* *available* *to* *returning* *inmates* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Employer* *receptivity* *to* *hiring* *returning* *inmates* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Employment* *restrictions* *for* *“hard* *to* *place”* *offenders* *(e.g.,* *sex* *offenders)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Job* *training* *provided* *&* *available* *to* *returning* *inmates* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Job* *readiness* *skills* *(i.e.,* *how* *to* *find* *a* *job)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT:)* *What* *is* *the* *single* *greatest* *challenge* *related* *to* *employment* *issues?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *“Soft* *skills”* *of* *employment* *(i.e.,* *how* *to* *keep* *a* *job;* *e.g.,* *punctuality)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *employment* *issues?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *employment?*

2. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate **housing**, overall, on the same 1-10 scale. - Please rate the following sub-items related to housing, and explain the rating.

*(PROMPT:)* *What* *is* *the* *single* *greatest* *challenge* *related* *to* *housing* *issues?*



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Housing** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
|  | |  | | | | | | | | |
| ***Overall*** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| *Housing* *available* *to* *returning* *inmates,* *including* *with* *family* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Cost* *of* *housing* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Housing* *restrictions* *for* *“hard* *to* *place”* *offenders* *(e.g.,* *sex* *offenders)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *housing* *issues?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *housing?*

3

3. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate **family** **support**, overall, on the same 1-10 scale. - Please rate the following sub-items related to family support, and explain the rating.

*(PROMPT:)* *What* *is* *the* *single* *greatest* *challenge* *related* *to* *family* *support* *issues?*



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Family** **Support** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
|  | |  | | | | | | | | |
| ***Overall*** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| *Ability* *and* *willingness* *of* *families* *to* *provide* *support* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Support* *to* *families* *themselves* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Parenting* *duties* *facing* *returning* *inmates* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *family* *support* *issues?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *family* *support?*

4

4. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate deficits in key **life** **skills** on the same 1-10 scale, and then explain your rating.

*(PROMPT:)* *Which* *life* *skills* *represent* *the* *largest* *deficit* *for* *inmates?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Deficits** **in** **Key** **Life** **Skills** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
| *Deficits* *in* *key* *life* *skills* *(e.g.,* *money* *management)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *life* *skills* *issues?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *life* *skills?*

5. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate the availability of **rehabilitative** **programming** (such as treatment services and programs) on the same 1-10 scale, and then explain your rating.

*(PROMPT:)* *Which* *specific* *program* *types* *are* *most* *lacking* *in* *rural* *areas?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Availability** **of** **Rehabilitative** **Programming** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
| *Availability* *of* *treatment* *services* *and* *programs* *in* *rural* *areas* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *rehabilitative* *programming* *issues?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *rehabilitative* *programming?*

5

6. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate the availability of **health** **services**, overall, on the same 1-10 scale.

- Please rate the following sub-items related to health services, and explain the rating.

*(PROMPT:)* *What* *is* *the* *single* *greatest* *challenge* *related* *to* *health* *services?*



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Health** **Services** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
|  | |  | | | | | | | | |
| ***Overall*** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| *Availability* *of* *&* *access* *to* *medical* *health* *services* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Availability* *of* *&* *access* *to* *mental* *health* *services* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Ability* *to* *pay* *for* *health* *services* *in* *rural* *areas* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *health* *services?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *health* *services?*

7. As it relates to rural reentry, please rate **transportation** **availability** on the same 1-10 scale and explain your rating.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Transportation** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
| *Transportation* *availability* *(e.g.,* *to* *access* *to* *needed* *services)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

6

8. There are a number of other criminogenic needs of inmates returning to rural areas. To what extent are the following issues or challenges as they relate to these needs:

*(PROMPT:)* *What* *is* *the* *single* *greatest* *challenge* *related* *to* *criminogenic* *needs?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **Other** **Criminogenic** **Needs** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
| *Thinking errors* *(e.g.,* *antisocial* *attitudes,* *decision* *making/* *problem* *solving)* *&* *emotional* *readiness* *(e.g.,* *coping* *skills)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |
| *Antisocial* *peers* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Please explain: | | | | | | | | | |

*(PROMPT* *2:)* *Are* *there* *any* *important* *differences* *between* *rural* *and* *urban* *reentry* *in* *terms* *of* *these* *criminogenic* *needs?*

*(PROMPT* *3:)* *Do* *you* *have* *any* *other* *comments* *related* *to* *these* *criminogenic* *needs?*

9. Are there any other major challenges or issues in rural reentry that you would rate, using the same scale, as some degree of significance?

- (If so, please explain them and your rating.)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1.** **Not** **An** **Issue/Challenge** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5.** **Moderately** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10.** **Very** **Significant** **Issue/Challenge** |
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7

10. Finally, given all of the issues we’ve discussed related to rural reentry, do you have any specific suggestions or policy recommendations about how to overcome or mitigate these challenges?

Thank you for your time and help with this project; your insight is extremely valuable. Before we leave today, is there anyone else you would recommend we speak with at or outside your agency?

Other recommended interviewees:

8

**Part** **2:** **Reentry** **Programs** **&** **Services** **Provided** **to** **Returning** **Inmates** **in** **General** **and** **in** **Rural** **Areas**

Can you please indicate who within your agency can answer the following questions about specific reentry services and programs that your agency provides to inmates [*these* *questions* *should* *not* *be* *asked* *of* *each* *respondent,* *but* *only* *the* *key* *informant(s)* *designated* *by* *agency* *leadership*].

*(For* *each* *of* *the* *following* *questions,* *prompt:* *Do* *these* *differ* *by* *rural/urban* *setting?)*

1. First, what reentry programs, services, resources, and/or other supports are offered by [NAME AGENCY] to inmates prior to release?

2. What reentry programs, services, resources, and/or other supports are offered by [NAME AGENCY] to inmates after release – such as in Community Corrections Centers?

3. Are there any specific community-based organizations or services that your agency commonly refers released inmates to? PROMPT: COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER, ETC.

- (If so, how are these referrals made?)

4. Are there special reentry programs, services, resources, and/or other supports directed to inmates returning to rural areas in particular?

5. Is your agency developing any new reentry initiatives, specifically focusing on rural reentry?

6. Does your agency have any policies or programs for “hard to place” returning inmates, in terms of both housing and/or employment?

7. Does your agency have any policies or programs targeting employer receptivity to hiring returning inmates?

8. Does your agency have any policies or programs to address issues with transportation?

9

**Wrap-Up**

Finally, we would like to ask if we can have a copy of any reentry manuals, handbooks, community resource directories, or other materials used by agency staff, or supplied to inmates directly, as part of the reentry preparation process, especially if it relates to rural reentry. If you have any materials like this, can we have copies?

