

The Essential Role of Private Voluntary Groups in Rehabilitating Offenders



Presenter:

Steven T. McFarland

Director

Task Force for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

U.S. Department of Justice

Washington, DC

Steven.T.McFarland@usdoj.gov

How can faith-based and community organizations legally partner with state corrections for pre-release social services?

Faith- or character-based programming in dedicated cellblocks:



- Voluntary and open to inmates of all faiths or none
- Genuine choice (no incentives or disincentives for particular program)

(Con't)

How can faith-based and community organizations legally partner with state corrections for pre-release social services?

Faith- or character-based programming in dedicated cellblocks:



- At least one secular alternative
- Privately funded expenditures for inherently religious activities
- Life Connections (FBOP); 20+ state prison systems

How can faith-based and community organizations legally partner with state corrections for pre-release social services?

Mentoring:

- Training of volunteers is essential; consider certification (e.g. CAPA)
- Establish relationship before release
- Video-conferencing (e.g. CSOSA of Washington, DC)



How can FBCOs be involved in providing post-release reentry services?

FBCOs can be involved in:



- Job coaching and placement assistance
- Vocational training
- Life skills training
- Mentoring children of prisoners
- Treatment for juvenile offenders

(Con't)

How can FBCOs be involved in providing post-release reentry services?

FBCOs can be involved in:



- Literacy
- Financial literacy
- Substance abuse treatment
- Transitional housing
- Language translation

Federal Funding

Sources of federal funding that can help jumpstart some of these initiatives:

Vouchers

- Six Site Anti-Gang Initiative
- Access to Recovery (HHS)

Federal Funding

Sources of federal funding that can help jumpstart some of these initiatives:

Direct Grants

- Prisoner Reentry Initiative (DOL)
- Weed & Seed (DOJ)

Federal Funding

Sources of federal funding that can help jumpstart some of these initiatives:

Cooperative Agreements (Contracts)

- Residential Reentry Centers, a.k.a. "half-way houses" (FBOP)

For More Information



Contact:

Jana Hoisington

Outreach

Task Force for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

U.S. Department of Justice

Washington, DC

Jana.Hoisington@usdoj.gov

202.514.2987

Federal Bureau of Prisons Life Connections Pilot Program

The Bureau of Prisons Life Connections Pilot Program is a residential multi-faith restorative justice program. The 18-month program is open to adult volunteer inmates in both male and female facilities in five BOP facilities across the country. The mission of the program is to reduce recidivism and bring reconciliation to victim, community and inmate through study of secular reentry-related subjects (e.g., ethical decision-making; anger management; victim restitution) from the inmate's religious or philosophical perspective. Participants also are matched with volunteer mentors of their faith or philosophy who visit weekly and are linked with a church or likeminded group at their release destination in order to enhance community reintegration.

Participants from the same faith study and pray together in small groups. They are led through a secular life-skills curriculum by a spiritual guide of their faith, who discusses what their sacred text (Quran, Bible, Torah) says about the subject (e.g., responsible parenting; budgeting; marriage enrichment; religious tolerance and respect;). They join their respective general prison population worship service (those of no designated faith engage in individual study during chapel times).

Participating inmates must apply for the program voluntarily; except for high security inmates, participants must be within 24 - 60 months of release (females longer); must be recommended by the sending institution's chaplain and approved by its warden. The initial cohort at each site was 32-36 inmates. The second cohort began after six months and the third after 12 months.

Participants must complete 500 hours of community service (such as sewing blankets for HIV-positive babies), participate in Victim Impact Programs, complete 150 hours of addiction programming; provide financial and emotional support to their family through weekly correspondence; maintain regular journaling; and have re-entry goals and action steps.

Participants have no incentive to participate - - other than a desire to change and grow. The LCP facilities are no different than any other cellblock in the facility. The move to an LCP facility of their security level will often take them much farther away from their family for 18 months. Moreover, the classwork and community service prevents participants from working as much as the general population, thus cutting in half their monthly earnings.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons plans to evaluate the program's effect on recidivism and hopes to expand LCP into as many as five more sites in FY 07. In addition, BOP hopes to open single-faith programs in FY 07.

BOP solicits volunteer mentors to work with inmates during incarceration and after their release. Individuals interested in becoming a Life Connections mentor-volunteer at any of the five Bureau of Prisons sites should contact a chaplain or the Life Connections Program personnel at the facilities listed below. Individuals interested in volunteering as a Life Connections mentor for inmates after their release may contact Volunteers of America at (225) 338-0794.

Life Connections Pilot Program Sites

- Federal Correctional Institution, Milan, Michigan (734) 439-1511
- U.S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas (913) 682-8700
- Federal Medical Center, Carswell, Texas (817) 782-4888
- Federal Correctional Institution, Petersburg, Virginia (804) 733-7881
- U.S. Penitentiary, Terre Haute, IN (812) 244-4400

Prisoner Reentry: Federal Funding For Services By Faith-Based & Other Non-Government Organizations

1. President Bush's **Prisoner Reentry Initiative** (PRI)

- Department of Labor PRI grants (awarded November 2005)
 - \$660,000 per year for up to 3 years beginning Spring 2006
 - 30 grantees¹ in 20 states (<http://www.dol.gov/cfbci/reentryfactsheet.htm>)
 - Contact: Scott Shortenhaus, Center For Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, USDOL: 202 693-6450 shortenhaus.scott@dol.gov

- Department of Justice PRI grants (awarded Summer 2006)
 - \$450,000 - \$1.8 Million
 - provided to the 20 state prison systems² where Dept Of Labor grantees are located (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/06PRIawards.pdf>)
 - for pre-release services for the state and local inmates (but not those inmates in Federal Bureau Of Prisons) who will receive post-release services from Labor grantees
 - Contact: Andrew Molloy, Sr. Policy Advisor, Bureau of Justice Assistance, USDOJ: 202 514-9909 Andrew.Molloy@usdoj.gov

