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Categorizing Reentry and Reintegration Efforts Across Five States

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COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM
IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BY

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Chicago, Illinois

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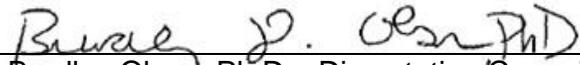
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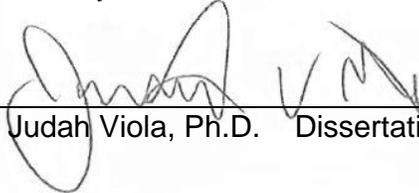
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Date

Dedication

This research is dedicated to the millions of individuals that experience marginalization and other dehumanizing experiences due to lived experience with the correctional control systems. We unite to fight against the stigma that creates barriers to transitioning back to our communities and recreating our lives in a meaningful way.

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Abstract

An average of 12,500 individuals are released from correctional control institutions in America each week. The reentry and reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into communities has emerged as a relevant concern. This collateral damage caused by mas incarceration continues to challenge out correctional institutions and community-based service provider to create better pathways for individuals returning home. Ending the collateral damage caused by mass incarceration will require a change in the way reentry and reintegration is defined, policies are created, recidivism is defined, and services are provided to individuals affected by mass incarceration. This research explores reentry and reintegration practices across five states. This exploration examines how each state facilitates reentry preparation, what state and local governmental bodies do to support reintegration, and the available community-based services in each state. This research also explores the usefulness of current recidivism data collection methods, prison to education pipelines, and how stigma affects the formerly justice involved individual.

Keywords: reentry, reintegration, policy, recidivism, programming, services, justice involved, best-practice

Categorizing Reentry and Reintegration Efforts Across Five States

The prison system, in the early years, focused on three pillars of operation, prevention (averting negative behavior), rehabilitation (correcting behavior), and punishment (removal from society). A prison sentence was meant to give an individual time to reflect on their anti-social behavior without distractions. The inclusion of rehabilitation meant that people would have an opportunity to focus on corrective behaviors while in prison. As a result, individuals were released with the information they needed to return to society, reformed. As criminal legal systems across America grew, they became a means to hold more individuals and punish them in the process. The pillar of rehabilitation was lost. After the war on drugs was declared, more people were sent to jail with longer sentences. Mass incarceration consumed communities without the consideration of people returning home.

Ending the collateral damage caused by mass incarceration will require a change in the way reentry is defined, policies are created, recidivism is defined, and services are provided to individuals affected by mass incarceration. Once an individual is involved with criminal, legal, and correctional control system the collateral damage interrupts their lives. It becomes a challenge to unravel the chaos caused by that interruption. Most often, the barriers caused by correctional control issues will limit the persons' rights to have full citizenship restored. Reintegration into society, after being involved with criminal legal systems is a difficult and daunting task.

Individuals with arrest and conviction records are permanently deprived of certain rights and are stripped of opportunities for housing, education, employment, social services, and other necessities (Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice, 2022). With the mass incarceration issues facing America today it would be valuable to revisit the question asked by former Attorney General of the United States Janet Reno back in 1999; "What is being done about all the people

coming out of prison?" (Holcomb, 2006). Transitioning from incarceration to free society is a time of profound uncertainty in the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals. Many individuals with criminal backgrounds desire to change their lives and put the missteps of their pasts behind them. Even the most basic elements of social reintegration, a place to stay, food, shelter, clothing, a network of support can pose a significant challenge (Halushka, 2020). These challenges can be the catalyst for individuals to choose "survival tactics" that often include further engaging in criminal behaviors, thus, the cycle of recidivism begins.

Criminal justice circles insist that recidivism is a major contributor to mass incarceration. While recidivism is the term for individuals returning to incarceration it cannot account for sentencing or even accurately account for how recidivism is calculated based on inconsistent data collection from each state. Releasing individuals from custody, often called reentry, is problematic in the absence of reentry services to help individuals successfully reintegrate into their communities. The creation of policy practices that support successful reintegration are the only chance for successful reintegration to occur in the United States. Policy also influences public opinion and can create more opportunities for reentry services at the local, state, and federal level of government. Finally, once reentry is supported, the facilitation of useful services is a logical next step to create sustainable processes that lead to successful outcomes for this population and an end to mass incarceration.

This research examines the aftermath of mass incarceration, which is reentry. California, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Washington have been identified by this researcher for the way they create a reentry path that promotes positive reintegration for individuals involved with the criminal legal system in their state. This researcher examines the reentry and reintegration practices and policies of the five states that uniquely address this issue to provide a better transition for individuals returning home from prison. The research will look at in-prison services

and how they are provided as well as community-based services and how they are provided. This research will also, gather policy data from each state that contributes to reentry and reintegration practices within that state. The researcher will interview key informants and extant data to determine the activities in each state.

Mass Incarceration

An estimated 760,000 adults are discharged from federal and state prisons every year. This means an average of 12,500 men and women are released from prison each week in the United States (Middlemass, 2017). The reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into communities has emerged as a key concern of the criminal justice system (Ganapathy, 2019).

On one level, the transition from prison to community might be viewed as unremarkable. On another level, this transition is difficult to navigate for formerly incarcerated individuals, therefore, increase the likelihood of returning correctional control situations. Ever since prisons were built, individuals have faced the challenges of moving from confinement in correctional institutions to liberty on the street. High recidivism rates indicate that correctional control environments have not adequately prepared individuals for life after a felony conviction (Travis, 2001).

The United States is in a period of fundamental course correction where the harm that has been done needs to be corrected by undoing the many policies that have promoted this era of punitive excess (Breman, 2021). Even though we know some things about mass incarceration, recidivism, the collateral damages, and the various approaches to reentry, we do not have a clear understanding of what the best programs and policies are that support and maximize effective reentry.

Recidivism

Recidivism is the tendency of a convicted individual to reoffend (commit a new crime) after an initial conviction. Recidivism is commonly measured by criminal acts that resulted in re-arrest, reconviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the individual's release.

Targeted recidivism studies working with specific policies, look at the effect of those policies on a wide variety of populations. Recidivism studies start with relatively circumscribed populations of convicted individuals and then, depending on the policy to be studied, reduce those populations even more. Thus, the problem of multiple causation is somewhat lessened. Under somewhat more promising and narrowed parameters, teasing out the recidivism-reducing effect of any policy can be daunting (Weisberg, 2014).

Watson et. al, (2015) points out, the literature is relatively silent on how to assess recidivism in a consistent and meaningful way. Countries like Norway are often seen as superlative when it comes to criminal justice related issues. They have moderate punitive policies while also having low rates of crime and recidivism. It is, however, a challenge for comparative recidivism research because recidivism is measured in widely unequal ways. We exploit the richness and flexibility of Norwegian data to examine how and how much national recidivism rates may be affected by how, among whom, and for how long recidivism is measured. When examining the results, they vary from 9% to 53%, and these numbers could, notwithstanding scientific scrutiny, be taken as a validation as well as a debunking of the abovementioned notion of the Nordic penal exceptionalism. (Andersen & Skardhamar, 2017).

Any effort to credit a particular program with reducing recidivism must be subject to the skepticism that is necessary in assessing any empirical causation in crime reduction studies. There is reason for skepticism at every level of determining what factors reduce recidivism in the

U.S. There is a difficulty in identifying any reliable determinants finding causation for increased/decreased recidivism, including the effect of incarceration rates on crime rates. There often are simply too many variables to account for, too many actors with too much and too many kinds of discretion, to confidently credit a deliberate program for a measured outcome (Weisberg, 2014).

Statics about recidivism are a significant measure of the nations' criminal legal system performance yet data regarding the rate at which individuals' return to prison following release is rare. The federal Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) publishes these data every three years. However, the use of different metrics tells different stories.

Traditionally, the most common measure of recidivism is the rate at which people return to prison within three years of release. Because there were long periods of time between national reports over the last few decades, it was commonly though that the three-year state prison recidivism rate was stagnant at about 50%. That was the return rate of people released in 1994, a finding that wasn't published until 2002. It was another dozen years before the next report, in 2014, tracked recidivism of those released in 2005 (LaVigne & Lopez, 2021).

More recently, BJS has reported recidivism rates more frequently and has used different measures, including the rate at which a person has been rearrested and not necessarily returned to prison. While the different measures have their strengths and weaknesses, it is important to compare apples to apples. In this case, that means distinguishing headlines about rearrest rates that top 70% over a five-year period from three-year re-incarceration rates, which now have fallen below 40%. Being rearrested, historically has not been counted in recidivism data. A rearrest does not equate to returning to prison or further criminal legal system involvement. Because of these reasons the reduction or increase in return-to-prison rates are unclear. The drop in return-to prison rates could be explained by changes in the behavior of those being released

(i.e., committing fewer new crimes or violations of supervision), or by changes in the behavior of the criminal justice system (such as police arrest practices or policies regarding how probation and parole agencies respond to supervision violations) (LaVigne & Lopez, 2021). The reduction could also be explained by the effectiveness of reentry programming in prison and reintegration services outside of prison.

Relying too much on rates of recidivism (as opposed to other indicators of success after prison) can result in incomplete conclusions, because recidivism data is skewed by inconsistencies in policing, charging, and supervision. Furthermore, perfect outcomes are often difficult-to-impossible for people leaving incarceration, as evidenced by the overwhelming prevalence of homelessness, unemployment, and poverty among formerly incarcerated people (Prison Policy Initiative, 2022).

Federal and state investments in reentry programs have been substantial in recent years, as have private sector initiatives to hire people with criminal records; these efforts and others may have reduced reoffending rates. Arrest rates for minor offenses have declined over the past decade, and the total number of arrests also has been falling, from 12 million in 2005 to 9 million in 2018. During that same time, at least two dozen states have limited or even prohibited reincarceration for technical violations of supervision, which may account for a large portion of the reduction (LaVigne & Lopez, 2021).

Mass incarceration and the collateral damages that result from it continue to be one of the most challenging criminal justice issues in America. An even larger challenge is the issue of release, reintegration and recidivism data. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (2020), roughly six million individuals are either in prison or jail or connected to some type of community corrections. However, the BJS reports inconsistencies in state-by-state recidivism data. The most current data for recidivism for the five states in this research is listed in Table 1.

The data, although included, is not reliable due to inconsistencies with current data collection tools (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022).

Table 1

State Recidivism 3-Year Data 2018-2021

California	Illinois	Minnesota	New Jersey	Washington
50%	43%	37%	30%	32%

Reentry and Reintegration

Once an individual has been convicted in the criminal legal system, a host of barriers begin to surface, and those barriers increase upon release from a correctional control situation. The current language used to describe the process of an individual being released from a correctional control situation is commonly referred to as reentry. However, that language does not describe the process that is involved with returning home for these individuals. Returning home is a linier process, progressing from one stage to another in a single series of steps: sequential. Reentry is an action or process of re-entering something. Reentry is a static event, nothing notable about simply reentering a community from a correctional control situation. Addressing the collateral damages of mass incarceration, reentry alone is not enough.