Thank you once more and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns, or to provide additional information.

10

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PENNSYLVANIA** **RURAL** **PRISONER** **REENTRY** **CHALLENGES** ***Please*** ***return*** ***in*** ***the*** ***envelope*** ***we*** ***have*** ***provided*** ***by*** ***October*** ***12,*** ***2012***  Name of Your Jail:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **PART** **1:** **KEY** **REENTRY** **CHALLENGES** **AND** **ISSUES** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| With each of our questions, please answer based on your experiences as a rural county jail warden. We are not asking for your own, personal opinions about reentry, but simply the extent to which, based on your position, you rate these topics as a challenge or issue to reintegrating your jail’s inmates. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| For the following reentry topics, please circle the number that reflects how challenging each topic is for inmates leaving your jail, using a scale where:  1 indicates the topic is NOT AN ISSUE/CHALLENGE, 5 indicates that it is MODERATELY SIGNIFICANT ISSUE/CHALLENGE, and 10 indicates that it is VERY SIGNIFICANT ISSUE/CHALLENGE. Note: Some topics may be of equal importance to you, thus it is OK for some topics to receive the same score as other topics. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Rating** **Scale**  (Circle the number that reflects how challenging the topic is for inmates leaving your jail)  **Reentry** **Topic** **NOT** **AN** **ISSUE/CHALLENGE** **MODERATELY** **SIGNIFICANT** **VERY** **SIGNIFICANT** **CHALLENGE** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **1a.** **Employment** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job opportunities available to returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Wages available to returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Employer receptivity to hiring returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Employment restrictions for “hard to place” offenders (e.g., sex offenders) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Job training provided & available to returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| “Soft skills” of employment (i.e., how to find a job, how to keep a job; punctuality) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| **1b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **employment?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | | | |

Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 1

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rating** **Scale**  (Circle the number that reflects how challenging the topic is for inmates leaving your jail)  **Reentry** **Topic** **NOT** **AN** **ISSUE/CHALLENGE** **MODERATELY** **SIGNIFICANT** **VERY** **SIGNIFICANT** **CHALLENGE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **2a.** **Housing** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Availability of housing for returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Cost of housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Housing restrictions for “hard to place” offenders (e.g., sex offenders) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| **2b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **housing?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **3a.** **Family** **Support** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ability of families to provide support | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Support given to families to assist returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Parenting duties facing returning inmates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|  | **3b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **family** **support?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **4a.** **Deficits** **in** **Key** **Life** **Skills** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Deficits in key life skills (e.g. money management, time management) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|  | **4b.** **Which** **life** **skills** **are** **most** **lacking?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | | | |

Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rating** **Scale**  (Circle the number that reflects how challenging the topic is for inmates leaving your jail)  **Reentry** **Topic** **NOT** **AN** **ISSUE/CHALLENGE** **MODERATELY** **SIGNIFICANT** **VERY** **SIGNIFICANT** **CHALLENGE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **5a.** **Availability** **of** **Rehabilitative** **Programming** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Availability of treatment services and programs in your county | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|  | **5b.** **Which** **specific** **program** **types** **are** **most** **lacking** **in** **your** **county?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **5c.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **rehabilitative** **programming?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **6a.** **Health** **Services** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Availability of & access to **medical health** services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Availability of & access to **mental health** services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Ability to pay for health services in rural areas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|  | **6b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **health** **services?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **7a.** **Transportation** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Transportation availability | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|  |  | | | | | | | | | | | |

Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rating** **Scale**  (Circle the number that reflects how challenging the topic is for inmates leaving your jail)  **Reentry** **Topic** **NOT** **AN** **ISSUE/CHALLENGE** **MODERATELY** **SIGNIFICANT** **VERY** **SIGNIFICANT** **CHALLENGE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **7b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **transportation?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **8a.** **Criminogenic** **Needs** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Thinking errors (e.g., antisocial attitudes, decision making/problem solving) & Emotional readiness (e.g., coping skills) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
| Antisocial peers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| **8b.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **comments** **related** **to** **criminogenic** **needs?**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **9.** **If** **there** **are** **any** **other** **major** **challenges** **or** **issues** **in** **rural** **re-entry** **that** **we** **have** **missed,** **please** **list** **them** **and** **your** **rating,** **using** **the** **same** **10-point** **scale.** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| **10.** **Do** **you** **have** **any** **specific** **suggestions** **or** **policy** **recommendations** **about** **how** **to** **overcome** **or** **mitigate** **the** **challenges** **related** **to** **rural** **reentry?** | | | | | | | | | | | |

Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 4

|  |
| --- |
| **PART** **2:** **REENTRY** **PROGRAMS** **&** **SERVICES** **TO** **RETURNING** **INMATES** **IN** **GENERAL** **AND** **IN** **RURAL** **AREAS** |
| 1. If you do population projections, whatare your projected releases, up to five years in the future?  2. What reentry programs, services, resources, and/or other supports are offered by your jail to inmates?  3. Are there any specific community-based organizations or services that your jail commonly refers released inmates to? |

Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 5

4. Is your jail developing any new reentry initiatives to deal with rural reentry issues?



5. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group that we may convene at Penn State todiscuss these issues further?

Yes No

**Other** **Materials**

Finally, we would like to ask if we can have a copy of any reentry manuals, handbooks, or other materials used by jail staff, or supplied to inmates directly, as part of the reentry preparation process. If you are able to, please, include copies with your mailed response, or send electronic files to Gary Zajac at gx3@psu.edu. Thank you for your time and help with this project; your insight is extremely valuable. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns, or to provide additional information.

**THANK** **YOU** **FOR** **PARTICIPATING** **IN** **THIS** **SURVEY!**

Gary Zajac, Ph.D.

Managing Director

814-867-3651

gxz3@psu.edu

**Penn** **State** **Justice** **Center** **for** **Research**

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Justice Center for Research—Pennsylvania Rural Prisoner Reentry Challenges Survey 6

**Legal** **Remedies** **and** **Limitations** **on** **the** **Employment** **of**

**People** **with** **Criminal** **Records** **in** **Pennsylvania**

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**The** **list** **of** **employment** **restrictions** **contained** **in** **this** **paper** **is** **the** **result** **of** **CLS’s** **review** **of** **Pennsylvania** **and** **U.S.** **statutes** **and** **regulations** **as** **of** **June,** **2011.** **However,** **it** **is** **possible** **that** **other** **restrictions** **exist** **that** **have** **not** **come** **to** **our** **attention** **or** **that** **have** **passed** **since** **this** **report** **was** **written.** **We** **invite** **readers** **of** **this** **report** **to** **contact** **Community** **Legal** **Services** **if** **they** **discover** **any** **other** **employment** **restrictions** **not** **reported** **here.**

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**Legal** **Remedies** **and** **Limitations** **on** **the** **Employment** **of** **People** **with** **Criminal** **Records** **in** **Pennsylvania**

**Introduction**

Like most Americans, ex-offenders need to be employed to support themselves and their

families. Moreover, participation in the labor economy is central to most of our identities; our

jobs play a major role in defining who we are. In short, employment is a linchpin to the

successful rehabilitation of ex-offenders and their full and productive participation in society.