2. Dept of Justice's **Anti-Gang Initiative** – Voucher-Based Reentry Services Demonstration Project

- \$500,000 to each of six cities: Cleveland, Dallas-Ft Worth, E. Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Tampa, and “222 Corridor” between Lancaster and Easton, PA (<http://www.psn.gov/>); funded Fall 2006
- Contact U.S. Attorneys Office covering each city: see <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/offices/index.html>

3. **“Ready 4 Work” Program**

- Provides job assessment, training and placement, and mentoring, for ex-offenders; supported by Departments of Labor and Justice
- grantee sites: 11 for adult non-violent felons³, six for juvenile offenders⁴
- See http://www.dol.gov/cfbci/Ready4Work_contacts.htm

¹ Tucson, Phoenix, San Diego, Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno, Denver, Hartford, Ft. Lauderdale, Des Moines, Chicago, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Boston, Baltimore, Pontiac (MI), St. Louis, Kansas City (MO), Egg Harbor City (NJ), Brooklyn, Astoria (Newark), Bronx, Cincinnati, Portland (OR), Philadelphia, Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Seattle, Milwaukee.

² AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, IA, IL, LA, MA, MD, MI, MO, NJ, NY, OH, OR, PA, TX, WA, and WI

³ Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, Memphis, Milwaukee, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

⁴ Boston, Brooklyn, Camden, Houston, Los Angeles, Seattle

Federal Funding & Services For Prisoner Reentry
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4. Dept of Justice's **Weed & Seed** funding

- US Attorney in your city can apply for designation of high-crime neighborhood as Weed & Seed site (“weed out” crime elements and “seed in” positive programs)
- Steering (or Advisory) Committee for each site consists of local faith-based and community representatives, who determine how to invest funding in law enforcement and prisoner reentry (\$1.1 million spread over four years)
- See <http://contacts.weedandseed.info/>

5. Federal Bureau of Prisons' (Dept of Justice's) **Residential Reentry Centers** (Halfway Houses)

- FBOP pays providers on contract to provide returning ex-offenders with short-term, secure housing with some programming
- Stew Rowles 202-305-8906 rowles@bop.gov or Ron Hayes 202-305- 8741 rhayes@bop.gov

6. **Department of Veterans Affairs Programs** for Ex-Vet Ex-Offenders

- Substance abuse, mental health, disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation and employment
- Veteran Affairs' Montgomery GI Bill and Veterans Workforce Investment Program; Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), sponsored by DOL's Veterans Employment and Training Service office (VETS); Health Care For Homeless Veterans; Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program
- Contact: Darin Selnick, Director, Center For Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, USDVA: 202 273-7499 darin.selnick@va.gov

7. **“Access To Recovery” Voucher Program** of Dept of Health & Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- Grantees in CA, CT, FL, ID, IL, LA, MO, NJ, NM, TN, TX
- See http://www.samhsa.gov/news/newsreleases/040303bg_howworks.htm

8. Department of Labor **“One Stop Career Centers”**

- Assist ex-offenders in finding jobs
- See <http://www.careeronestop.org/>

9. **Department of Housing and Urban Development**

- Section 8 Rent Subsidies

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- Public Housing (most ex-offenders are not categorically banned)
- Contact David Carradini, HUD Center For Faith-Based and Community Initiatives: 202 708-2404 david_j._carradini@hud.gov

10. Department of Labor's **Federal Fidelity Bonding Program**

- Insures those who employ ex-offenders against theft
- <http://www.bonds4jobs.com/bondingprogram.html>

11. **Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit** for employers of ex-offenders

- Federal tax credit that encourages employers to hire ex-offenders by reducing employers' federal income tax liability by as much as \$2,400 per qualified new worker
- <http://www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax/>

12. **VISTA** (Corporation For National and Community Service)

- Partnerships began August 2005 in 15 cities⁵ between VISTA and Weed & Seed in which full-time VISTAs recruit volunteer mentors for prisoners near release
- <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/programs/reentry.html#vista>

13. Office of **Probation and Pretrial Services**, Administrative Office of the US Courts

- During supervised release, OPPS provides comprehensive reentry services
- <http://www.uscourts.gov/fedprob/supervise.html>

14. Department of Health and Human Services funding for **HIV testing and services**

- testing – Centers for Disease Control
- Minority Aids Initiative (MAI)
- rapid testing - SAMHSA
- Contact Mike Costigan, HHS Center For Faith-Based and Community Initiatives: 202 358-3595 Michael.Costigan@hhs.gov

15. **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant** to states

Ex., Ohio's General Assembly gave Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives one percent of state's TANF block grant, or \$22 Million

⁵ Austin, Charleston, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas-Ft Worth, Houston, Indianapolis, Miami, Oakland, Philadelphia, Portland (OR), Providence, San Antonio, Washington DC

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16. Dept of Justice's **Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)**

- dispensed \$110 Million to build capacity of 69 reentry service providers
- funding ended in June 2006, but multi-year evaluation is in progress
<http://www.svori-evaluation.org/>

17. Federal Bureau of Prisons (DOJ) **Faith- or Character-Based Pre-Release Program**

- “Life Connections”: voluntary 18-month curriculum in six sites
- BOP contracts with faith leaders to provide programming
- expanding to more facilities in 2007

See also City, County and State Grants and Contracts for prisoner reentry services⁶

⁶ *Ex.*, Community-Based Reentry Initiative Grant Program of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; New Creations Community Outreach, Detroit, MI (313) 875-3883. Over 20 state prison systems operate faith- or character-based pre-release units (many similar to FBOP's “Life Connections” program).