Reintegration on the other hand is the action or process of integrating. Formerly incarcerated individuals benefit from the process of integration into their communities and acclimating to new processes or new conditions. Durnescu (2018) argues the process of reintegration encompasses more than one event. The formerly incarcerated individual is challenged with creating identity, changing thinking, finding employment, establishing sustainability and so much more, which perpetuates the process of reintegration and navigating the pathways to building "life" outside of correctional control. As individuals reintegrate, they

become more distant from the correctional control experience, and they become less dominated by the sense of being controlled. They acclimate to new ways of living.

As these individuals start to forget the prison, experience as being dominant in their life an identity shift begins to take place. Individuals become more autonomous and useful for their families and communities. They tend to stop describing themselves as prisoners and turn to descriptions that are more suited to their transformation. (ie., man, father, husband, son, and brother) (Durnescu, 2018). Contact with the criminal legal system can permanently disable an individual's ability to re-adapt to society, resulting in substantial social and economic costs as well as a lifetime of social stigmatization (Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice, 2022). This confirms the importance of creating an identity as part of the reintegration process (Durnescu, 2018). No other country in the world disenfranchises people who are released from prison in a manner even remotely resembling the United States, this is seen in the way reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals is mishandled (Alexander, 2012).

Policies Supporting Reintegration

As reflected in an interview with Jeremy Travis, within the criminal justice systems there needs to be less punitive responses, which leads to more restorative solutions. There need to be responses that promote individual and community well-being (Breman, 2021).

Three decades of policies aimed at being tough on crime have created barriers to supporting reintegration. These invisible punishments further exclude and stigmatize formerly incarcerated individuals in both society and within the family (Pogorzelski et. al., 2005). Public jails and prisons cost 80.7 billion and private jails and prisons cost 3.9 billion (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2020). There are also collateral costs in relation to incarcerating individuals. As a nation, more than $80 billion annually is spent to incarcerate 2.2 million people in facilities

whose deplorable conditions, subpar treatment services, and ineffective programs engender recidivism. Still, communities spend yet another $3 billion to support them.

The social costs of our failing criminal justice system, such as the harm done to people, families, and communities, are far higher. These costs are not distributed evenly. The burden is carried largely by already detrimentally marginalize low-income and minority communities (Edge, 2009). There is around 2.9 billion in cost to families with women taking on much of the cost in black communities (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2020). Unraveling local, state, and federal policies that support reintegration, promote safety, and decrease frivolous spending are complex to categorize. There are few policies that are under one specific effort.

Federal

The First Step Act, formally known as the Formerly Incarcerated Reenter Society Transformed Safely Transitioning Every Person Act, is a bipartisan criminal justice bill passed by the 115th Congress and signed by President Donald Trump in December 2018. In addition to expanded programs and policies such as compassionate release, good conduct credit change, increased use of home confinement, substance use treatment and medically assisted treatment this act includes a reentry (reintegration) effort, "Ready to Work". Ready to work seeks to connect employers directly to individuals incarcerated so that the individual will have to opportunity for secure employment once released (Department of Justice, 2019).

The Second Chance Act of 2007 reauthorizes the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning. The Second Chance Act authorizes federal funding for state and federal reentry programs. The Second Chance Act also calls for a state-by-state review of policies that hinder full civic participation by formerly incarcerated individuals (Pogorzelski et. al., 2005).

State

An aspect of prison release that can increase the potential for recidivism is the lack of access to support for survival. In the U.S., residents may be eligible for government assistance including food assistance, temporary cash assistance, medical assistance and food assistance in they qualify. This assistance is regulated individually from state to state. Temporary cash assistance provides short-term cash benefits to families with children under the age of 18, or under age 19 if full time secondary school students, as well as pregnant women during their last trimester. The food assistance program helps low-income individuals and families buy the food they need for good health. Medicaid provides medical cover to low-income individuals and families through a variety of eligibility categories.

In the U.S. where there are limited low-income housing options and no socialized health care, these programs are sometimes the only basic human needs resource upon release from correctional control situations. All residents may apply for services and, if the need is demonstrated, will receive these forms of federally funded assistance, administered by the states, for 6–12 months, after which they will need to reapply. These services are, however, underused (Costopoulos et. al, 2017).

Unraveling specific and concise information regarding funding for reentry programming at the state level is challenging. Typically, state budgets do not include "reentry" as a budgetary item. State budgets include an allocation for department of corrections. DOC then allocates funds in different areas. DOC does not specifically separate "reentry" funds, rather monies are allocated in different areas. Some mentionable areas include, facility operations, employee salaries, medical, overall programs, and community supervision.

In all five states in this research, the budget does not allocate community-based reentry funding in the budget. Each reentry service provider solicits funding through grants, mutual aid,

philanthropy, and other sources, unless the community-based service has contracted a specific service through department of corrections.

Table 2

State Department of Corrections Budget 2021

California	Illinois	Minnesota	New Jersey	Washington
17.3 Billion	1.5 Billion	6.3 Billion	9.5 Million	2.5 Billion

Local

One of the more popular local legal interventions that has won many adherents in terms of reducing recidivism but has also been the subject of interesting scrutiny is the advent of drug courts and mental health courts. Drug courts identify individuals with severe substance use disorder challenges and for whom a carefully formulated mixture of sanction, supervision, and therapy is thought to be very promising in reducing recidivism. Mental health courts promote a parallel approach for offenders who exhibit severe mental illness. In both cases, promising candidates are diverted during legal proceedings and given the conditional opportunity to avoid prison altogether if they succeed in rehabilitation. These are often very effective programs because they identify instances of substance use disorder or mental illness that are strongly correlated with offending behaviors, and because enforced and targeted therapy is logically much more effective than the general rehabilitation efforts under regular probation (Weisberg, 2014).

In contrast, the individuals who are not so deeply addicted and for whom offending is less compulsive are able to game their way into the drug court system to avoid prison and will do well in drug court programs. However, individuals that struggle with more serious substance use disorders, the ones for whom offending is sometimes more compulsive, are likely to fail at drug court programs and to be penalized with a conventional long sentence. In effect these offenders

are punished for both the crime and the treatment failure. Drug courts can produce results that

are misleading. It is confusing that the courts aim to break the cycle of irrational substance use

disorder and compulsive behavior but expect the offenders to respond positively and promptly to

treatment plans based on rational self-control and diligent adherence to protocols. Therefore, a

drug or mental health court a program tilted toward the population with less severe challenges

may have outcomes that favor this population and increase the illusion of success with

individuals that have more severe challenges (Weisberg, 2014).

Supporting Reintegration

Johnson (2008) asserted that reintegration programming promotes safer communities and

reduce the likelihood of an individual reoffending. Programming is a means to facilitate the

reintegration process for individuals returning home however not all programming is useful to

reach the goals of reducing reengagement in criminal activity.

Education is a major barrier to the formerly incarcerated individual becoming gainfully

employed. Employability often increases through training and education. Unfortunately, training

and education is one of the areas in which a formerly incarcerated individual may be legally

barred from engaging. Criminologists identify successful reentry as being highly dependent on

the individual's ability to find employment, sustain employment, and earn a living wage through

employment. Education is tied into employment and identifying qualified candidates (Buitrago et

al., 2020). Prisons disregard data that suggests education significantly reduces recidivism; many

correctional institutions lack educational programs inside the prison.

Education Program Examples

For formerly incarcerated individuals, education may be closely associated with a future

job opportunity and developing personal identities (Manger, et, al., 2020). In prison, education

programs are a great way to prepare individuals for reentry. These spaces allow individuals to

make a connection to learning that continues upon their release. Higher education has played a

significant role in providing individuals with access to opportunities that lead to positive social

mobility. Despite the opportunities higher education provides to transform lives, justice

involvement often presents significant obstacles and barriers to education. These barriers make it

difficult for students with criminal backgrounds to access the transformational opportunities that

education can offer (Phillips, 2020). The educational programs in table 3 are a few that appear to

engage individuals under and beyond correctional control.

Table 3

In Prison Higher Education

California Prison Education Project (PEP)	California has expanded educational opportunities for inmates in 12 Californian prisons. By providing academic, life skills and career development programming, PEP aims to educate, empower and transform the lives of incarcerated individuals PEP has evolved into the largest volunteer-based prison education program of its kind in the United States (Reese, 2019).
Illinois Education Justice Project (EJP)	A comprehensive college-in-prison program based at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Programming offers courses at Danville Correctional Center. The learning community that EJP instructors and students continually recreate at the prison is at the core of everything else that is done. EJP also supports progressive policymaking around criminal justice. EJP encourages students to stay connected post incarceration and often hires alumni for paid EJP related employment (EJP, 2021).
New Jersey NJ-Step Raritan Valley Community College	The staff of NJ STEP, supported by Rutgers University – Newark, works with the partner colleges and NJ DOC to ensure collaborative operations, appropriate course offerings, and seamless transfers that ultimately allow students to complete degree requirements. This program helps with applications, transcript requests, recruiting prospective students, and preparing pre-release educational plans
Minnesota Metropolitan State University in St. Paul	Individuals in Minnesota prisons are pursuing associate and bachelor's degrees through a partnership between the Department of Corrections (DOC) and some of the state's top colleges. There are bachelor's degree courses at Stillwater; Minnesota State University, Mankato bring associate degree programs to Shakopee and Faribault, and Minneapolis Community and Technical College is enrolling Lino Lakes inmates in its associate degree program.
Washington Community colleges	Over 1,933 vocational certificates and 53 associate degrees have been obtained by individuals incarcerated. There are 12 prison site education navigators and 10 college site education navigators assisting incarcerated individuals into a guided pathway of education opportunities into careers in high demand and provide for family-wage jobs in and out of their incarceration.

Stigma

Those with criminal backgrounds carry the burden of their crimes with them. The social construction of stigma is best described by sociologist Erving Goffman, who contended that stigma is the "situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance" (Phillips, 2020). Stigma can deeply influence an individual's choices when they return home. Often this isn't a realized concept. The fallout from stigmatization of the formerly incarcerated is widespread across all systems, compounding the negative effects of poverty, food and housing insecurity, unemployment, violence, unaddressed physical and mental health needs, and the lack of educational opportunities. These negative factors impose upon the formerly incarcerated themselves, but also spill over into their families and into the communities in which they live (Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice, 2022). The labels and challenges of the formerly incarcerated individual will dissipate once the dehumanizing factors are taken away; the oppressed will no longer be oppressed (Travis et al, 2009).

Five State Examination

The following states have been identified by implementation of effective reintegration programming and implementing institutional practices that promote successful reintegration. These states promote reintegration that begins in the institution and extends upon release into the community. Given the hundreds of thousands of individuals who will be released annually, this is an area of theory, research, and practice that warrants concentrated and sustained attention (Jonson & Cullen, 2015).

California

The state of California boasts, "through extensive community partnerships, innovative community supervision and a commitment to rehabilitation, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is helping offenders succeed as they return to their

communities. Comprehensive pre- and post-release rehabilitative programs and services are offered in communities throughout California delivered through alternative custody, residential, outpatient and drop-in centers" (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 2021).

Illinois

In 2019, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) created a new program that's focus is to provide the necessary services to people returning to society. Administrator for the Reentry Program, Jennifer Parrack, said it's all about bridging the gap between life inside the prison and when people are released on parole. "We really knew that we were not adequately preparing our men and women to leave our correctional facilities and be successful," Parrack said. "For our men and women that have worked really hard in our correctional facilities to better themselves and get prepared to have a better life to support their family members upon release, we really need to be working hard to assist them" (O'Brien, 2020).