Unfortunately, the very existence of any kind of a criminal record is frequently a

significant barrier to being hired for a job, or once hired, keeping the job1. Increasing numbers

of Americans indisputably are passing through the criminal justice system and thus

experiencing this employment barrier. In 2007, more than 7.3 million people, or 3.1% of the

country's adult population, were incarcerated, on probation or on parole in the United States,

constituting one of 31 of U.S. adults. Rising unemployment rates make finding employment

even more difficult for persons with criminal records, often limiting them to low-wage jobs that

offer no future.

The options for ex-offenders who are looking for work are limited. They can try to

clean up their criminal records through expungements or pardons, although these procedures are

severely limited in Pennsylvania. They can attempt to enforce under-utilized legal remedies

that limit the extent to which criminal records can be considered when employment decisions

are made.2 They can try to convince an employer to seek a bond against the risk of theft that the

1 Some employment or licensing restrictions may also apply to individuals who have “founded” or “indicated” reports of child abuse. Although they are civil in nature, “indicated” reports of child abuse often carry some of the same employment consequences as criminal convictions, without the procedural safeguards afforded to persons charged with crimes. Because child abuse reports can affect employment opportunities, a brief discussion of these reports is warranted; please see Appendix A.

2 See Part III of this paper.

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employer fears from employing an ex-offender. Most likely, they do not know of or cannot

utilize any of these options, and their only alternatives are a long, dogged and often repetitive

job search, work in the underground economy, or a return to a life of crime.

This report outlines the impact of criminal records on employment opportunities in

Pennsylvania. In Part I, we discuss the overall legal framework applicable to the employment of

people with criminal records. In Part II, we list occupations in which criminal records must be

considered and which legally prohibit employment of some ex-offenders. In Part III, we discuss

legal rights and remedies for ex-offenders in the employment context.

**I.** **Employer** **Consideration** **of** **Criminal** **Records** **-** **Generally**

In many occupations, federal or state statutes require a criminal background check on

new employment applicants. These laws usually mandate that the report be ordered from the

Pennsylvania State Police (the PSP), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (the FBI), or both.

These laws typically also list offenses or classes of offenses (such as felonies) that prohibit

employment of the person with the criminal record in that field. In other occupations, a similar

statutory mandated screening is done in the licensing process, usually by a State licensing board.

These statutes tend to exist in care-giving and security professions. These laws are discussed in

the next section.

For the vast majority of jobs, however, no such laws exist to control an employer’s

decision about an applicant with a criminal record. In those “unregulated” jobs, employers have

a great deal of discretion whether or not to conduct a background check and hire an ex-offender.

However, there are limits to this discretion, created by federal discrimination law and by state

law that require employers to assess the suitability of the person despite the criminal record.

These statutes are discussed in Part III.

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**II.** **Occupations** **Where** **Certain** **Ex-Offenders** **Are** **Prohibited** **By** **Law** **from** **Employment**

While all employers *may* use job-related criminal records in their hiring decisions, some

employers *must* obtain criminal records and reject candidates with certain convictions. Both

state and federal laws proscribe or restrict the hiring or licensing of individuals with particular

types of convictions in the following professions. Note that these laws only govern convictions,

not arrests that do not lead to convictions. Moreover, juvenile adjudications do not constitute

disqualifying offenses.3

The following are summaries of criminal background restrictions on Pennsylvania

workers in employment or licensing that are created by federal and state law. Ex-offenders

whose employment could be impacted should check into the precise list of crimes prohibited by

statute and regulation and compare it to their criminal history records as reported by the PSP.4

Employers are encouraged to learn the exact provisions of the laws applicable to their jobs, so

that they do not over-exclude persons whose offenses on their criminal records are not

enumerated among the prohibitions.

**Broad Restriction: “Working with Children”**

Recently-enacted restrictions on working with children do not fit neatly into any

particular category listed below, and therefore merit a separate explanation. In late 2006, the

Pennsylvania legislature amended the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) to expand the

prohibitions on employment of individuals working with children. While previously the CPSL

had required background checks and prohibited certain employment of job applicants for schools

and child care, it now applies as well to anyone with a “significant likelihood of regular contact

3 A juvenile adjudication is not a criminal conviction, and it does not impose any civil disability ordinarily resulting from a conviction. 42 Pa. C.S.A. § 6354(a).

4 A PSP record can be order on-line: https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp .

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with children” under his or her “care, supervision, control or training.” While the exact contours

of the coverage of this law are still being determined, examples given by the statute are social

workers, clergy, hospital personnel, mental health professionals, counselors, librarians and

doctors. The definition is arguably overbroad and vague and may be read to apply to an

extremely broad range of professions.5 Persons determined to be covered by this law are

required to obtain both FBI and PSP records, as well as child abuse records.6

The offenses which prohibit employment under the CPSL are as follows:

**May** **not** **hire** individuals with **founded** child abuse reports **within** **last** **five** **years** or with convictions for homicide, aggravated assault, kidnapping, rape, various sex crimes, prostitution felonies, concealing death of child, endangering welfare of child, or pornography **ever**, or for drug felonies **within** **the** **last** **five** **years**

In 2004, the CPSL’s lifetime prohibition on the employment of people with aggravated assault

convictions was determined to violate the Pennsylvania Constitution. Warren County Human

Services v. Sate Civil Service Commission, 844 A.2d 70 (Pa. Commw.), *appeal* *denied*, 863 A.2d

1152 (Pa. 2004). The legislature has not yet modified the statute to make it constitutional by

putting time limits on the lifetime disqualifications. Consequently, the Pennsylvania Department

of Public Welfare has an interim policy permitting employers required to comply with the CPSL

to hire persons with convictions of the enumerated crimes if the following requirements are met.

 The individual has a minimum five year aggregate work history in care dependent services since conviction of the crime or release from prison, whichever is later. Care dependent services include healthcare, elder care, child care, mental health services, mental retardation services, or care of the disabled.

