

## FACILITY REENTRY PROGRAMMING

### Introduction to Offender Reentry Services

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) offers a range of transitional programming to offenders during confinement and in the community. Many of these resources are organized under the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP), a collaborative effort involving the DOC and other state agencies, county agencies, faith groups, community organizations, and private citizens.

This Backgrounder describes some resources available to offenders in DOC facilities. These resources have been developed through identifying “best practice” models in preparing offenders to return to their communities.

### Staffing

Under MCORP, the DOC has committed specific staff positions at most facilities to assure integrity and continuity of reentry services. All facilities with a significant number of releases have an assigned transition program coordinator to facilitate reentry resources. These coordinators are managed and supported by a central reentry team.

### Resource Centers

Each DOC facility maintains a reentry resource center that includes written and electronic directories of community resources statewide, job

search assistance, family reunification information, housing information, etc. Access to these centers is available to all general population offenders.

### Resource Fairs

Transition resource fairs are held annually at most facilities. Community resource organizations and agencies from around the state are invited to participate as exhibitors. Exhibitors typically are government agencies, trade unions, faith-based groups, community nonprofits, and volunteer groups. They represent resources in a variety of offender need areas such as housing, employment, family support, personal finance, and mental health. Staff and offenders are invited to attend and meet with exhibitors throughout the day.

### Prerelease Classes

A three-day curriculum of prerelease classes and activities is offered at all DOC facilities. The curriculum covers housing, employment, personal identification (ID) documents, health, transportation, family issues, living under supervision, and personal financial management. A prerelease handbook covering these topics is provided to every participating offender. This handbook is also available at [www.doc.state.mn.us/publications/documents/prereleasehandbook.pdf](http://www.doc.state.mn.us/publications/documents/prereleasehandbook.pdf).

### Child Support

To provide accurate and efficient child support information to DOC staff, counties, the Department of Human Services (DHS), offenders, and their families, the DOC has established a child support staff position. This staff works primarily with newly-admitted offenders but is available to provide information and assistance to staff and offenders at all DOC facilities and at all stages of confinement.

### EMPLOY Program

MINNCOR, the DOC’s prison industry program, created EMPLOY in 2006. Eligible participants have either worked in a MINNCOR shop for six months or longer or completed a vocational education program. EMPLOY provides employment readiness, job search techniques, and resume enhancement to offenders prior to release. A major focus of EMPLOY is to provide relevant, solid job leads for releasing offenders. In an effort to break through employment barriers, EMPLOY actively seeks relationships with employers willing to hire individuals with criminal records.

A job retention specialist meets with participants within the first two weeks of release to deliver the participant’s personal portfolio, review the contents, and provide contracts to community resources. Subsequent meetings are scheduled at one month, six months and a final meeting at one year.

---

## Personal ID Documents

Possession of personal ID documents is critical to every newly-released offender. Most offenders do not have these documents when they are admitted to the DOC.

To assure that as many offenders as possible have ID at release, DOC staff work with newly-admitted offenders to apply for two critical ID documents – a birth certificate and social security card. Application mailing costs are covered by the DOC, and fees for birth certificate applications are paid with offender phone revenues. Once these documents are obtained, they are retained in the offender's file until the day of release.

Initial attempts to obtain a social security card or birth certificate may not be successful. As part of individual release planning and prerelease classes, efforts to obtain these documents are renewed.

The DOC and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) have partnered to provide photo ID equipment at most DOC facilities, allowing offenders to secure state photo ID cards or driver license renewals close to their release date. Staff from various local DPS driver services offices come to the facilities as needed and provide this service. The ID card or driver license is then mailed to the facility for retention until the offender's release.

## Health Services Discharge Planning

The DOC Health Services Unit provides specialty release and reintegration services related to medical, mental health, chemical dependency, and sex offender needs.

Medical staff identify soon-to-be-released offenders with unique

medical care needs and refer them to the medical release planner for continuing medical care. Behavioral health staff offer release planning services to severely mentally ill offenders and as a component of the chemical dependency and sex offender treatment programs. Continued clinical services form the foundation for a comprehensive behavioral health reintegration plan. Also included in the plan are placement in specialized housing, work or education involvement, and family/friends participation in the offender's community reintegration. All planning is in conjunction with the requirements of correctional supervision.

## Health Care Coverage

Many offenders do not have health care coverage in the community for themselves or their families. To address this issue, the DHS has provided training to all DOC facility caseworkers on applying for state-subsidized health care plans for low-income individuals and families. Written application information is provided to offenders. Upon request, staff assist offenders in applying for health care coverage.

The DHS has also developed policy to provide consistency in the way county workers process applications.

---

## Introduction to Juvenile Reentry Services

The DOC provides services for juvenile males and females. Currently state-committed juvenile females are housed at a contract facility; juvenile males are housed at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Red Wing. The DOC is vested in juvenile reentry to

enhance positive and pro-social transition into adulthood.

The Red Wing facility provides treatment, education, and transition services for serious and chronic male juvenile offenders. Through early assessment, transition risks and needs are identified during the resident's first 30 days.

Reentry needs are then addressed with the advancement and progression of the resident's individualized treatment plan. Residents are assessed through standardized tools such as the Youth Level of Services Inventory and given various evaluations to measure their knowledge of independent life skills. Components of prerelease include support team staffings, furloughs, life skills, employment and parenting classes. Youth who have successfully completed programming will be supervised on a 90-day extended furlough.

Juvenile Reentry Services staff utilize and establish collaborations with various agencies and community stakeholders to remove barriers to employment, education, health and mental health care.

August 2008

---

Minnesota Department of Corrections  
1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-5219  
651/361-7200  
TTY 800/627-3529  
www.doc.state.mn.us