Minnesota

To reduce recidivism, Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP), attempted to increase offender access to community services and programming by producing greater case management collaboration between caseworkers in prison and supervision agents in the community. The results showed that MCORP significantly improved employment rates, decreased homelessness, broadened offenders' systems of social support, and increased the extent to which offenders participated in community support programming (mentoring, restorative justice services, and faith-based programming). The findings further revealed that MCORP significantly reduced all three types of reoffending (rearrests, reconviction, and new offense re-incarcerations). The evidence suggests that MCORP was effective in decreasing reoffending largely because it increased the extent to which offenders were employed, involved

in community support programming, and able to develop systems of social support (Grant, 2012).

New Jersey

More than 20,000 individuals participated in the Residential Community Release Program (RCRP) system. With the emphasis on rehabilitation, community corrections facilities have played a major role in reducing New Jersey's prison population. The evidence-based programs provide a safe, structured environment where offenders nearing release to the community rebuild their lives through programs that address criminogenic factors and substance abuse related issues. All the programs emphasize reducing chemical dependency, shifting attitudes toward criminal behavior and promoting relapse prevention and skill maintenance (Reentry Coalition New Jersey, 2021).

Washington

Department of Corrections Washington State reports, "though most individuals who are incarcerated will return to their communities, successful transitions are difficult. The likelihood of successful transition can be improved with utilization of reentry programs and practices. The Department is committed to being reentry-focused and providing resources for individuals currently in and leaving the system, to assist in safe and successful transition to the community" (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021).

Successful reintegration is not simply a function of choosing not to commit crimes; it is also the result of having sufficient access to resources, opportunities, and reintegration capital that make criminal activity unfavorable and less likely. Reintegration capital develops through networks as people and communities are empowered through collaboration with others. This collective value is developed though networks that may not normally come together for collaboration (Koschmann & Peterson, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

Operating from a worldview framework, proposing a constructivist approach to the study of prisoner reintegration, this study will focus on the social context and policy implementation of prisoner reintegration. There is an undeniable variation across policy areas as an important aspect of the reintegration process. A significant amount of evidence suggests that social construction has a profound effect on prisoner reintegration and is transformative for this population (Christiansen, et. al, 1999).

According to Nicholson et al. (2004), social construction theory has given the social scientists a way to understand the systematic issues as they relate to marginalized communities based on an opinion that truth is a matter of consensus based on policy and social norms rather than with objective reality. Social construction and constructivism explore the process of reintegration from the perspective of the creators and facilitators of policy. The construct of recidivism dictating reintegration success reduces empowering opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals (Patton, 2002). Constructionist theory would suggest the criminal legal system uses construct policy-laden evidence of recidivism risk to facilitate the administration of justice and that the idea of recidivism being unavoidable is constructed, in fact recidivism is avoidable (Eaglin, 2017). From this lens the research question for this study is: What specific programs, policies or other factors contribute to successful reintegration? The study described in the next section will use a qualitative cross sectional research design to explore issues relating to reentry and reintegration. This study will help sort out the difference between reentry and reintegration, and how that relates to recidivism, as well as to understand the effectiveness of federal, state, and local policies, and the effectiveness of current programs.

Design

This exploratory study focused on five states that are promoting the practice of assisting

formerly incarcerated individuals to prepare for their release from prison and provide services

once they return to their community. These states were chosen because there is data mentioned

above that suggests there are efforts that contribute to individuals getting out of prison and

staying out of prison. The variety of data types assisted this researcher in exploring the state

policy level data, DOC policy and practice, community organizational approaches and

interviewee responses to connect the data. This design structure provided a look at reentry and

reintegration from differing perspectives. Information was gathered from key informants from

the department of corrections, community organizations and advocates. Extant data available

through websites, peer reviewed journals, reentry coalitions, justice departments, social media

and other public forums. By compiling reentry and reintegration focused practices and extant

data from California, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Washington this researcher examined

the factors that contribute to effective reintegration in each state.

Method

A series of eight interviews were conducted with department of corrections staff that

facilitate reentry efforts, community reentry organization staff members that facilitate

reintegration efforts, and advocates that support in prison education and policy change efforts.

Qualitative and quantitative extant data were collected as it relates to reentry activity in

California, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Washington. Extant data included state

legislation and policy, prison policy, prior research, and prison and community programming.

The data reviewed either validated or disputed other data. This researcher compared sources and

collected similar data points to determine the validity. This researcher also compared extant data

to interviewee responses to determine the functionality and practice of reentry and reintegration efforts in each state.

Instrument

Three sets of interview questions were developed (See appendix A). A set of questions was designed for key informants within correctional institutions, another for those in community organizations, and one for advocates for reform in the areas of reentry and reintegration. The interview questions had some variation based on the role of the key informant. The questions were designed to understand the landscape of reentry and reintegration in each state. The questions were also a means to support the extant data and clarify information that was unclear. The interview questions were open ended to allow the key informant the ability to expound on points and offer other information that was not anticipated.

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Results

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After collecting data through eight interviews, a content analysis was conducted to determine themes and concepts that emerged from the interview process. The responses to the questions were broad across all interviews. Each interviewee was situated in differing positions within the state, therefore the responses were not consistent. The nature of the questions elicited different responses to each question from each interviewee. Three common themes emerged across the eight interviews; reentry should begin once an individual is under the supervision of correctional control, developing reentry/reintegration programming and services should include a holist approach to individual needs, preparing individuals for release by providing access to essential documents (identification, birth record ect.). Each interviewee talked about how to facilitate planning with an individual around reentry. The importance of beginning this process when an individual enters DOC was mentioned in each interview. All the interviewees talked about program development in their respective positions. They emphasized quality and

accessibility as being most important for individuals to receive the tools they will need to return to the community and practice prosocial behaviors. Each interviewee stated that the success of reentry and reintegration is dependent on holistically providing for the individual. They each mentioned the beginning of this process starts with assisting individuals to validate their identity through essential documents. At least two of the interviewees mentioned that state level governmental and legislative support is important. They discussed legislative support in terms of creating legislation that will provide individuals with laws and policy that will make their transitions less complicated. This support is different in each state involved in this research.

Upon collecting extant data from each state, data was compiled to conduct a comparative analysis of the state level data. This process examined differing conditions from each state and compared the information across each state.

Five-State Overview of Reintegration

California

Supported by Governor Gavin Newsome, The California Dream is the idea that every person can achieve a better life, regardless of where they start out. Even in a time of economic growth and record employment, too many Californians are experiencing the squeeze of stagnant wages and the rising price of building-block necessities such as housing, health care, education, and childcare. California strives to reanimate the California Dream, building a California for all (Office of Governor Gavin Newsome, 2022).

Department of Corrections (DCR)
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation facilitates the successful reintegration of the individuals back to their communities equipped with the tools to be drug-free, healthy, and employable members of society by providing education, treatment, rehabilitative, and restorative justice programs, all in a safe and humane environment.

The Division of Rehabilitative Programs (DRP) through DCR ensures all DRP programs provide the necessary value, maximizing use of state funds, creating a safe prison environment, and effectively reducing recidivism, providing the most effective programming, monitor key performance indicators such as program completions, attendance, certifications, learning gains, and fidelity. These guiding values provide a framework for DRP executives and staff as they work toward creating a "Roadmap to Rehabilitation". Such a roadmap begins the day an offender is admitted to a state prison and continues through their release to a county jurisdiction or until the end of their parole supervision.

Focused partnerships with community organizations remove duplication processes and procedures, combines necessary resources, and dismantles the silos that create inefficiencies. Starting early with rehabilitative programs is the best way for an offender to be prepared for success upon release. Rehabilitative programming opportunities are available to all offenders at various stages during their incarceration, including parole. During an offender's incarceration, they are provided medical, dental, mental health, institutional jobs, and an annual classification process.

Programs (DCR). California's In Prison Programs (IPP) provide comprehensive educational programs, treatment programs, and pre-release rehabilitative programs for offenders while in prison. These programs focus on cognitive behavioral interventions, pre-release education, planning, skills, and acquiring a California identification card. Programming outlines can be found in the table below. All programming is facility specific.

Table 4

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Programs

Arts In Corrections (AIC)	Allows offenders to create self-awareness through visual, literary, media, performing, and folk and traditional art opportunities.
Innovative Programming Grants (IPG)	The goal of IPG is to improve access to programming and increase the percentage of incarcerated individuals served in California's adult prisons.
Adult Education	The programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE).
The California Identification Card (CAL-ID)	Provides a valid CAL-ID to eligible offenders upon their release from prison.
Career and Technical Education (CTE)	Seven different career sectors that include building and construction, energy and utilities, business and finance, information and communication technologies, fashion and interior design, manufacturing and product development, and transportation.
Continuing Education	General education courses in high-interest subjects for personal enrichment, development, and post-secondary learning activities.
Post-secondary Education	Courses include college-level coursework offered to students through the Post-Secondary and Continuing Education Program in partnerships with various community colleges.
Student Support Services	Dedicated to developing policies that support quality academic services, accommodations, and modifications for offender-students with developmental, physical, or cognitive disabilities and for those with a high risk of academic failure.
The Transitions Program (TP)	Offers participants employability and financial literacy skills to prepare for successful reentry into their communities.
The Cognitive Behavioral Treatment for Sex Offenders (CBT-SO)	A pilot program which provides cognitive behavioral treatment programming to address the criminogenic needs of offenders who are required to register pursuant to Penal Code section 290 (PC 290).
Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI)	An evidence-based treatment which helps offenders understand the thoughts and feelings which influence behaviors.
Offender Mentor Certification Program (OMCP)	A voluntary program for long-term and life-term offenders. This program provides them with the training and education needed to become Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Counselors. Upon graduating from the OMCP, these OMCP mentors are assigned and paid as co-facilitators in CBI programs throughout all adult institutions

Community Reintegration. Through extensive community partnerships, innovative community supervision and a commitment to rehabilitation, DOC is helping offenders succeed as they return to their communities. Comprehensive pre- and post-release rehabilitative programs and services are offered in communities throughout California and delivered through alternative custody, residential, outpatient and drop-in centers.

Live-in programs for offenders serving the last part of their sentence in community programs in lieu of confinement in state prison provide links to community rehabilitative services and programs focused on skills such as Substance Use Disorder Treatment (SUDT), education, housing, family reunification, vocational training, and employment services. Some of the programming after release include, Alternative Custody Program (ACP), Community Prisoner Mother Program (CPMP), Custody to, Community Transitional Reentry Program (CCTRP), Male Community Reentry Program (MCRP).

Residential programs for parolees are offered throughout the state. All provide residency and support services to parolees including SUDT, Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT), life skills, employment, education and transitional housing such as, Female Offender Treatment and Employment Program (FOTEP), Parolee Service Center (PSC), Specialized Treatment for Optimized Programming (STOP), and Transitional Housing Program (THP). Outpatient and drop-in programs for parolees provide support in employment assistance and placement, relationships, cognitive behavioral therapies, education, housing and vocational training, Caltrans Parolee Work Crew Program, and Day Reporting Centers / Community-Based Coalition (CBC).