5 23 Pa. C. S. § 6344.2.

6 23 Pa. C.S. § 6344(b).

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 The individual’s work history in care dependent services may not include any incidents of misconduct.7

**Employment Prohibitions**

The following are professions in which employers are legally prohibited by law from

hiring persons with certain offenses.

**Aircraft/Airport** **Employees** (applies to those with direct access to airplanes or secure airport areas and to security screeners)

**May** **not** **hire** individuals convicted of federal hijacking or other air crimes, murder, assault with intent to murder, espionage, treason, sedition, kidnapping, rape, extortion, armed robbery, weapons convictions, distribution (or intent to distribute) a controlled substance, or felonies involving: a threat, willful destruction of property, importation or manufacture of a controlled substance, burglary, theft/fraud, possession or distribution of stolen property, aggravated assault, bribery, or illegal possession of a controlled substance punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of more than **one** year **within** **last** **10** **years.** 49 U.S.C. § 44936; 14 C.F.R. §§ 107.209 and 108.229.

**Armored** **Car** **Crew** **Member**

**May** **not** hire individuals with any conviction that disqualifies them from firearm license or permit. 15 U.S.C. § 5902.

**Bank** **Employee**

**May** **not** **hire** individuals convicted of crimes of dishonesty, breach of trust, or money laundering without prior written consent of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. FDIC has indicated that it considers drug offenses to be crimes of dishonesty.

FDIC may not give consent for a **minimum** **of** **10** **years** for crimes involving bribery /corruption in banking, embezzlement/theft, fraud or false statement in banking or bankruptcy transactions, obstructing the examination of a financial institution, or racketeering. 12 U.S.C. § 1829.

7 This policy is found in DPW Office of Children, Youth and Families Bulletin No. 3490-08-03 (June 27, 2008), at http://www.pccyfs.org/dpw\_ocyfs/Implementation\_Act179(2006)\_Act73(2007)\_amending\_CPSL.pdf .

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**Child** **Care**

**May** **not** **hire** individuals with **founded** child abuse reports **within** **last** **five** **years** or with convictions for homicide, aggravated assault, kidnapping, rape, various sex crimes, prostitution felonies, concealing death of child, endangering welfare of child, or pornography **ever**, or for drug felonies **within** **the** **last** **five** **years.** 23 Pa. C.S. § 6344(c); 55 Pa. Code § 6000.22 (the Child Protective Services Law, or CPSL).

For more on the CPSL, including the unconstitutionality of its lifetime bars on employment and DPW’s interim policy permitting persons with enumerated convictions to be employed, *see* *supra* at pages 6-7.

**Child** **Care** **Workers** **in** **Federal** **Agencies** **or** **Facilities**

**May** **refuse** **employment** for a conviction involving a sex crime, offense involving child victim, drug felony, or any other crime that bears on fitness to work with children. 42 U.S.C. § 13041.

**Employee** **Benefits** **Employee**

**May** **not** **hire** any individual (or assign fiduciary, trustee or officer) with convictions for robbery, burglary, extortion, embezzlement, fraud, theft, bribery, arson, murder, rape, drugs, kidnapping, perjury, assault with intent to kill for **13** **years** **after** **conviction**. 29 U.S.C. §1111.

**Nursing** **Home/Home** **Health** **Care/Other** **Workers** **in** **Long-Term** **Care** **Facilities**

**May** **not** **hire** individuals convicted of homicide, aggravated assault, kidnapping, rape, robbery, burglary, arson, theft (including two misdemeanors), various sex crimes, concealing death of child, endangering welfare of child, pornography, felony drugs **ever.** 35 P.S. § 10225.503(a) (known as the Older Adults Protective Services Act, or OAPSA).

In Nixon v. Commonwealth, 839 A.2d 277 (Pa. 2003), the Pennsylvania Supreme Court held that the lifetime criminal records ban of OAPSA violated the Pennsylvania Constitution as applied to petitioners because it did not provide an opportunity for them to prove their suitability for employment. Efforts are underway to amend OAPSA to reflect this decision. In the meantime, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging has an interim policy permitting people to work if they have an a minimum five year aggregate work history in care dependent services since conviction of the crime or release from prison, whichever is later. http://www.aging.state.pa.us/aging/lib/aging/Nixon\_Letter.pdf

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**Police**

**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of felony or serious misdemeanor. 53 P.S. § 2164(7); see also pages 6-7 regarding restrictions on working with children.

**Port** **Workers** (must have a transportation security card – also known as TWIC -consistent with the following restrictions)

**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of espionage, sedition, treason or federal terrorism crime (or conspiracy to commit any of the above) **ever**.

**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of a crime involving a “transportation security incident,” improper transportation of a hazardous material, unlawful possession, use, sale or manufacture of an explosive device, murder, making a threat of using an explosive or other lethal device against a government facility or transportation system, violation of RICO or conspiracy or attempt regarding any of the above **ever—but** **can** **apply** **for** **a** **waiver** **from** **the** **Transportation** **Security** **Administration** **(TSA).**

**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of a weapons offense, drug offense, crime of dishonesty (not including welfare fraud or writing bad checks), extortion, bribery, smuggling, immigration violations, arson, kidnapping or hostage taking, rape or aggravated sexual assault, assault with intent to kill, robbery, fraudulent entry into a seaport, RICO or conspiracy or attempt of the above **for** **seven** **years** **before** **applying** **for** **transportation** **credentials** **or** **for** **five** **years** **after** **release** **from** **incarceration,** **whichever** **is** **later—but** **can** **apply** **for** **a** **waiver** **from** **TSA.** 46 U.S.C. § 70105(c)(1); 49 C.F.R. § 1572.103.

**Private** **Detective** (including employees of organizations with private detective licenses)

**Must** **refuse** **employment** for a conviction of any felony or of the following crimes: weapons offenses, possessing burglar’s tools, receipt of stolen property, unlawful entry, aiding escape from prison, pick-pocketing, possessing or distributing narcotics, solicitation of sodomy or other lewdness, reckless endangerment, terroristic threats, simple assault. 22 P.S. § 23(a).

**School** **Employees** (public and private schools in Philadelphia)

**Must** **refuse** **employment** for a conviction involving homicide, aggravated assault, stalking, kidnapping, unlawful restraint, luring a child into a structure or vehicle, rape, statutory sexual assault,

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involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, sexual assault, institutional sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual intercourse with an animal, incest, concealing death of a child, endangering welfare of children, dealing in infant children, felony prostitution, obscene materials, corruption of minors, sexual abuse of children, unlawful contact with a minor, sexual exploitation of children, or a felony drug offense **at** **any** **time** preceding employment application. **Must** **refuse** **employment** for convictions for all other felonies for **ten** **years** after expiration of sentence. **Must** **refuse** **employment** for misdemeanors of the first degree for **five** **years** after expiration of sentence. **Must** **refuse** **employment** of individuals convicted of more than one misdemeanor (first degree) charge of DUI for **three** **years** after expiration of sentence.

