




**PITFALLS &
PERSEVERANCE**
THE JOURNEY OF A REENTRANT

WHAT IS REENTRY?

Reentry refers to the *transition* from incarceration back into the community.

Although focusing on the reintegration back into the community, reentry starts upon remand.

Alaska Department of Corrections (ADOC) and its many partners strive to take a holistic approach to reentry focusing on many facets that can affect an individual's success upon release;

- ❖ Relationships with friends, family and peers
 - ❖ Financial stability (EX: budgeting, credit score help, child support)
 - ❖ Transportation
 - ❖ Housing
 - ❖ Employment
 - ❖ Access to behavioral health services
- 

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

ALARMING DEMOGRAPHICS

- Minorities overrepresented
- Increase in nonviolent offenders (serving more time)
- Increase in female and elderly prisoners
- Increase in pretrial offenders

CURRENT 2017 COSTS

	Yearly	Daily
Institutions (Hard Beds)	\$54,611.30	\$149.62
Community Residential Centers (Soft Beds)	\$38,416.25	\$105.25
Electronic Monitoring	\$8,073.80	\$22.12
Probation & Parole	\$3,423.70	\$9.38

System cannot sustain as is:

Over capacity prison system

Displaced Alaska Natives

Need for increased access to treatment and services

Need for more effective individualized case management

WHAT DRIVES RECIDIVISM?

Front End:

- ❖ Low-risk individuals learn anti-social behaviors off higher-risk individuals
- ❖ The longer low-risk defendants are detained before trial, the more likely they are to commit a new crime within two years of disposition

Back End:


- ❖ Unmatched treatment and supervision needs of individuals
- ❖ Release plan not developed through evidence-based practices.
- ❖ Referrals for community made post-release

HOUSING

Reentrants struggle to find housing for many reasons:

- ❖ Stigma of being an “ex-offender”
- ❖ Federal or State programs that prohibit individuals with a criminal conviction from receiving assistance
- ❖ Limited affordable housing
- ❖ Housing that meets requirements of Probation/Parole Officers (Ex: safe, no victims, no alcohol/drugs, no minors).

Housing options for reentrants (not exhaustive):

- ❖ Permanent supportive housing
 - ❖ Transitional housing
 - ❖ Long-term residential housing programs for treatment related issues
 - ❖ Private landlords
 - ❖ Homeless shelters
- 

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation: “Returning Home” Program

The voucher program includes housing in areas across Alaska; Anchorage, Fairbanks,

Homer, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Petersburg, Sitka, Soldotna, Valdez, Wasilla and Wrangell.

- Annual cost of Returning Home Voucher: **\$8,400 vs \$54,611.30** (hard bed)

The Partners Reentry Center in Anchorage, Alaska has established relationships with over 126 landlords that will rent to reentrants;

Housing Assistance (Since August 2013)

Temporary/Transitional Housing Placements: **1,725**

Long-term housing placements (at least 48 with children): **179**

Assistance to Avoid Eviction (50 with children): **159**

TOTAL Re-entrants housed since opening August 2013 **2,063**

EMPLOYMENT

ADOC has work release and vocational work release programs. These benefit everyone involved; inmates get a chance to learn new skills, interact with outside community members, pay off fines, restitution and child support and start saving money towards their release. Employers get a determined, skilled worker who shows up on time and is accountable daily for their actions:

ADOC Vocational Work Release Programs include partnerships with Dan's Automotive, NAPA, Lee's Heavy Equipment Repair and Everything Bagels

ADOC Apprenticeship programs (examples):

- Barber
 - Culinary
 - Electrical
 - Welding
 - HVAC
 - Carpentry
- 

EMPLOYMENT

Within the Community, many agencies help reentrants obtain employment:

- ❖ **Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)** works directly with Department of Corrections in order to assist transitioning individuals with resume assistance, mock interviews and job search skills.
- ❖ **Partners Reentry Center (PRC)** has utilized over 755 employers statewide to hire reentrants
- ❖ **Downtown Hope Center** offers culinary and baking apprenticeship programs
- ❖ **Cook Inlet Tribal Council, NineStar, DOLWD, PRC** and others have job labs where reentrants can receive employment assistance
- ❖ DOLWD offers tax credits and bonding to employers that hire reentrants.
- ❖ In June 2017, Alaska Economic Trends published an article that cited some interesting factors when considering employment and recidivism rates; reentrants had a higher chance of staying out if they found employment quickly, kept the job for at least a year and earned more than \$25,000 annually.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Access to Behavioral Health Services is vital for an individual's success upon release.

These services are broad and include such things as mental health treatment, substance abuse programs, parenting classes and cognitive behavioral therapy.

Key to an individual's success upon release is the transition plan; are appointments set and confirmed, does the individual have reminders in place, are records following the individual, will they have transport for their appointments?

Main points:

- Medicaid and other eligibility applications; are they eligible for these programs and have they applied prerelease? **Prerelease is vital for reentry efforts**; setting things up prior to release so individuals can smoothly transition without waitlists, application periods and other barriers relevant for services (collateral information, funding, transport, etc).
- Coordination of Care is vital between the ADOC and outside community partners; referrals for assessments, continuation of treatment programs and requirements of supervision
- ADOC partners with outside service agencies to help provide supportive services and other programming to include (not exhaustive): treatment programs, peer groups, case management services, MRT and parenting

HOW TO HELP

- ❖ Learn and understand the struggles (YOU being here is great start!)
- ❖ Help break down the barriers; consider hiring a reentrant, housing an individual, donate to programs for bus passes and vouchers for needs
- ❖ Donate clothing, food and other household items
- ❖ Mentor an inmate or transitioning individual
- ❖ Talk about REENTRY! These folks are getting out- it is up to US in how we accept them back into our communities