One community-based organization, Project 180, offers several diverse and award-winning programs, tailored to the specific needs of individuals after release. AB 109 is an extensive forensic treatment service designed to support the reentry process by addressing

behavioral health needs, along with practical reentry needs including medical/dental, family reunification, education, employment, benefits assistance, housing, transportation, and beyond. AB 109 is run in close collaboration with the Los Angeles County Probation Department and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

The Co-Occurring Disorder Court (CODC) is serviced by Project 180. The program is designed for defendants with significant behavioral health needs. This diversion program provides intensive supervision and treatment. Successful participants have the opportunity not only to turn their lives around, but to have a reduction or dismissal of their criminal charges. This program runs in collaboration with the Superior Court, Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office, Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Public Health.

Intensive Case Management Services Program (ICMS) – Funded by the Department of Health Services, Office of Diversion and Reentry. The ODR/ICMS program provides intensive wraparound services to the high-need/high-barrier behavioral health population in the LA County jail system. The program provides both interim and permanent supportive housing for some of the most underserved, or highest utilizers in the County system.

The Supportive Employment Program (SEP) is an evidenced-based supportive employment model and aimed to increase each client's success in job placement, retention and satisfaction.

The Young Adults Program (YAP) works in partnership with Homeboy Industries (HI) (reentry provider) and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Project 180 provides internship opportunities for HI staff that want to increase their exposure and experience in the field of social service. At Project 180, Homeboy interns can work with co-occurring, justice-involved clients as client advocates.

*Resources for California community reintegration service providers can be found at

https://helpforfelons.org/reentry-programs-in-

california/#:~:text=Cal%20State%20San%20Bernardino%20Reentry%20Initiative%20%E2%80

%93%20250,Locations%20include%3A%2010170%20Missile%20Way%2C%20Mather%2C%

20CA%2095655.

Illinois

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker's stated goals are to reform the criminal justice system, end

the epidemic of gun violence, prioritize mental health and defend and expand the individual and

civil rights of every Illinoisan. The overall goal is to reduce crime, reduce recidivism and

improve the quality of life in Illinois communities. Illinois has made strides in recent years,

reducing its prison population by 15% since 2019. The state desires to have a more

compassionate and empathetic approach to addressing the challenges facing the state's criminal

justice system that can significantly improve outcomes (Office of Governor Prtizker, 2022).

Reducing the rate of recidivism has become a central focus of Illinois criminal justice policy and

reform (Green, 2019). The Center for Justice and Reconciliation "views crime as more than

breaking the law and it also recognizes the harm caused to the people, relationships, and the

community". This approach to justice reform, equity, and opportunity creation can help avoid the

entry of individuals into the criminal legal system, utilize alternatives to incarceration,

effectively reintegrate individuals into society, rebuild trust, and repair damage to affected

communities (Office of Governor Pritzker, 2022).

Illinois has identified several crucial components to justice reform: a focus on justice

reform, public safety, courts, and rehabilitation. Other efforts include coping with and preventing

violence by treating gun violence as a public health concern, building skills in stakeholders (e.g.,

law enforcement, correctional officers, violence interrupters) who interact with high-need

individuals, and rebuilding trust in law enforcement within the communities. Diverting people away from incarceration toward treatment can significantly increase quality of life while focusing on evidence-based rehabilitation efforts at prisons, jails and in communities to rehabilitate individuals and eventually reduce recidivism. There is so much challenging work ahead and this work is shifting Illinois away from mass incarceration, allowing people to contribute to their communities, and repairing harm caused in marginalized neighborhoods (Office of Governor Pritzker, 2022).

        Department of Corrections (DOC). DOC developed Community Support Advisory Councils (CSACs) in the highly effected areas of the state where most parolees return. CSACs are community-based partnerships designed to work collaboratively with parole agents and other existing community resources to develop wraparound services for parolees, while assisting other groups with building community capacity to develop their own resources. Each CSAC consists of a fifteen-member body formed using the criteria determined by the DOC; council members are volunteers and represent various sectors within the community. Each CSAC employs staff to carry out the goals and objectives of the council. Both parole agents and individuals from within the community also actively participate in monthly meetings. The purpose of CSAC is to help individuals to become productive members of their communities and to lead crime-free, drug-free lives and, thus, keep them from re-offending. The establishment of the CSACs helps create a linkage to the community and DOC. The CSAC serves in an advisory capacity to DOC (Illinois Department of Corrections, 2022). In recent years the director of DOC appointed Jennifer Parrack as Reentry Administrator within DOC. This appointment was a natural next step after the transformative change at Kewanee Correctional Center in downstate Illinois. Under the leadership of Parrack, Kewanee is the model institution within this system. The main objective of "Kewanee Life Skills Reentry Center" is to build valuable life skills and prepare individuals for

release. The facility specifically focuses on all life areas that, if enhanced, will give an individual more options for success. As Reentry Administrator, Parrack is tasked to adopt this model in all the other institutions as custody levels will allow. While DOC holds specific contracts such as housing for individuals with registry requirements and substance use and mental health disorder treatment, in many Illinois communities the corrections to community handoff needs more collaboration.

Programs (DOC). According to the Assistant Chief Administrative Officer at Statesville Correctional Center, Kenneth Osborne, the department has redefined what it means to serve an individual in custody. From a programming standpoint it is important to look at an individual person and their needs while in custody. Osborne states that "no one is being rewarded for their qualification to be in custody, however, becoming a more program-oriented environment allows individuals to focus on more than just doing time". DOC has embarked on well thought out processes of who we are serving, what their needs are, and creating a targeted focus to address those needs while they are in custody and when they leave custody according to Osborne. Another noteworthy comment by Osborne is that every facility in the department has programming, however that programming looks different at each facility.

To allow all individuals to participate in programming and adhere to the federal law to eliminate solitary confinement, DOC has created restrictive housing units for individuals that are non-compliant or at risk of harming themselves or others. According to Osborne, in the restricted housing unit, a multi-disciplinary team meets to provide services that increase prosocial behavior. One of the many benefits of this is unit is that individuals are not barred from engaging in programming because of some institutional maladjustment.

DOC developed a policy relating to reentry to ensure that offenders are provided treatment, programming, and a reentry pathway during their incarceration, as well as the

opportunity to establish post incarceration plans to enhance their opportunities for successful

reintegration into the community. The reentry pathway may potentially encompass housing

requirements, length of stay, risk assessment, classification level, identified programming and

treatment needs, and access to reentry resource materials, including technology and opportunities

to request official documents.

A reentry plan is established for each offender. The plan focuses on obtaining official

documents, identifying programming needs, developing a path to completion and confirmation

of access to reentry resources. These activities occur prior to one year from mandatory

supervised release (MSR) or discharge; or within 60 days of admission, if admitted with less than

one year to serve within DOC.

The reentry plan is driven by the assessment and additional identified reentry preparation

areas such as: cognitive behavioral programming, education and vocational programming,

reentry Prep Program, employment seminars/job fairs, reentry summits, reentry workshops with

community-based organizations or partner state agencies, and civics education and required

programming with handouts. The release plan is developed for each offender upon intake to

guide the individual through incarceration in DOC and will give everyone an opportunity to

complete programming and prepare for release from custody.

A contract employee at DOC, Douglas, (once a person in custody), stated that while in

custody programs, were available to him at the facility in which he was housed, however full

reentry programming is not available to everyone at every facility. Douglas also talked about the

staff at the institution recognizing his ability to develop materials for the institution that assisted

institutional goals. He says, "before I knew it, I was making stuff for the director's office".

Through his contract employment with DOC, Douglas played an instrumental role in making

reentry resource guides, developed by Education Justice Project (EJP), available to individuals

incarcerated on their tablets. "Now reentry guides are available on peoples' tablets which gives them the opportunity to access them whenever they need to" Douglas said.

Table 5

Illinois Department of Corrections Programs

Education	1. Adult Basic Education 2. Special Education Programs 3. Automotive 4. Construction 5. Horticulture 6. Culinary Arts
Behavioral Health	1. Thinking for a Change (T4C) 2. Career Technology 3. Reentry Summit 4. Substance Abuse 5. Sexually Dangerous Persons (SDP) 6. Anger Management
Leisure Time Service (LTS)	1. Gym 2. Chaplaincy 3. Library

Community Reintegration

The landscape of community reentry and reintegration support in Illinois is expansive. Some of the smaller communities in Illinois are making great strides to serve individuals' as they return home. Legacy Reentry Foundation (LRF) is one of the organizations that is making a difference. Executive Director, George Moore, a formerly incarcerated person states that the organizations provide services that he once needed when he was returning home. He does not believe that reintegrating should pose barriers that create lifetime sentences for a mistake. LRF provides services such as mentoring, employment, life skills, and alternatives to aggression through the organizations Legacy Arts and Media Program. According to Moore, any programming developed for this population of people should be holistic and flexible to consider unique circumstances. Moore also explains that employment training programs are important for

people returning home, they give an opportunity to build a skill and earn more than minimum wage.

One of the most recognized community support organizations in Illinois is based in the Chicagoland Cook County area is The Safer Foundation. In addition to comprehensive reintegration services, they also provide a model for community support that many other organizations in Illinois follow. The Safer Foundation provides services in key areas that assist individuals in navigating the barriers to reintegration. Some of the services include, education, employment, work-force development, job readiness, clothing, anger management, and behavioral health.

The Safer Foundation created the Legislative Advocacy and Policy Division. Project Manager, Avalon Betts-Gaston with Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice (ILARJ) says that the organization does a great job making a difference in the lives of clients however there were challenges because of bad policies and laws. Safer Foundation recognized that providing direct service is "good work" for individuals returning home and there also needed to be advocacy work against the barriers that make life difficult for people returning home (Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice, 2022). ILARJ was created to hold some judicial accountability. As Betts-Gaston points out, legislation like Fist Step Back and the Second Chance Act, were passed by Congress and supposed to create changes under Federal law, however the legislation is not being followed and no one is monitoring it.

Most human service organizations in Illinois focus on a wide variety of supports that overlap reintegration, substance use disorder, and mental health disorder. Nicasa Behavioral Health provides behavioral health services for individuals leaving DOC. Prior to an individual being released, field services will schedule an appointment with Nicasa for the individual to receive services upon their release. The services provided by this organization include outpatient,

anger management, and cognitive behavioral therapy to name a few. All the services provided by Nicasa are evidence based.

*Resources for Illinois community reintegration service providers can be found at https://reentryillinois.net/#/?step=1.

Minnesota

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz directed all state agencies to craft or update existing strategic plans by the spring of 2020. The administration stated that progress is best achieved when organizations set bold goals, work collaboratively, monitor progress, and make course corrections when needed. Minnesota department of corrections developed a comprehensive plan for their department based on this directive (Office of Governor Tim Waltz, 2022). The state of Minnesota is in a state of reconstruction due to new leadership and with new leadership there is a new focus according to Kate Erickson, Department of Correction's Community Stability Program Director (CSPD).

Department of Corrections (DOC). The Minnesota Department of Corrections works to transform lives for a safer Minnesota using a person-centered approach. With a focus on public safety, including the well-being of people committed to custody staff prioritizes strategies that hold people accountable for the offenses they commit while giving them the tools they need to succeed as they transition back to communities. Under Minnesota law, DOC is responsible for the "care, custody, and rehabilitation" of anyone committed DOC by the courts. The mission, structure, and work are grounded in this statutory directive. The individuals committed to DOC can be incarcerated in prisons or under supervision in the community.