Public School Code, 24 P.S. § 1-111(e)(these rules also apply to school bus drivers and student teachers); CPSL, 23 Pa. C.S. § 6344(c). For more on the CPSL, including the unconstitutionality of its lifetime bars on employment and DPW’s interim policy permitting persons with enumerated convictions to be employed, *see* *supra* at pages 6-7.

**U.S.** **Government** **Employee**

**May** **not** **hire** individuals convicted of attempting or advocating the overthrow of the U.S. government for **five** **years** following conviction. 18 U.S.C. § 2385.

**Occupational Licenses**

Some occupations and professions require a license and are regulated by licensing

boards created under state statute. The licensing boards are generally given a great deal of

discretion to determine the fitness of individuals applying for licenses or certificates and are

authorized to refuse or revoke licenses where the applicant has been convicted of any felony or

a misdemeanor that relates to the relevant trade, occupation or profession. Many licensing

boards are *required* to consider convictions when making licensing decisions or are even

prohibited from licensing individuals with certain convictions. Ex-offenders considering

training for specific professions should contact the appropriate licensing board to determine

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whether a particular policy or restriction will make a license in that field difficult or impossible

to obtain. The following is a list of licensing boards that may or do consider criminal

convictions in their licensing decisions.

**Accountant**

**May** revoke or suspend license if individual engages in dishonest conduct. 63 P.S. § 9-9.a.

**Architect**

**May** refuse or revoke license for conviction of any felony or crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. § 34.19. A crime of moral turpitude is a crime of dishonesty and includes offenses such as fraud, tax evasion, perjury and similar offenses.

**Auctioneer**

**May** revoke license for conviction for forgery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, any crime of moral turpitude **within** **five** **years** **prior** **to** **issuance** **of** **license.** 63 P.S. § 734.20.

**Barber**

**May** revoke or suspend license if individual engages in dishonest conduct. 63 P.S. § 559.

**Bondsman**

**May** **suspend** **or** **revoke** license if convicted of any criminal offense. 42 Pa. C.S. A. § 4746(b)(3).

**Casino** **employee** **(gaming** **employees)**

License or permit **will** **be** **denied** for felonies and gambling offenses **within** **15-years.**

When evaluating an application after 15 years, the Gaming Control Board will consider:

(1) the nature and duties of the applicant’s position; (2) the nature and seriousness of the offense;

(3) the circumstances under which the offense occurred;

(4) the age of the applicant when the offense was committed; (5) whether the offense was an isolated or repeated incident; (6) evidence of rehabilitation.

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4 Pa. C.S.A. § 1213; 58 Pa. Code § 435a.1(f) and (g).

**Casino** **employee** **(nongaming** **employees)** (do not handle gaming money – includes bartenders, food service, clerical, parking attendants, and janitorial workers)

Registration **may** **be** **denied** for felonies and gambling offenses **within** **15-years.**

When evaluating an application for a registration, the Gaming Control Board will consider:

(1) the nature and duties of the applicant’s position; (2) the nature and seriousness of the offense;

(3) the circumstances under which the offense occurred;

(4) the age of the applicant when the offense was committed; (5) whether the offense was an isolated or repeated incident; (6) evidence of rehabilitation.

4 Pa. C.S.A. § 1213; 58 Pa. Code § 435a.1(g).

**Chiropractor**

Applicant for license must submit evidence that he/she has not been convicted of drug felony **in** **last** **ten** **years.** Board **may** **refuse** **license** if convicted of any felony, or misdemeanor **in** **the** **chiropractic** **profession.** 63 P.S. §§ 625.501, 625.506.

**Dental** **Hygienist**

**May** refuse or revoke license for any felony or crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. § 124.1. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Dentist**

**Must** refuse or revoke license if convicted of any drug felony less than **10** **years** **old.** **May** refuse or revoke license if convicted of any other felony or any crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. §§ 123.1, 124.1. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Employment** **Agent** (applies to license holder only)

**May** refuse license to anyone with conviction for any crime other than traffic violation. 43 P.S. §§ 539(8), 541; 34 Pa. Code § 9.13.

**Engineer,** **Land** **Surveyor,** **Geologist**

License **must** **be** **revoked** (with opportunity to be heard) for any

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drug felony or crime relating to professional field. 63 P.S. §§ 151(g), 157.1(b).

**Funeral** **Director**

**May** refuse license for any crime of moral turpitude, violation of health law, or relating to profession. 63 P.S. § 479.11.

**Horse** **Racing** (applies to anyone employed at horse gambling or race meetings, including vendors and stable workers)

**Must** **refuse** license for conviction of race fixing. **May** **refuse** license for conviction of any crime of moral turpitude, illegal gambling. 58 Pa. Code § 165.35.

**Hunting/Trip** **Permit** **Salesperson**

**May** deny license for conviction of any crime. 67 Pa. Code § 65.3.

**Insurance** **Adjuster**

**May** revoke license for conviction of any felony. 63 P.S. § 1606.

**Medical** **Technician,** **Emergency** **(EMT)**

**May** suspend, revoke or refuse certification for conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude. 35 P.S. § 693(j.1)(1)(xiv). *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Midwives**

**May** **refuse** license for crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. § 172. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Mortgage** **Broker**

**May** deny license for conviction of any felony or misdemeanor. 63 P.S. § 456.06(d).

**Motor** **Vehicle** **Dealer**

**May** **refuse** **or** **revoke** license for any crime of moral turpitude, dishonesty/theft **committed** **as** **a** **dealer** **within** **5** **years** **of** **application.** 63 P.S. § 818.19.

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**Nurse** (Registered Nurse and Licensed Practical Nurse)

**Must** **refuse** license for any drug felony conviction **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years**. **May** **refuse** license for any other felony or crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. §§ 216(c), 224(a)(5)(RNs); 63 P.S. §§ 655, 666(a)(5)(LPNs). *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Occupational** **Therapist**

**Must** **refuse** **or** **may** **revoke** license for any crime found by Board to have a direct bearing on fitness to be an OT. 63 P.S. § 1516. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Optometrist**

**Must** **suspend** license for a drug felony. **May** **revoke** license for any felony or crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. § 244.7. See also pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Osteopath**

**May** **refuse** license for any felony, drug felony, crime of moral turpitude or any crime related to the practice of osteopathic medicine. 63 P.S. §§ 271.14, 271.15. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Pawnbroker**

**Must** **refuse** license for any conviction of engaging in pawnbroking business without license. 63 P.S. § 281-8(a).

**Pharmacist**

**Must** **refuse** license for conviction of any drug felony **in** **the** **last** **10** **years.** **May** **refuse** license for any felony related to the practice of pharmaceuticals, or any crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. §§ 390-3, 390-5.

