

PNO Briefing Paper: Federal Agencies

Throughout the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations the federal government actively supported research and the development of reentry programs, particularly at the state and local level. President Bush signed the Second Chance Act which provided grants for adult and juvenile reentry programs to state and local agencies in 2007.

Federal agencies involved in reentry include the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance and programs within the Department of Labor and Department of Education. Since 2011, federal activities were coordinated among more than 28 agencies by the Federal Interagency Reentry Council. This Briefing Paper identifies some of the federal Agencies engaged in reentry, reentry programs and grant making and the resources they provide.

SOME OF THE FEDERAL AGENCIES ENGAGED IN REENTRY, REENTRY PROGRAMS AND GRANT MAKING:

The [Federal Interagency Reentry Council](#), initiated in 2011 and active through the end of the Obama administration, ultimately involved [representatives from more than 28 agencies](#). The Council's role in the Trump administration has yet to be defined. PNO maintains communications with the Council's key staff. The National Institute of Justice provides [a succinct description](#) of the Council.

United States Department of Justice - Office of Justice Programs - [Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\)](#) is the grant-making and resource agency supporting corrections and reentry programs at the national and state level. Many reentry-related and Second Chance Act functions are farmed out to the Council of State Governments; BJA's web page does not even identify "reentry" as a stand-alone topic. The site is searchable and will yield numerous reports and grand documents. The site has not been updated since the end of the Obama administration. (June 2017)

The independent [National Institute of Corrections](#) (NIC) funded an early initiative designed to inform and improve reentry at the state and local level. NIC sponsored two initiatives, developing two program models summarized in lengthy, detailed handbooks: the [Transition from Jails to Community Model](#) ("TJC") released in August 2008; and, the [Transition from Prisons to Community Model](#) ("TPC") released in 2010. Neither publication nor the NIC's work addresses the specifics of reentry in the federal system.

The NIC has also formed a [Federal Offenders Reentry Group](#) ("FORGe"), the goal of which is to "To improve public safety and opportunities for successful community reintegration for individuals involved with the federal criminal justice system." The NIC's Community Services Division engages in ["Transition and Offender Workforce Development,"](#) efforts the NIC says are coordinated with other agencies to improve employment programs for individuals in and returning from federal, state and local corrections.

The United States Department of Labor's [Reintegration of Ex-Offenders – the Adult Program](#) focuses on employment-centered programs supported by federal grants. The Department's [grant](#)

[making](#) includes employment-related reentry projects and programs. The application period for reentry-related 2017 grants appears to have ended (June 2017).

During the Obama administration the United States Department of Education sponsored [research in the area of training and education for inmates](#). While funding for secondary education for prisoners almost ended with their exclusion from Pell Grants, still roughly 240,000 or 10% of nearly 2.5 million participants in adult education report themselves to be prisoners or jail inmates. The Department renewed efforts to provide assistance for inmates seeking educational opportunities with the [award of several pilot grants](#) from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education.

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