Regardless of their custody status, the mindset is the same: a person's path to rejoining their community starts on the day they begin serving their sentence. DOC views every day that follows as an opportunity. There is an opportunity in DOC to make Minnesota a safer place to

live by identifying and implementing effective strategies to transform lives. From officers, agents, case managers, and other employees, everyone involved has an opportunity to provide tools for empowerment in the lives of the people with whom they work. Erickson agrees that DOC is taking a public health approach to engaging individuals in custody.

Approximately 7,500 individuals in 10 prisons and approximately 104,000 people under DOC community supervision. DOC and community corrections partners have an opportunity to transform lives through accountability and the connections to needed mental and chemical health resources, education, job training and employment, and other supports and structures they will need to transition back to communities (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 2022).

Upon admission to DOC a comprehensive intake and assessment process focusing on all components of the person's life. A multi-disciplinary team supports to help the individuals understand their strengths along with their challenges. The team creates an individualized and front-end loaded program-plan developed in a truly collaborative process with the individual in custody. As an individual serves their time in custody, they are provided opportunities to engage in services within the institutions.

Programs (DOC). The department of corrections is where planning for the future begins for individuals in custody. Each institution provides everyone in custody an Ault Pre-Release handbook to prepare for release (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 2022). Additionally, there are comprehensive programs which are accessible while an individual is in custody. The state of Minnesota has been highlighted repeatedly for reentry efforts, by the National Institute of Justice's CrimeSolutions.gov, a website that presents programs that have undergone rigorous evaluations and meta-analyses. CrimeSolutions.gov assesses the strength of the evidence about whether these programs achieve criminal justice, juvenile justice, or crime victim services

outcomes in order to inform practitioners and policy makers about what works, what doesn't, and what's promising in reentry programming (CrimeSolutions, 2022).

DOC offers educational programs and a variety of evidence-based behavioral health programming that is specific to each of the facilities. Throughout DOC (facility specific) services that are both gender-responsive and trauma informed include cognitive behavioral intervention, chemical dependency, mental health, effectiveness skills, domestic violence, health realization, mindfulness, parenting, anger management and other specific behavioral intervention programming. See programming in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Minnesota Department of Corrections Programs

New Dimensions Chemical Dependency Program	Effectiveness Skills, Domestic Violence, Health, Realization/Mindfulness Abused Boys Wounded Men, Parenting in Recovery, Lifeblood, Release and Reintegration.
General Education	Basic Adult Education, English as a Second Language, GED Preparation, Leader for MN, Standard Adult Diploma
Career/Technical	Computer Literacy, Microsoft Office Specialist, A+ Computer Maintenance, Small Business Management, Mechanical Drafting, Carpentry, Cabinetmaking, Advanced Cabinetmaking, Drywall Installation and Repair, Floorcovering, Heavy Equipment, Manufacturing Skills
Supplemental Educational Programming	Career & Employability Skills, Forklift Training, MN Prison Writers Workshop, Reading is Fundamental, Parenting Education, Cognitive Skills utilizing Thinking, for a Change (T4C) curriculum
Higher Education	College Transfer Coursework, College Preparation Coursework, Accuplacer Testing, Mechatronics, College Correspondence Courses.
Transitions Pre-Release	Pre-release class, Employment Seminars, Budgeting and Finance Seminars, Drivers testing to prepare for release
Volunteer Programming	400+ volunteers, Religious services, Alcoholic Anonymous, Alternatives to Violence
Behavioral Health Services	Assessment, Individual and group therapy, Crisis intervention, Anger Management, Adapt and Overcome, Emotional Intensity Disorder (EIM)
Adjustment, Transitional Services Program	Supportive Living Services, Linden Support, Sleep and Anxiety, Release and Reintegration
Other miscellaneous programming	Apiary (bee) program, Restorative Justice, Long Term Offender Group, Bereavement and Loss, Prison Fellowship, Special Engineers/Boilers Operational, Licensure Program, Safe Serve.

Community Reintegration. Through the renewed efforts under Corrections Reform,

DOC has taken the lead with community reintegration efforts. The development of the

Community Stabilization Program (CSP) through DOC's Community Services Division is

focused on rehabilitation of individuals when they return to communities. CSP has taken on a person-centered design which allows the program to focus on an individual needs in a holistic way according to Erickson, Director of CPS. "The growth of CSP is dependent on collecting data in a meaningful way and we have not figured out how to measure the transformation yet," says Erickson. "Capturing transactional information of engagement with individuals supports the creation of services that help individuals thrive in our communities" states Erickson.

There are many other organizations in community that work to assist individuals with their return home. 180 Degrees created Clifton Place which provides stable housing for men when they return home. Every year 200 men arrive at Clifton Place on their way to a fresh start. According to Erickson, housing stability is more challenging for individuals for individuals returning home because of their custody status are not included in housing and homeless service system. Over 70% successfully graduate from the program and are able to secure employment and housing, realizing their commitment to remain employed and sober and maintain a stable living space.

With employment, housing, and connections to on-going services, Clifton Place graduates have essential building blocks in place to achieve economic security. Families of Clifton Place graduates repeat over and over that they need their husbands, fathers, and sons in their communities. Clifton Place graduates re-connect with their families, contribute income and child support, and become role models, building stronger communities. Senior Manager Tony Hunter says that Clifton Place builds stronger communities, increases the productivity of all people, and improves public safety. 180 Degrees has worked with offenders for more than 30 years and provides offenders with the tools needed for success. Some of the more intimate services include hands-on assistance for employment applications, access to felon-friendly

employment opportunity lists, life skills and money management education, and other life areas that create barriers to reentry according to House Manger Layee Sanoe.

Hunter mentioned "our newly formed relationship with Community Technical College and Alpha Emergence Intense Sex Offender's Program. We are partnering with MCTC/Lino Lake "Prison to College" program. That program serves individuals who are serving time in Lino Lake Correctional Facility an opportunity to pursue post-secondary education. Upon their release, they will continue to provide this opportunity to finish what they started in the facility". Sanoe stated that Clifton Place provides housing for individuals who do not have addresses when they are released.

Twin Cities Recovery Project (TCRP) is another program in Minnesota that while primarily focusing on recovery from substance use and mental health recovery, they serve a large population of individuals returning home that are challenges with remaining substance free and creating wellness around mental health diagnosis. At TCRP, a staff of Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS) from all different backgrounds and walks of life make sure that everyone looking for help in their recovery or help for navigating community resources are provided services that suit their personality and learning style. CPRS's meet one-on-one with an individual looking for help on a regular basis and can be utilized as much or as little as the person receiving services desires.

Additionally, a CPRS sets a positive example in the form of living testament to recovering from life's challenges. The CPRS staff are trained to help navigate resources, such as looking for jobs or housing, coaching on job preparedness or resume building, helping their participants get more organized while dealing with real-life scenarios, and offering non-judgmental guidance to program participants who may not feel comfortable being vulnerable in more traditional therapeutic environments (Twin Cities Recovery Project, 2022). Erickson

reported that partnerships with community organizations bolster the services an individual receives in the community.

*Resources for Minnesota community reintegration service providers can be found at
https://lionheart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/MINNESOTA_Reentry_List.pdf.

New Jersey

The State of New Jersey supports the idea that incarceration, addiction, and mental health challenges touch every family, and socioeconomic sector in some way. Statewide trends alone do not tell the whole story of incarceration: there is wide variation in the use of incarceration across the state. New Jersey demonstrates a commitment to supporting individuals being released from correctional control. During the pandemic corrections policies were changed so that individuals being let out did not have to wait for approved housing rather –churches opened up to provide for their basic needs upon their release. From the current Governor Phil Murphy's office to organizations throughout the state of New Jersey that provide services to individuals being released from prison, there appears to be a general direction for reentry (State of New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, 2022).

The ACLU gave New Jersey an A (the only one in the country) for best use of funding from the 2018 1st Step Act. The state took special consideration in 2021 when garnering funds from the American Rescue Plan to include reintegration efforts in the budget plan (New Jersey Reentry Conference, 2021).

In 2018 New Jersey reported 50,062 individuals incarcerated in the state. The highest rates of prison admissions are in rural counties, and pretrial detention continues to increase in smaller counties even as it is on the decline in larger counties. It is critical to examine incarceration trends in every corner of the state, because although the largest counties may have the most people in jails—the highest rates of incarceration are in smaller cities and rural

counties. Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver speaks freely about her thoughts and views regarding incarceration and reentry. "Incarceration should be about rehabilitation, the opportunity for people to reset their lives" (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2021).

Between 2010-2018 under the governorship of Chris Christy the New Jersey prison population decreased 35%, the DOC budget reduced by 59 million and as a result two prisons were closed. Crime rates declined during this time as well. The former Governor believes "the Governor's seat allows the ability to do good and leadership is top down. Legislation should mandate physicians to get involved in reentry due to the overlap between incarceration and SUD/MH" (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2021). New Jersey Congress women Madeline Dean stated that taking advantage of available government grant money to partner with mental health and law enforcement creates opportunities for individuals returning home from prison (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2021).

Department of Corrections (DOC). The vision of DOC is that every individual released from prison will be prepared to reenter society as a productive, law-abiding citizen of New Jersey. Office of Transitional Programs (OTS) has oversight over the transitional and social services programs within DOC. The office has developed partnerships with federal, state and local agencies for creating linkages to resources that provide support to returning individuals. By providing comprehensive services from the time an individual enters prison through their reintegration back into society the OTS strives to enhance public safety by reducing the risk that individuals will reoffend and return to prison.

Through DOC, OTS operates to implement a seamless continuum of care for individuals utilizing cost-effective, proven practices system-wide that increase individuals' abilities and motivation to practice responsible, crime-free behavior. The State Parole Board and its District Parole Offices work in partnership with community-based programs to develop and maintain a

continuum of treatment, support services and supervision that encourage and aid offenders in completing their supervision in the community (New Jersey Department of Corrections, 2022).

Senators Cunningham and Sweeny support restorative efforts by the state that include authorizing a "clean slate" expungement of criminal records for residents who have not committed an offense in ten years and who have not been convicted of the most serious crimes; restoring voting rights; and curbing driver's license suspensions. In one year, New Jersey created a bolder set of reintegration laws than any other state in the country to the present time (NJRC, 2021).

Programs (DOC). The mission of DOC is to protect the public by operating safe, secure, and humane prisons. This is done through effective treatment of offenders and by providing services that promote successful reentry into society. The core focus of DOC, along with the holistic rehabilitation of people who are incarcerated through behavioral therapy, addiction treatment, vocational and educational training, is the well-being of staff through training and issuance of holistic health resources (New Jersey Department of Corrections, 2022).

Table 7

New Jersey Department of Corrections Programs

Thinking for a Change (T4C)	Cognitive-behavioral program, endorsed by the National Institute of Corrections as a best practice approach for reducing recidivism.
Successful Transition and Reentry Series (STARS)	Release preparatory program designed to address each major reentry barrier faced by the returning individual.
Cage Your Rage (CYR)	Best practice program designed to help offenders recognize their angry feelings, learn their cause, and deal with them in a responsible way.
Successful Employment through Lawful Living and Conflict Management (SEALL)	A continuation of the STARS program with a specific focus on maintaining employment.
Helping Offenders Parent Effectively (HOPE)	Best practice parenting program. Offenders who learn to be better parents can help reduce these risks and Research shows that individuals who learn to become better parents are less likely to return to prison and that their children adjust better when they are reunited.
Family Reunification and Transition (FRAT)	Empowers individuals with skills to help them develop a plan for rebuilding family relationships that may have been damaged as a result of their incarceration and aids in helping them to understand the expectations set by their family members for when they return home.