**Physical** **Therapist/Athletic** **Trainer**

**Must** **refuse** license to individuals convicted of any drug felony **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years.** 63 P.S. § 1306.

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**Physician**

**Must** **refuse** license for any drug felony conviction **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years**. **May** **refuse** license for any other felony or any misdemeanor **relating** **to** **a** **health** **profession.** 63 P.S. §§ 422.22, 422.41. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Physician’s** **Assistant**

**May** **refuse** license for any felony conviction. 63 P.S. § 271.15(b). *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Podiatrist**

**May** **refuse,** **suspend** **or** **revoke** license for conviction in connection with the practice of podiatric medicine or involving moral turpitude. 63 P.S. § 42.16. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Private** **Detective**

**May** **not** **issue** license if convicted of any felony or of the following crimes: weapons offenses, possessing burglar’s tools, receipt of stolen property, unlawful entry, aiding escape from prison, pick-pocketing, possessing or distributing narcotics, solicitation of sodomy or lewdness, reckless endangerment, terroristic threats, simple assault. 22 P.S. § 16(b).

**Psychologist**

**Must** **refuse** license for any drug felony conviction **in** **last** **ten** **years**.

**May** **refuse** license for any other felony or misdemeanor **in** **the** **practice** **of** **psychology.** 63 P.S. §§ 1206, 1208. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Radioactive** **Waste** **Disposal** (applies to facility operators)

**Must** **deny** license for conviction of a first degree misdemeanor or felony **involving** **an** **environmental** **crime** **within** **the** **last** **10** **years.** **May** **deny** license if applicant or applicant’s partner, officer, associate, or agent has engaged in unlawful conduct. 35 P.S. § 7131.502.

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**Real** **Estate** **Appraiser**

**May** refuse certification for any crime substantially related to qualifications, functions, and duties of persons appraising real estate. 63 P.S. § 457.11.

**Real** **Estate** **Broker**

**May** **refuse** license for conviction of any felony or crime of dishonesty. 63 P.S. § 455.604.

**Salesperson** **of** **Game** **of** **Chance**

**May** **not** **issue** **or** renew license for conviction of an felony **in** **the** **last** **five** **years** or any gambling (“Bingo Law”) offense **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years**. 10 P.S. § 317.

**Speech** **Pathologist/Teacher** **of** **the** **Impaired**

**May** **refuse** **or** **revoke** license for conviction of any felony or first or second degree misdemeanor **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years.** 63 P.S. § 1710. *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Social** **Worker**

**Must** **refuse** license for any drug felony conviction **in** **the** **last** **ten** **years**. **May** **refuse** license for any other felony or crime of moral turpitude. 63 P.S. §§ 1909, 1911; 49 Pa. Code § 47.12(2). *See* *also* pages 5-7, regarding new restrictions on working with children.

**Tax** **Assessor**

**May** refuse certification for any crime substantially related to qualifications, functions, and duties of persons developing real property assessment. 63 P.S. § 458.7.

**Taxi** **Driver**

**May** **not** **issue** **medallion** if applicant or officer/director of corporate applicant has any felony conviction **in** **last** **five** **years.** 66 Pa. C.S. § 2408(c).

**Truck** **Drivers** **of** **Hazardous** **Materials** (hazmat endorsements)

**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of espionage, sedition, treason or federal terrorism crime (or conspiracy to commit any of the above) **ever**.

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**May** **not** **employ** if convicted of a crime involving a “transportation security incident,” improper transportation of a hazardous material, unlawful possession, use, sale or manufacture of an explosive device, murder, making a threat of using an explosive or other lethal device against a government facility or transportation system, violation of RICO or conspiracy or attempt regarding any of the above **ever—but** **can** **apply** **for** **a** **waiver** **from** **the** **Transportation** **Security** **Administration** **(TSA).**

**May** **not** **employ** if **felony** conviction for weapons offense, drug offense, crime of dishonesty (not including welfare fraud or writing bad checks), extortion, bribery, smuggling, immigration violations, arson, kidnapping or hostage taking, rape or aggravated sexual assault, assault with intent to kill, robbery, fraudulent entry into a seaport, RICO or conspiracy or attempt of the above **for** **seven** **years** **before** **applying** **for** **transportation** **credentials** **or** **for** **five** **years** **after** **release** **from** **incarceration,** **whichever** **is** **later—but** **can** **apply** **for** **a** **waiver** **from** **TSA.** 49 C.F.R. § 1572.103(a) and (b).

**Vehicle** **Damage** **Appraiser**

**May** **deny** license for conviction of any felony. 63 P.S. § 856.

**Veterinarian**

**Must** refuse license for any drug felony conviction in last ten years. **May** revoke or suspend license for any other felony. 63 P.S. §§ 485.9, 485.21; 49 Pa. Code § 31.11(b).

**III.** **Potential** **Remedies** **for** **Denials** **of** **Employment** **Based** **on** **Criminal** **Records**

Job applicants who are rejected from employment solely because of their criminal

records have several potential remedies, under state law and federal antidiscrimination laws.

**A.** **Pennsylvania** **Law** **Limiting** **Consideration** **of** **Criminal** **Records**

A Pennsylvania statute provides, "Felony and misdemeanor convictions may be

considered by the employer only to the extent to which they relate to the applicant's suitability

for employment in the position for which he has applied.” 18 Pa. C.S. § 9125(b). There has

been almost no guidance under state law on the issue of “suitability” under this law. However, 18

one of the few cases construing this statute has been determined that it means that employers

may ***only*** consider ***felony*** ***and*** ***misdemeanor*** ***convictions.*** Cisco v. United Parcel Services, Inc.,

476 A.2d 1340 (Pa. Super. 1984). Consequently, under this statute, employers may ***not***

consider ***arrest*** ***records,*** ***juvenile*** ***adjudications*** ***and*** ***summary*** ***offense*** ***convictions.***

No administrative agency enforces this law; it must be enforced through filing a lawsuit.

To date, there have been very few lawsuits enforcing this statute, possibly because it does not

provide for attorneys’ fees to a winning plaintiff. However, recent case law in Pennsylvania

indicates that the courts may be sympathetic to a claim by an individual who is otherwise

qualified for a position.8 Moreover, increased attention to and education regarding this statute

may make employers more aware of their legal obligations.

