

## PNO Briefing Paper: National Resources

The concept of “reentry” entered into the thinking and actions of academics, policymakers, advocates and justice and corrections professionals in the late 1990’s. A number of nationally-based agencies and organizations took the lead in program development and in removing barriers to employment, housing and social integration for individuals leaving jails and prisons. Many of these organizations are still active in reentry. A number have published reports and evaluations and issued recommendations and guidelines, some more current or comprehensive than others. This PNO Briefing Sheet describes the information available from many national organizations including on-line bibliographies and reference materials. (Federal agencies active in reentry are described in a separate PNO Briefing Paper available on PNO’s RESOURCE web page.)

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WHICH PROVIDE INFORMATION, HAVE ENGAGED IN REENTRY PROGRAM DESIGN, OR ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED REENTRY SERVICES.

[National Reentry Resource Center](#) (NRRC) of the Council of State Governments, sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, United States Department of Justice, is a major resource for news, webinars, information about the Second Chance Act, announcements of federal grants [publications on a wide range of reentry topics](#). The NRRC’s website probably provides the best introduction to reentry programs, research, evaluations, grants and news.

The Resource Center maintains a [comprehensive list of evaluations](#) of a wide range of reentry programs with color-coded ratings showing the relative value of many programs in reducing recidivism or improving employability. A significant number of programs were found to have marginal impacts on the criteria by which they were evaluated.

The [Urban Institute](#) and its [researchers](#), notably Nancy LaVigne, published many of the key early reports on reentry in the 2000’s. More recently the Institute has been a key collaborator in the federally-funded Justice Reinvestment Initiative. It still maintains a [library of many of its early reports](#) and while the Institute is less active in reentry than in its past, it recently concluded a [project focused on fatherhood and reentry](#).

The [Vera Institute of Justice](#) has been an historical leader in alternatives to jail and prison and in reentry for returning citizens. The Institute’s [more recent projects](#) focused on reducing barriers to living in public housing and demonstrating the value of providing post-secondary education in prisons. Both topics are the subject of reports and updating news clips maintained on the site.

As a source of current information and developments in reentry, [Reentry Central](#) is a key on-line publication. Focused almost exclusively on reentry issues, it describes itself as the “National Website on Reentry” and frequently picks up on interesting and topical publications, research and activities throughout the country. (Subscription required for access beyond the front page.)

The [National Employment Law Project \(NELP\)](#) advocates for a \$15/hour minimum wage and protection of state labor laws. But NELP is also the place to turn to for guidance in dealing with legal barriers to employment for persons convicted of crimes. It is home to some of the nation’s [leading advocates on employment-related reentry issues](#) and leads a [national campaign](#) to ensure



that people with convictions have a fair chance to work, centered around the “Ban the Box” movement.

The [National H. I. R. E. Network](#) (National Helping Individuals with criminal records Re-enter through Employment) was established in 2001 as a special project at the [Legal Action Center](#). The Network’s goal is to increase the number and quality of job opportunities available to people with criminal records by changing public policies, employment practices and public opinion. It maintains an on-line [list of reports and publications](#) that target employment-related reentry issues broadly defined.

The [Prisoner Reentry Institute \(PRI\)](#) is one of 12 research centers housed at the [John Jay College of Criminal Justice](#) in New York. Directed by Ann Jaobs, the Institute’s [mission](#) is “to spur innovation and improve practice in the field of reentry by advancing knowledge; translating research into effective policy and service delivery; and fostering effective partnerships between criminal justice and non-criminal justice disciplines.” PRI promotes the “prison to college” pipeline, a housing initiative, and other active reentry programs.

The [Bazelon Center](#) has been one of the lead national organization on issues of health and access to treatment for incarcerated people and individuals leaving jails and prisons with medical and mental health conditions. Since at least 2009, the Center’s [criminal justice program](#) has been an informed advocate for [linking people leaving corrections to federal benefits](#), including information on how corrections agencies can make use of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act

More currently, the [Center for Health and Justice](#) at the Illinois-based [TASC](#) (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) has a developed expertise in bringing the benefits of Medicaid expansion to justice-involved populations including individuals released from jails and prisons. The Center released a [series of useful publications](#) on the issue in 2016.

And the [National Institute of Corrections](#) (NIC) has selected what it terms a collection of “top shelf” [publications and tool kits on implementation of the Affordable Care Act](#). The right-hand column of this page lists additional ten organizations with expertise in this area.

#### ADDITIONAL SECONDARY REFERENCES:

[Families Against Mandatory Minimums \(FAMM\)](#), one of PNO’s allies in efforts to provide individuals incarcerated in the BOP with meaningful reentry services, consistently advocates for improved reentry-related educational and vocational programs. In June 2017 it published the results of an inmate survey of the BOP’s programs, [Using Time to Reduce Crime](#).

The [American Conservative Union Foundation Center for Criminal Justice Reform](#) was founded to *inform and mobilize public support for criminal justice reforms based on conservative principles, and to work with government officials to effectively implement those reforms. Pat Nolan directs the Center, which is a key player in the Right on Crime Movement. The Center’s lead policy areas are asset forfeiture and mental health, but it issues [reports and running](#)*

[commentary](#) on a broader range of issues including federal reentry. The Foundation was a co-sponsor of the release of FAMM's report, [Using Time to Reduce Crime](#).

The [Prison Policy Initiative](#) located in western Massachusetts conducts its own research, much of which is graphically presented on a web site that is rich in advocacy-oriented information. Although reentry is not a principle issue for the Initiative, it maintains an extensive on-line library with a [section on "Recidivism and Reentry"](#) that contains many relevant reports and research papers on reentry going back to the early 2000's.

[The Sentencing Project](#) continues to be a premier independent source of information and research on many sentencing-related issues, including collateral consequence and felony disenfranchisement. It recently [projected the increases in the federal prison population](#) that will result from charging and sentencing policies announced by Attorney General Sessions and legislation pending in Congress. Although The Sentencing Project does not identify reentry as one of its lead issues, its staff, particularly Nicole Porter, have been effective advocates for improved reentry services in several jurisdictions.

The Brennan Center of Justice, New York University School of Law publishes research and informed articles on reentry-related issues. The Center's reentry focus is on [felony disenfranchisement and voting rights](#). On occasion the Center's writers and research staff address broader reentry issues. See, for example: [Mark Kleiman's chapter](#) in a Brennan publication, *Solutions: American Leaders Speak Out on Criminal Justice*, (April 27, 2015) arguing that effective reentry programs will be key to reducing America's excessive prison population; [Criminal Justice Debt: A Barrier to Reentry](#) (2010) discussing the impact of various types of debt on probationers and returning citizens; and [Public Housing Authorities Need Better Guidance on Dealing with Criminal Records](#) (April 22, 2013)

The Pew Center on the States Public Safety Initiative undertakes system reform under the mantle of the federally-funded Justice Reinvestment Initiative which has authored [countless recommendations and reports](#) on sentencing and other justice reforms, some of which touch on reentry. The Center's [public safety performance project](#) which "helps states advance policies and practices in adult and juvenile sentencing and corrections that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control corrections costs" does not identify reentry as a primary issue of concern.

[Prison Fellowship](#) is a vigorous proponent and an advocate for strongly faith-based programs that meet the needs of incarcerated individuals and the community at large. The organization has ties throughout Christian churches and communities in many states. It offers [faith-based reentry programs](#) for interested individuals.

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