Community Reintegration. In 2020, Trenton Free Public Library (TFPL), began offering services, resources and referrals to community resources for citizens returning to their local communities after completion of their prison terms. This is part of the state-wide effort of the New Jersey State Library create opportunities for individuals returning home. The two-year program, offered in partnership with the New Jersey State Parole Board and the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, offers new opportunities to break cycles of

recidivism. This effort includes onsite social workers in each location to conduct individualized assessments and provide referrals to employment opportunities, library resources and classes, and occupational skills training (Parker, 2020).

With ten services sites throughout the state, the New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) is a comprehensive organization that provides opportunities to individuals navigating the collateral consequences of correctional control. According to CEO Bolivar Flores, NJRC is ambitious to create an environment, which promotes pro-social norms, encouraging the establishment of attachments to positive rehabilitative cultures, strengthening bonds among peers who promote positive norms and values, and promoting family reunification. Participants receive individualized assessments and treatment plans that address essential needs, including housing, treatment, mental health care, medical care, and access to health insurance and other public benefits to secure these essential needs. Flores reported that many individuals return home without health insurance and identification, two of the most essential needs for these individuals.

This organization was created through community efforts and collaboration in 2014 with the support of Governor Christie's administration. The Hudson County/Jersey City reentry model was initiated through a series of strategic partnerships between the Hudson County Department of Corrections (HCDOC), the New Jersey Department of Family Services (DFS), and local non-profit providers. Also included are the Jersey City Employment and Training Program (JCETP) and Integrity House, a substance abuse treatment provider, both agencies with decades of experience of experience serving court-involved individuals (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2021). NJRC aims to provide clients with addiction treatment, structured sober housing, job training and employment, linkage to legal services and healthcare, spiritual mentoring, and so much more according to Flores.

In addition to behavioral health services, NJRC has created a training center to provide employment trainings and direct linkage to employment. Employment is an important component to success when a person comes home according to Flores. Additionally, the organization is committed to expanding services for Veterans' that have served this country. Flores states that "Veterans' that have found themselves incarcerated return home to little support. NJRC has made a commitment to a new Veterans' Outreach Initiative. *Resources for New Jersey community reintegration service providers can be found at https://reentrycoalitionofnj.org/reentry-resources-by-county/.

Washington

The government in Washington allows residents to influence decisions that shape the quality of life for all Washingtonians through its Boards and Commissions. The governor takes great pride in appointing qualified, responsible members who reflect the diverse lifestyles of our state and who want to make the state of Washington a better place for all. Governor Inslee stated, "one of the most significant public safety investments we can make to improve the lives of individuals and the safety of our communities is to do more to prepare people leaving our criminal justice system for a successful re-entry to society" (Washington Governor Jay Inslee, 2022).

In 2016 Governor Jay Inslee, in recognition of National Reentry Week, signed an executive order to better support the successful transition of people leaving prison and returning to their communities. Approximately 17,000 people are incarcerated in Washington state prisons and about 95 percent will return to their communities. Fifty percent of those men and women are parents. The executive order, "Building Safe and Strong Communities through Successful Reentry," directs state agencies to reduce recidivism and increase public safety with stronger transition programs, so more men and women can build lives based on jobs rather than on crime.

Improving human-centered operations for incarcerated individuals is one of the goals for the state of Washington (Washington Governor Jay Inslee, 2022).

Department of Corrections (DOC). DOC is committed to operating a safe and humane corrections system and to partner with others to transform lives for a better Washington. The assistant director of reentry services stated, "Reentry represents a continuum of services that engage the population, our employees, and community partners" (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021). An integrated reentry approach focuses resources that help prepare, transition, and stabilize individuals.

DOC cannot solve the issues of reentry and recidivism (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021). DOC recently created a position, Director of Person-Centered Services which is held by Chris Poulus. Poulus stated "I never would have imagined being employed in the place I was once incarcerated, and I have met others that were once incarcerated in this system that are now employed by the same system". Person Centered Services focuses on building rapport within DOC between staff and individuals incarcerated- a culture shift according to Poulus. This service also informs staff training and reentry efforts. One of the newer efforts is developing a way for "credible messengers" to go in the institutions and talk about reentry in a realist manner that will help individuals preparing to return home plan for unseen challenges Poulus stated.

Collaborating with other agencies and community-based organizations helps individuals choose to break the cycle of incarceration. Through this approach, DOC assists in increasing the number of individuals who receive reentry transition services, maximize use of available programs, utilize continuous case management principles, and increase the number and utilization of formal agreements with community-based organizations and governmental agencies (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021).

In 2021 DOC removed disciplinary segregation. The state recognized that not only is the practice dehumanizing but being in segregation can also create more obstacles for incarcerated people as they prepare to re-enter the community, since time in restrictive housing limits access to programs, re-entry preparation and positive social interaction (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021).

Programs (DOC). DOC provides many agencies and volunteer operated programs to inmates and supervisees to constructively occupy inmate time, as well as provide opportunities for positive personal growth. Some of the programming includes, emotional coaching, parenting skills, relationship enrichment, education, substance use, mental health, and much more. Programming is specific to facilities (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2021). Programs and descriptions are included in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Washington Department of Corrections Programs

Boy Scouts Behind Bars	Parents play basketball and volleyball with their kids and lead activities related to Boy Scout values, including community, loyalty and helpfulness.
Emotion Coaching	Inmates learn the simple and effective three-step process: First, label and validate the emotions you see. Second, deal with misbehavior if you need to. Finally, help your child solve the problem.
Girl Scouts Beyond Bars	The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program offers to rebuild broken mother-daughter relationships, easing separation and empowering young women to manage feelings of anger and abandonment.
Inside Out Dads	A curriculum for incarcerated fathers that bridges the gap between the inmate father and his children.
The Long-Distance Dads	Focuses on parenting and relationship skills. Such programs "can make a difference not just in the lives of children, but in the recidivism rate — keeping these guys out and making them productive citizens."
The Parenting Inside Out	An evidence-based parenting skills training program developed for criminal justice involved parents. Through rebuilding family relationships, inmates set the stage for reentering the community and living positive, pro-social lives.
Parent teacher teleconferencing	Offered to inmates with children in the school system. Conferencing is intended to assist inmates in maintaining positive connections with their children and to engage these parents with the teachers to support the academic success of their children.
Partners in Parenting	Focuses on the identified concerns of recovering parents and encourages learning and skill-building in key areas such as parent-child communication, developmental expectancies, guidance and discipline, problem solving, and self-care.
Preparing for Release	Designed for inmates returning to a family type environment and occurs at the institution within 6 months of release.
Read to Me Daddy/Mommy	Parents select a fun, positive and inspiring book, or poem for their child. Then they practice reading it aloud and the reading is recorded. The recording and book are then sent to the child, fostering connection between children and their absent parent.
Relationship Enrichment	Teaches partners how to work with the small daily moments that make up the heart and soul of any relationship.
The Residential Parenting Program (RPP)	Allows pregnant, minimum-security inmates with sentences shorter than 30 months the opportunity to keep their babies with them after giving birth.
The Strength in Families	Family-focused case management supported access to community resources, and one-on-one assistance with education and employment goals are offered to all participants in the program and will ultimately promote stronger families and reduced recidivism.
The Trades Related Apprenticeship Coaching (TRAC)	A union pre-apprenticeship program to prepare women to enter one of four building trades including carpentry, laborer, iron work, and the cement masonry.

Community Reintegration. The Washington State Department of Corrections and the Statewide Reentry Council estimate that 8,000 people are released from prison each year (Department of Corrections Washington State, 2022). Many leave prisons traumatized, and most have experienced nothing in the form of restorative healing. Furthermore, they are released to cities, towns and neighborhoods that are ill-prepared to support successful reentry.

Most of the individuals who are incarcerated return to their communities, successful transitions are difficult. Washington's 37% recidivism calculation suggests that many of the individuals who are released from confinement will recidivate and return to prison. The result of the high rates of recidivism are reduced public safety due to the new crimes being committed, increased costs and poor long-term outcomes for the individuals who are released. Reentry programs are designed to assist individuals who are releasing from incarceration to successfully transition back into the community. In conjunction with Department of Corrections the Reentry Center is part of Washington DOC programs and everyone is assigned the case manager to assist with reentry into the community the case manager provides counseling services as needed counseling will be consistent with the individual case plan this will include referrals for housing employment and training and treatment programs (Department of Corrections Washing State, 2021).

Freedom Project in Washington has a vision that supports the shift from punishment to restoration, from oppression to equity, and from apathy to empathy. According to Poulus with DOC, the staff at Freedom Project have a unique understanding of the individuals they serve. Freedom Project interrupts the cycle of incarceration with programs that provide healing connections and restorative communities for participants both inside and outside prison. The programs support incarcerated individuals and those recently released through the practice of nonviolent communication, mindfulness, racial equity and anti-oppression. These practices

define the organization and how reentry is addressed in the community. Freedom Project continually works with facilitators who are currently incarcerated and those recently released from prison to develop and revise the curriculum. The collaborative practice supports accountability, equity, and authenticity (Freedom Project, 2022).

*Resources for Washington community reintegration service providers can be found at https://www.recordgone.com/articles/ex-offender-rehabilitation-reentry-programs-washington.htm.

Policy Review

Since 2007, 35 states have reformed their sentencing and corrections policies through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a public-private partnership that includes the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Assistance, The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, the Crime and Justice Institute, and other organizations. Although reforms vary from state to state, all aim to improve public safety and control taxpayer costs by prioritizing prison space for people convicted of serious offenses and investing some of the savings in alternatives to incarceration that are effective at reducing recidivism. Some states have engaged in more than one reform effort. In the years since the wave of reforms began, the total state imprisonment rate has dropped by 11 percent while crime rates have continued their long-term decline. At the same time, states that have enacted justice reinvestment laws expect to save billions of dollars because of their reforms (Pew, 2018).

The Collateral Consequences Resource Center (CCRC) is a non-profit organization established in 2014 to promote public engagement on the issues raised by the collateral consequences of arrest or conviction. These issues directly connect to reintegration for individuals' post-conviction, pre-release, and post-release. Collateral consequences are the legal restrictions and societal stigma that burden people with a criminal record long after their criminal

case is closed. The Center provides news and commentary about this dynamic area of the law, and a variety of research and practice materials aimed at legal and policy advocates, courts, scholars, lawmakers, and those most directly affected by criminal justice involvement (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022). The five states which are the focus of this research are highlighted below according to CCRC rankings.

California

California, ranking third, restores the vote after completion of any felony imprisonment, having removed restriction for parolees in 2020 via the ballot initiative. Recent governors have pardoned generously, relying on judicial certificates of rehabilitation. In 2019, the state enacted automatic relief for non-conviction records, misdemeanors, and less serious felony convictions, relief that was made retroactive to 1973 in 2021. It offers few opportunities for court managed deferred adjudication, and its extensive diversion programs depend upon policies of county prosecutors. California has robust prohibitions on employment discrimination based on criminal record, but its regulation of the occupational licensing process can be strengthened. It should also consider offering record clearance to more serious felonies and extending opportunities for deferred adjudication (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022).