**B.** **Race** **Discrimination** **Claims** **Under** **Title** **VII** **and** **Other** **Antidiscrimination** **Laws**

For African-American and Hispanic ex-offenders, an employment rejection for having a

criminal record may implicate a race discrimination claim under Title VII of the Civil Rights

Act of 1964 ("Title VII").9 This claim is based on a "disparate impact" theory that recognizes

that even unintentional discrimination violates the law where a facially neutral policy

disparately harms minority job seekers and is not required by business necessity. In the

criminal record context, the claim is that because African-Americans and Hispanics are arrested

and convicted in numbers disproportionate to whites, minority job applicants are

disproportionately excluded records.10

8 See, for instance, the Warren County and Nixon decisions, discussed *supra* *at* *6* *&8.*

9 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e- 2000e-17.

10 Judge John J. Fullam notably ruled that an employer violated Title VII when it terminated a white woman because of an old criminal conviction. The judge ruled that even though she was not a member of the protected class, she had been adversely impacted by a discriminatory policy and therefore had standing under Title VII. Field v. Orkin,, No. 00-5913 (E.D. Pa. filed October 30, 2001).

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Legal support for criminal record disparate impact claims dates to the early 1970s, when

the courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which is responsible

for enforcement of Title VII, started to find Title VII violations where there was either a blanket

exclusion of persons with criminal records or a lack of business necessity for such a policy. In

1970, a federal district court found that a policy which automatically disqualified persons who

had arrest records violated Title VII.11 In 1975, a federal appeals court rendered the most

important decision on convictions until recently, ruling that an across-the-board disqualification

based on convictions was invalid.12 Several more rulings followed which found a Title VII

violation for employer use of criminal records.13 These court decisions are synthesized in an

EEOC policy statement issued in 1987 on employer use of criminal convictions records.14

This statement reiterated EEOC's position: that because a policy or practice of excluding

persons from employment on the basis of their conviction records has an adverse impact on

African-Americans and Hispanics, such a policy violates Title VII unless the employer

demonstrates a business necessity for the policy. The policy identified three factors relevant to

the business necessity justification:

(1) The nature and gravity of the offense or offenses;

11 Gregory v. Litton Sys., Inc., 316 F. Supp. 401 (C.D. Cal. 1970), modified on other grounds, 472 F.2d 631 (9th Cir. 1972). Gregory is still considered the leading case on an employer's use of arrest records.

12 Green v. Missouri Pac. R.R. Co., 523 F.2d 1290 (8th Cir. 1975).

13 E.g., Carter v. Gallagher, 452 F.2d 315 (8th Cir. 1971)(brought under 42 U.S.C. Sect. 1981 and 1983); Dozier v. Chupka, 395 F. Supp. 836 (S.D. Ohio 1975); Richardson v. Hotel Corporation of America, 332 F. Supp. 519 (E.D. La. 1971), *aff'd* *mem*., 468 F.2d 951 (5th Cir. 1972); EEOC Decision No. 74-89 (Feb. 12, 1974); EEOC Decision No. 71-2682 (June 28, 1971).

14 “Policy Statement on the Issue of Conviction Records Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (1982)” (Feb. 4, 1987) in II EEOC Compliance Manual § 604.

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(2) The time that has passed since the conviction and/or the completion of the sentence; and

(3) The nature of the job held or sought.15

The EEOC’s most recent policy guidance on employer use of criminal records was a

1990 statement on arrest records, which reaffirmed its 1987 statements on convictions and

concluded that employers will seldom be justified in making employment decisions based on

arrests which did not lead to convictions.16 For evaluating arrests, EEOC added a fourth criteria

to the three established for evaluating convictions: the employer must evaluate the likelihood

that the applicant engaged in the conduct for which he or she was arrested. Under the detailed

analysis set forth by the EEOC in its 1990 Policy Guidance, a blanket exclusion from

employment of persons with arrest records will rarely be justified since the criteria requires

individual assessment of the applicant’s situation.

Claims based on Title VII and criminal history records brought between 1990 and the

present have often been rejected, when they have been brought at all.17 The most recent and

most notable decision on this issue since the 1970s involved a lawsuit challenging the criminal

records policies of Philadelphia’s public transit authority for its paratransit contractors. El v.

15 A subsequent policy issued by EEOC in 1987 discussed the plaintiff’s burden of proving a disparate impact in a criminal conviction charge, indicating that EEOC would apply a presumption of an adverse impact on African-Americans and Hispanics, based on national and regional conviction rates statistics. “Policy Statement on the Use of Statistics in Charges Involving the Exclusion of Individuals with Conviction Records from Employment” (July 29, 1987) in II EEOC Compliance Manual App. 604-B.

16 Policy Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (1982)” (Sept. 7, 1990) in EEOC Compliance Manual § 604.

17 *See,* *e.g*., Matthews v. Runyon, 860 F. Supp. 1347 (E.D. Wis. 1994) (summary judgment against plaintiff for failing to establish a prima facie case); Lewis v. Alabama Dept. of Public Safety, 831 F. Supp. 824 (M.D. Ala. 1993) (dismissal on plaintiff’s inadequate statistical showing); Williams v. Carson Pirie Scott, No. 92 C 5747, 1992 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 13643 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 9, 1992) (finding that defendant established business necessity to fire employee from “collector” position); Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Carolina Freight Carriers Corp., 723 F. Supp. 734 (S.D. Fla. 1989) (both rejecting plaintiff’s prima facie case and finding business necessity); Moses v. Browning-Feris Industries of Kansas City, No. 84-2334-S (D. Kan. Sept. 22, 1986) (finding for defendant after trial on grounds that the policy of rejecting applicants for position of garbage collector who were convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude was justified by business necessity). One notable exception is Field v. Orkin, No. 00-5913 (E.D. Pa., October 30, 2001), discussed *supra* note 10.

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Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, 479 F.3d 232 (3d. Cir. 2007). Although

the Third Circuit rule against the plaintiff, it did so because of the plaintiff’s failure to submit

evidence to rebut the defendant’s expert on recidivism, not because people with criminal

records lack entitlement to legal protections in the employment context. The court did not

endorse the EEOC guidance on convictions, concluding that it was not entitled to deference. Id.

at 244. However, ***it*** ***did*** ***mandate*** ***that*** ***criminal*** ***records*** ***policies*** ***“accurately*** ***distinguish***

***between*** ***applicants*** ***that*** ***pose*** ***an*** ***unacceptable*** ***level*** ***of*** ***risk*** ***and*** ***those*** ***that*** ***do*** ***not.”*** Id. at 245.