Diversion, Outreach, and Opportunities for Recovery (L.A. DOOR) – A new City Attorney strategy to address addiction, mental health, and physical wellness in the field rather than in a courtroom. Funded by a Proposition 47 grant award from the state, LA DOOR addresses these issues by prioritizing mobile outreach, pre-booking diversion, and community engagement over the traditional criminal justice system approach (Project 180, 2022).

Illinois

Illinois held on to its first-place ranking through addressing discrimination based on conviction record through its Human Rights Act. While its record relief laws are progressive, it should consider authorizing automatic sealing of non-convictions at disposition, and except those deferred dispositions are offered only in specialized cases (drugs and other minor nonviolent crimes). Pardoning is dependent on the predilections of the incumbent governor, and it is less reliable than in states with more transparent advisory systems. Illinois has taken several commendable legislative steps to encourage voting awareness by prisoners, but it seems that it would take a constitutional amendment to do away with felony disenfranchisement altogether. To hold on the CCRC's rating for 2023 Illinois may consider the sealing of non-convictions automatic or mandatory at disposition without requiring a separate petition, though its decentralized records system may make further automation technologically challenging. It could also eliminate some of the access barriers to petition based relief identified in CCRC's 2021 report, and it could give its courts broader authority to defer adjudication in any case eligible for a probationary sentence to avoid conviction. Finally, it could close a loophole in its expungement law to specifically authorize courts to reduce restitution to a civil judgment (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022).

Minnesota

Minnesota, ranking number eight, restores the vote upon discharge from a felony sentence, which can be delayed due to unpaid court debt for up to ten years. Minnesota's provisions for record relief are only adequate, though its courts have broad authority to defer adjudication, and its high ranking is a function of its strong regulation of public employment and occupational licensing under a law largely unchanged since the 1970s, which was recently extended to private employment. Sealing eligibility could be extended and procedures simplified,

and relief made automatic for non-conviction records. Courts' authority to stay adjudication could be made independent of the prosecutor's assent, since its authority otherwise extends only to first offender drug cases. Its pardon process is regular but not particularly productive, and it does not compensate for the narrow eligibility standards of its record clearing laws. Minnesota slipped four places in the rankings this year, largely because its legislature didn't enact any new laws. It could enhance its position by automating sealing of non-conviction records, making more felonies eligible for record clearing, and restoring the vote to anyone living in the community without regard to whether they still owe court debt (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022).

March 2021, The Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act (MRRA) is a new approach to Minnesota's sentencing that allows people committed to the Department of Corrections (DOC) to earn early release and earned supervision abatement by successfully completing goals identified in their Individualized Rehabilitation Plan. The money saved will be reinvested in the corrections system, victim and crime prevention programs, and the state general fund.

New Jersey

New Jersey, ranking number four, has made great strides in recent years in almost every area: it repealed a restrictive voting restoration law in 2019 and replaced it with a simple law limiting disenfranchisement to a period of felony incarceration. Also, in 2019 New Jersey expanded its courts' expungement authority, and authorized automatic sealing of misdemeanors and many felonies. It makes expungement of non-conviction records automatic, but limits deferred adjudication to drug court cases. New Jersey courts have authority to issue certificates relieving mandatory collateral consequences as early as sentencing, and its parole board has this authority thereafter, but pardoning has been infrequent and irregular in recent years. New Jersey

law regulating consideration of criminal record in occupational licensing, which dates from the 1960s, was improved in 2021 but needs more work. Its ban-the-box requirement for public and private employment provides no standards or procedures for enforcement (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022). In 2019 the Cunningham Cleanser passed through legislation and allows for automatic expungement for most crimes after 10 years of no criminal activity (Legislative services New Jersey, 2022).

In 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed a Reentry Bill, which facilitates identification for individuals when they are let out of an institution in New Jersey. The New Jersey Senate passed legislation in 2020 that is (affectionately) called Earn Your Way Out, giving individuals an opportunity to begin preparing for re-entry into society when they enter prison, not upon release from prison, and an opportunity to become better people when they leave prison than when they entered (O'Dea, 2021).

New Jersey government has committed to using state block grant funding for housing and creating low income and section-8 opportunities for individuals returning home from correctional control. According to Lt. Governor Oliver, the state remains open to looking at state level policies that create barriers for this population and encourages reaching out to legislators for statutory amendments as new solutions become apparent (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2021).

Washington

Washington, ranking eleven, legislated in 2021 to restore voting rights to all not actually incarcerated. Convictions for all but the most serious and violent offenses that have been discharged may be "vacated." While vacatur results in statutory sealing of law enforcement records, court records require a "compelling" standard for sealing — including for non-conviction records and records of deferred adjudication. Pardons process is regular but grants

few. Washington bans the box for both public and private employers, but there are no standards or procedures for enforcement. Licensing law allows disqualification if conviction "directly relates" to occupation and occurred within the previous ten years, gives effect to judicial Certificate of Restoration Opportunity (CROP) certificate, and authorizes preliminary determination – but many procedural protections lacking. Many licensed professions and jobs fall outside this law (e.g., health, education, and social service jobs), though recent laws extend CROP protections to health professions. Washington has moved up seven places in the rankings since 2020 through productive lawmaking last year. To improve its ranking further, Washington should revisit efforts to automate some record clearance, at least for non-convictions. It can also do more to offer procedural protections in licensed professions apart from CROP certificates and should extend workplace protections more generally (Collateral Consequences Resource Center, 2022).

In June 2018, the state of Washington introduced HB2638 to support individuals being released from the department of corrections. The Graduated Reentry program (GRE) allows individuals to be within 6 months of release and able to return to the community if they have served one year of their sentence, have an approved residence to return to and re willing to participate in programming directed by DOC based on n earlier assessment. These individuals will be place on an electronic monitoring device and must follow all directives outlined under their community supervision agreement.

The Reentry Grant Program was created in 2021 to fund community-based organizations from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, to provide, housing, case management and navigators, employment services, family reunification, and legal services that respond to collateral damages on reentry.

In 2018, Graduated Reentry (GRE) was established through the passage of Substitute House Bill 2638. Through GRE, incarcerated individuals were eligible to return to their communities for up to the final six months of their sentence if they met certain criteria. In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5121, significantly expanding eligibility for the GRE program. The revised statute creates two tracks for individuals to serve a portion of their sentence in partial confinement alternatives focused on building infrastructure including developing policies, screening tools and criteria, establishing new staff positions, and processes to support the transfer of individuals into the community. This work has included the engagement of outside stakeholders, including families of incarcerated individuals, to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives are considered when developing reentry plans and meeting individual's needs.

State Reintegration Best Practices

There are consistent practices in each state that prove to be effective both preparing individuals for their return home and supporting them in the community. The research reveals that access to reintegration services pre-release (in custody) is not available to all individuals. Access to pre-release programming is dependent on the facility an individual is housed in, security level, and release date. This is consistent pre-release in all five states. Best practice efforts post-release differs in each state and within the organizations in each state. Service providers across all states are plentiful and generally easily accessible.

Table 9

State by State Best Reentry Best Practice Pre-Release

Best Practice	California	Illinois	Minnesota	New Jersey	Washington
Individual Reentry Plan	X	X	X	X	X
Reentry Case Management	X	X	X	X	X
Behavioral Health Services	X	X	X	X	X
Basic Education	X	X	X	X	X
Higher Education	X	X	X	X	X
Employment Training			X		X
Medication		X			
Resource Guide	X	X	X		
Voting					

Table 10

State by State Best Reentry Best Practice Post-Release

Best Practice	California	Illinois	Minnesota	New Jersey	Washington
Identification	X	X	X	X	X
Health Insurance	X	X	X	X	X
Food Benefits	X	X	X	X	X
Behavior Health Services	X	X	X	X	X
Supportive Services	X	X	X	X	X
Employment	X	X	X	X	X
Education/Training	X	X	X	X	X
Voting	X	X		X	X
Transportation					
Automatic Restoration					

As indicated in tables 9 and 10 there are common practices across all five states that contribute to effective reentry/reintegration. Each of these states develops individualized plans for individuals once an individual entered department of corrections, which includes reentry case management. Each of these states makes essential programming available at prisons in the areas of behavioral health and education pre-release. Post-release services within the state are more often provided by community organizations. Some post-release services are provided in conjunction with department of corrections community supervision. Overall, all five states have

common post-release services available within the state such as access to identification, health insurance, food benefits, behavioral health/supportive service, employment, and education/training. Providing the programming and services listed in tables 9 and 10 above provide opportunity and access to individuals that increase their chances of returning home and not returning to prison. Some common practices noted in tables 9 and 10 that are not consistent across all states are considered best practice, however the policy and legislation in these states do not currently support them consistently across all states.

Discussion

Each of the states in this research are self-directed in the ways they approach planning around reentry. All five of the states created similar practices that are consistent across all of them. Through this research, we understand that is worthwhile to begin reentry planning as soon as an individual is incarcerated. Completion of a thorough assessment identifies key areas to focus on during incarceration and individual case management to create a reentry plan. Developing programming that addresses cognitive, education, employability, social engagement, civic responsibility, health, and other life areas produces opportunities for restorative healing. Creating an environment of safety and trust promotes engagement and participation in programming. Each state recognizes basic and higher education as way to interrupt the cycle of returning to prison. Creating space for those five critical areas is an important step to reimagining what reentry can look like.

Through this research, we further understand that is worthwhile to continue practical and supportive services as a person reintegrates into their communities. Nine key areas were identified in this research as being consistent reintegration practices for formerly incarcerated individuals in each state. The top three are helping with obtaining identification, health insurance and food benefits upon reentry. This is the first step to helping an individual's build a foundation

for reintegration. Behavioral health services, especially for individuals with mental health or substance use disorder diagnosis is necessary in assisting individuals with continuity around mental and emotional health. Employment, education and or training opportunities create the needed tools for sustainability and financial stability for formerly incarcerated individuals.

We know that there are some key areas that acknowledged by few or no states. As shown in Tables 9 and 10, some of the pre-release practices that are not consistent across the five states and are noteworthy to mention as best practice. Providing previously prescribed medication at the time of release to individuals returning to the community reduces stress and confusion for the individual returning home. Providing individuals with a resource guide that is specific to the community they are being released to makes it easy for individuals plan for their release while still incarcerated. Voting in-prison is currently a controversial issue across America and none of the five states in this study allows individuals that are incarcerated to vote. It seems sensible to this researcher that the responsibility of voting can encourage an individual to think more civic-minded. Consequently, in four of the five states, voting is automatically restored once an individual is released from an institution, however one of the states require individuals to be completely disengaged from correctional control involvement. For an individual returning home, transportation is one of the greatest barriers to navigating reintegration. None of the five states has community-based transportation as part of their services for formerly incarcerated individuals, yet transportation is a recognized barrier. Finally, legislation in all states that support automatic restoration of rights to formerly incarcerated individuals is a best practice. However automatic restoration is not supported by state policy in any of the five states. Automatic restoration of rights is the catalyst to reducing the barriers individuals face as they are reintegrating into their communities.

We know that legislative support is paramount to states creating policies and practices that are empowering to individuals returning home. We also know that legislative support without action does not work. While each state operates differently based on funding and policy, the states in this research have some similarities that work consistently across all states. Each of these states take advantage of federal legislation that promotes reentry/reintegration. Because they take advantage of legislation (Second Chance Act) they are afforded funding for the policy(s) they create around the federal legislation. That funding is meant to be used to support the policy in any way the state deems appropriate. Through this research we learned that legislative creation is leaning more toward person/human centered inclusion and veering away from legislation that creates more mechanisms for punishment. Collaboration is present in many state practices around reentry. These states demonstrate collaborative partnerships between corrections and community. That looks different from state to state however collaboration strengthens programming and services which benefits upholding reentry/reintegration practices. At least one of the states in this research includes "rehabilitation" in its institutional name. We understand that in-prison and out of prison employment training is necessary for individuals returning home. We know that the states that have in-prison training programs have a more robust programming curriculum. We found through this research that states with support from the state and local government, thrive in the areas of service for individuals, state level funding support, and state and local level supportive policy. The research discovered the states that include formerly incarcerated individuals in state level decisions making and employment opportunities show great success in building inclusive reentry/reintegration systems. Following incarceration, the needs of individuals reentering their communities are profound and wide-ranging, creating a high need for services to assist them in what can be a complex transition. Providing individuals with access and opportunity within the community helps to minimize the

challenging barriers they will face. Eliminating the barriers to housing, employment, advancement, equity, fairness, and continuity of life is paramount to breaking the cycle of returning to criminal legal systems. Abolishing the stigma that dehumanizes individuals because of their background creates opportunities for self-actualization and creates more supportive networks within the community.

A growing number of programs have been created in prisons and the community to address reentry and reintegration needs of individuals returning home. Implementing programs effectively, however, poses substantial challenges. A wide diverse set of programs have been created and only a limited number of rigorous evaluations have been conducted (Johnson & Cullen, 2015). Research suggests that, overall, reentry services reduce recidivism, but program effects are heterogeneous and at times criminogenic. These programs are "one size fits all" in practice and often create mechanisms that perpetuate criminal behavior. Effective programs tend to be consistent with the individualized risk-need responsivity model. The risk-need-responsivity model is a model used in criminology to develop recommendations for how individuals should be assessed based on the risk they present and what they need, and what kinds of environments they should be placed in to reduce recidivism. This research highlights the use of this mechanism in all five states using assessment tools when an individual enters department of corrections. This research also examined in-prison educational programs and their benefits to enhancing reentry/reintegration practices.

The connection between persons once incarcerated and education is highly noted in research. In prison education programs that transition to out of prison academic programs are highly successful in some states as noted in this research. Across all five states in this research educational programming is present and available for incarcerated individuals to access. The availability of out of prison education varies across the five states. Academic settings are ideal

for individuals returning home because it gives them the opportunity to demonstrate discipline, bring additional wisdom and life experience to their learning environments, and practice patience and restraint (Phillips, 2020). Education is the center piece of all human transformation – there is no hope and there are no dreams without it (Reese, 2017). To have hope an individual must feel hopeful.

As mentioned earlier in this research stigma and stigmatizing, often dehumanizing, language negates positive progress for this population. As demonstrated in this research, the use of stigmatizing language is present across correctional institutions and services providers in each state. Unfortunately, staff that are not affected by a particular stigma tend to respond negatively in their interactions and behaviors around stigmatized individuals (Phillips, 2022). It is age-old practice to refer to individuals under correctional control as inmate, convict, offender, and criminal. This use of language either directly or indirectly perpetuates stigmatization. Thus, individuals facing stigma find themselves dealing with both internal and external manifestations of stigma both inside and outside of prison. It is important that systems of care and control are cognizant of the language used to address people and refer to them. There must be a pivot in thinking and action as it relates to what can be stigmatizing. According to Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice (2022), issues of reintegration are best viewed through a holistic lens, appreciating the complexity and unique experiences of people with records. Solutions that address or alleviate the symptoms that involve public safety, and not addressing the root cause and are only temporary. Progress in this area of research requires a shift in perspective to create lasting solution focused remedies and remembering that the plight of the formerly incarcerated individual can best be described and understood through the voice of those with lived experience. Ensuring that individuals are thinking about their return home prior to their release and offering opportunities for rehabilitation during that time is the first step. Building a sense of

healing around reintegration must be at the forefront of change through respect for individuals, human diversity, social justice, and empowerment.

Limitations

The limitations of this research include limited access to key informants to gather information about policy, practice, and funding. Including individuals directly involved at the correctional and community level may have led to a greater understanding of how the system of reintegration works in each state. Gaining access to budgetary data that outlines how monies are spent on reintegration efforts within each state was difficult. The availability of a reintegration model that included best practice components nationally was not available. The absences of a universal measure to calculate recidivism created a substantial limitation to this study. Time available and time dedicated to researching this topic proves to be the greatest limitation as there are many levels of policy and practice that require unpacking for a full systematic review. A researcher with more time and funding might be able to collect data from more states to facilitate a more thorough review. More time and funding would allow a researcher to interview more key informants to validate or dispute extant data derived from internet sources.

Recommendations

A broader look into all 50 states and their reentry and reintegration practices is needed to make a clearer analysist of what is consistent and what works. Issues of employability, education, housing, mental health, and substance use disorder-related concerns need to be addressed through policy change and funding opportunities for the formerly incarcerated individual to have a successful return to society. Funding for reentry and reintegration creates a broader access to provider for the needs of an individual returning to their community. As mentioned by Bunn (2019) there are intersectional needs that are of ultimate importance yet appear to be discarded as valuable factors. More research around the intersectional needs and

how they affect reentry preparation and reintegration to the community is desirable. Creating spaces for shared commitment to reintegration within state level government is an ideal place to begin promoting change. As the research indicated in the state of New Jersey, the commitment from legislators and community members creates a focused effort to this issue. Inclusion of community psychology principles can contribute to promoting social change. Additional action-oriented research will help to inform policy and practice to build a model for reintegration that is holistic and transformative. Researching the benefits of building relationships with corrections and community will provide best practice guide for solving and abolishing the related social problems for individuals returning home from incarceration. Utilizing data informed procedures is practical when building programs and services for reentry/reintegration. Relevant data is a means to understand the needs of this population and create policy, programming, and services.

There are other implications for further research in this area such as a closer examination of how monies are allocated for reentry specific efforts within DOC. An examination of how services are offered within DOC and how an individual can access those services. A sustained effort to evaluate carefully designed programs rigorously is needed and may require development of a "criminology of reentry" (Johnson & Cullen, 2015). A thorough inquiry into institutional cultures, how individuals are treated, and treat each other would be helpful. Other areas needing attention include evaluation of corrections-to-community partnerships, how that relates to the population's success, and assessing community-based services availability of funding to assist individuals with reintegration. Further review of these areas can help to unpack what reintegration looks like in each state and the areas for improvement.

Efforts must not only improve traditional reentry services by providing expanded services much earlier in the process, but also need to incorporate innovative non-traditional reentry services, which are holistic, geared towards harm reduction, and are family centered. Some of the

ways to accomplish holistic practices are to include and educate the family during incarceration and after. Identifying the immediate needs of individuals as they return home through longitudinal studies and the voice of "credible messengers". A practice of transitioning from corrections to community ideally includes a collaboration between the DOC system and community-based organizations (a supportive soft hand-off from one place to the next) therefore further research regarding the benefit of this practice is needed. Understanding political practice and the intersection of community-based challenges will promote fairmindedness and diverse solutions. Consultation with all stakeholders will inform the creation of opportunities that create avenues, which build capacity to address this marginalization population. One important factor in effective reentry will include an evaluation of the services related to the immediate needs listed in tables 9 and 10 of this research. Once an individual returns home, reintegration becomes a balancing act of priorities and decisions. Creating inclusive policies where formerly incarcerated individuals are considered as valuable assets to the community and their debt to society is considered paid after their discharge from correctional control.

Based on Patton's (2002) reference to social construction theory, social construction is a way to look at the process of reintegration from the perspective of the creators and facilitators of policy. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) should continue to utilize policy, program funding, research projects, and more, to provide information and resources related to reentry and increasing the success of those returning to their communities. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) should create a universal quantitative measurement tool for calculating recidivism across all states. Finally, more research around federal policies and funding to provide states with the information needed to make state level policy changes and access monies already available within the state through federal funding.

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Appendix A
Interview Questions

Correctional Staff

1. Where do you work and what is your role?

   a. How does your role support an individual's return to the community?

2. Reentry/reintegration and recidivism has been defined differently by different people. I would be interested to know how do you define these?

3. I have learned that many services are not always publicly marketed. What are the services that your institution provides?

   a. Are there services or practices that are more useful to individuals?

4. How are your services provided, individual/group?

   a. How frequently are your services provided?

5. It would be interesting to learn if there are services you wish you could provide and what are the reasons you may not be able to at this time?

6. Are there any specific challenges for providing service?

7. In your opinion, are there areas of services that are missing?

8. To what extent do you engage community partners to assist individuals with reintegration plans? (i.e., making connections to service providers pre-release).

9. Do you have an evaluation measure to gauge the impact of your services on recidivism?

   a. If yes, are you able to share some results from your most recent evaluation?

   b. If no, is there a particular reason (i.e., lack of funding, not enough data).

10. Of the individuals engaged in your services within the past year, how many have sustained success in the reentry process (have not returned to prison)? Are there any of your services that are directly driven by policy initiatives?

      a. If yes what are those policies?

Reentry/Reintegration Staff

1. Where do you work and what is your role?

      a. How does your role support an individual's return to the community?

2. Reentry/reintegration and recidivism has been defined differently by different people. I would be interested to know how do you define these?

3. I have learned that many services are not always publicly marketed. What are the services that your organization provides?

      a. Are there services or practices that are more useful to individuals?

4. How are your services provided, individual/group?

      a. How frequently are your services provided?

5. It would be interesting to learn if there are services you wish you could provide and what are the reasons you may not be able to at this time?

6. Are there any specific challenges for providing service?

7. In your opinion, are there areas of services that are missing?

8. To what extent do you engage community partners to assist individuals with reintegration plans? (i.e., making connections to other service providers).

9. Do you have an evaluation measure to gauge the impact of your services on recidivism?

      a. If yes, are you able to share some results from your most recent evaluation?

      b. If no, is there a particular reason (i.e., lack of funding, not enough data).

10. Of the individuals engaged in your services within the past year, how many have sustained success in the reentry process (have not returned to prison)?

11. Are there any of your services that are directly driven by policy initiatives?

      a. If yes what are those policies?

Elected official

1. What is the elected position that you hold?

2. Reentry/reintegration and recidivism has been defined differently by different people. I would be interested to know how do you define these?

3. Are there initiatives that you have either initiated or supported related to reentry?

4. In your opinion, what types of policies are missing?

5. To what extent do you engage community partners to advocate for reintegration policies?

6. How does "tough on crime" impact your political positioning on reentry?

7. What policy initiatives in the last 5 years have the potential to do the best for this population?

8. Once a new bill, policy, initiative has passed do you track its initiation in your district?

   a. If yes, how is that done?