Describing the application of its test, the court distinguished between applicants who pose

“minimal level of risk” and those who do not. Id. at 245 n. 13 & 14. The court indicated that

business necessity case law requires “some level of empirical proof that challenged hiring

criteria accurately predicted job performance.” Id. at 240.

The El decision, then, presents several lessons. (1) Employers may refuse to hire some

persons with criminal records, despite the racially disparate impact. (2) However, to avoid

violating Title VII, they must carefully craft their criminal record exclusionary policies, based

on empirical evidence as to whether a person with a criminal record presents more than a

minimal risk.

Given the solid legal foundation that these actions have in the EEOC guidances and case

law, as well as the increased attention that is being paid to the employment barriers faced by ex-

offenders, race discrimination claims under Title VII may become a more viable remedy for

individuals with criminal records who are being unfairly barred from employment. In order to

enforce Title VII rights, claims must be filed with a regional office of the EEOC within 300

days of the date of the violation of rights.

22

Moreover, other antidiscrimination agencies in Pennsylvania also recognize that

disparate impact claims for rejecting people with criminal records arise under the statutes that

they enforce. In January 2010, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (“PHRC”)

sought public comment on a proposed policy guidance on this issue. While the PHRC has not

adopted or declined to adopt this policy guidance to date, it has accepted and investigated race

discrimination charges for people with criminal records under the Pennsylvania Human

Relations Act. Similarly, we understand that the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations

would accept such charges as arising under the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance.

**C.** **Philadelphia** **“Ban** **the** **Box”** **Ordinance**

On April 13, 2011, the City of Philadelphia enacted Chapter 9-3500 of the Philadelphia

Code, the “Fair Criminal Record Screening Standards.” This ordinance is often known as the

“ban the box” law. It applies to private employers that employ ten or more persons within the

City of Philadelphia,18 in addition to the City of Philadelphia itself.

The ordinance contains two important substantive provisions.

(1) Employers may not “knowingly and intentionally make any inquiry about or …

take any adverse action against any person on the basis of any arrest or criminal accusation

made against such person, which is not then pending against that person and which did not

result in a conviction.”19

(2) Employers may not ask job applicants to disclose criminal convictions during the

application process, or before the conclusion of the first interview.20

Employers are exempted from the ordinance if their actions are authorized by any other

applicable law, or they are criminal justice agencies.21

18 Section 9-3502(9). 19 Section 9-3503(1). 20 Section 9-3504.

21 Section 9-3505.

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Employers that violate the ordinance are subject to a fine. As this is written,

enforcement responsibility for the ordinance has not yet been delegated by the Mayor.

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**APPENDIX A--CHILD ABUSE REPORTS**

Some employment or licensing restrictions may also apply to individuals who have

“founded” or “indicated” reports of child abuse or neglect. Although they are civil in nature,

“indicated” reports of child abuse often carry some of the same employment consequences as

criminal convictions, without the procedural safeguards afforded to persons charged with crimes.

Because child abuse reports can affect employment opportunities, a brief discussion of these reports

is warranted.

Under the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), 23 Pa.C.S. §6301 et. seq., local child

protective service agencies throughout Pennsylvania are required to investigate reports of suspected

child abuse or neglect. These reports of suspected abuse originate from a variety of sources:

neighbors, teachers, doctors, hospital social workers, family members, even the children

themselves. Investigative social workers are supposed to interview witnesses and review any

available medical documentation in making a determination as to whether or not the report is

substantiated. If not substantiated, the social workers mark the reports as “unfounded” and the

reports are eventually expunged. “Founded” reports are those in which a court has made an

adjudication of child abuse. Court adjudications theoretically can be appealed to a higher court.

The CPSL prohibits the employment of individuals who have “founded” child abuse reports within

the five years preceding applications from jobs in child care and schools.

Reports are “indicated” when the investigating child protective services agency determines

that there is “substantial evidence” of abuse or neglect. In our experience, many “indicated” reports

of child abuse involve incidents that do not rise to the level of child abuse under the law–such as

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purely accidental injuries, fights between siblings, or the lawful infliction of corporal punishment

that does not result in severe pain. These reports are not subject to any judicial oversight or due

process protection unless appealed in a timely manner. Under Pennsylvania statute, reports made

after July 1, 1995, must be appealed within 45 days of notification of the indicated status of the

report.22 **However,** **because** **the** **notice** **that** **used** **to** **be** **sent** **to** **individuals** **placed** **on** **the** **Child**

**Abuse** **and** **Neglect** **Registry** **was** **deemed** **by** **the** **Commonwealth** **Court** **of** **Pennsylvania** **to** **be**

**defective,** **individuals** **may** **still** **be** **able** **to** **appeal** **their** **indicated** **reports** **even** **beyond** **the** **45-**

**day** **deadline.** **If** **the** **date** **of** **the** **report** **is** **prior** **to** **September 12, 2008,** **the** **deadline** **will** **be**

**waived** **and** **individuals** **can** **still** **request** **to** **have** **their** **report** **expunged.**

The Department of Public Welfare is in the process of revising this notice, and the 45-day

deadline will be in effect again once that process is completed.

Many individuals do not receive the notification, do not understand it, or do not recognize its

significance when they do receive it. Expungement requests made after the 45-day deadline are

automatically denied, and it is extremely difficult to get the deadline lifted without very good cause

for missing the appeal deadline. Failing to receive notification without extenuating circumstances is

not generally accepted as good cause. Consequently, a permanent barrier to certain types of

employment is thus created.

Even though no statute prohibits the employment of persons with “indicated” reports of

child abuse in any field that we are aware of, these reports regularly preclude people’s employment

or impede their ability to get a license in many professions, such as those related to children or

medical professions. As discussed on page 5 of this report, recent legislation has expanded

22 Indicated reports made before July 1, 1995, are appealable at any time. 26

employment restrictions contained in the CPSL for individuals seeking to work with children. We

recommend that individuals ascertain that they are not the subject of any indicated or founded child

abuse reports before attempting to get a license or enrolling in costly and time-consuming

vocational training or education. They can do so by calling or writing the child abuse registry as

follows:

Terry Clark, Director Childline & Abuse Registry Department of Public Welfare

Office of Children, Youth and Families P.O. Box 8170

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8170 (717) 783-6211

We further recommend that they contact the relevant licensing boards to find out whether a

child abuse report might affect their ability to get a license. In the event that a report exists that may

affect employment or licensing, a local legal services organization or a private attorney may be able

to assist individuals in getting their records cleared.

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