

# Reducing Jail Populations through Supportive Reentry Services



# The Challenge & Promise of Reentry in Municipalities

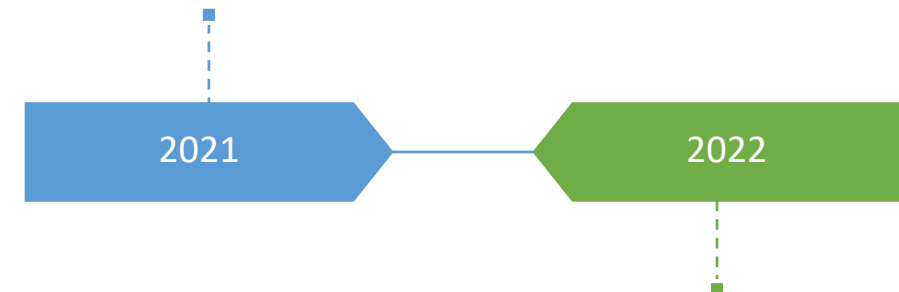
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City efforts to support effective return from jails and prisons—the process known as reentry—exist in a complex landscape shaped by direct service and coordination. Based on a landscape analysis, NLC offers several recommendations about next steps and new directions that cities can take to leverage additional partners, resources and achieve greater impact. Understanding the reentry landscape is the first step in developing effective programming and ultimately eliminating the over reliance on the criminal justice system.

**Definition of Returning Citizen:** the term ‘returning citizen’ replaces the stigmatized terms ‘ex-con’, ‘ex-felon’, etc., and refers to an individual who is returning home after being in prison or jail.

## Why Are We Here?

- \*Pivot Fellowship
- \*Reentry Landscape Scan
- \*The Release of The Challenge and Promise of Reentry in Municipalities



- \*Building off the Landscape Scan & The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force
- \*Launching the Municipal Reentry Leaders Network



# Landscape Scan Observations: City Reentry Approaches

## Hierarchy of Reentry Needs

### BASIC/IMMEDIATE

Employment, Housing,  
Physical & Mental Health  
Services, Social Services,  
Food & Clothing Assistance,  
Transportation

### SUPPLEMENTAL

Legal Assistance, Education,  
ID and other Documents,  
Fines & Fees Assistance,  
Child Care

### TERTIARY

Financial Literacy, Tech  
Training, Gender ID services

1. Direct – the city reentry office manages all services provided to the client
2. Indirect – the city provides referrals, directing clients to services that are provided by private and non-profit organizations
3. Combination of direct and indirect - city office provides some services in house and refers clients to others
4. Hub – the city acts as an umbrella, coordinating city agencies and community organizations. Here the goal is to combine resources and increase efficiency by having all city, private, and non-profits work together





# Landscape Scan Recommendations

The landscape scan also identified seven key emerging opportunities for the city reentry field. These include:

- ◆ Improving expungement and other record sealing efforts.
- ◆ Connecting returning citizens to university-based credentialing and professional development programs
- ◆ Focusing efforts, to a greater degree, on young adults ages 18-25.
- ◆ Closing service and “handoff” gaps and similar measures to improve strategic coordination of the nonprofit-led efforts that dominate the field. Cities can take advantage of the infrastructure and network created by the organizations currently in the reentry space and submit joint applications for federal funding that emphasize coordinating or other roles.
- ◆ Including returning citizens in planning and implementation of services and coordinating efforts.
- ◆ Creating more cross-program and cross-agency collaboration with corrections, probation, sheriffs, jails, and the courts, to ensure that reentry supports begin

“behind the wall” and to minimize re-arrest and re-incarceration, particularly for technical and process violations.

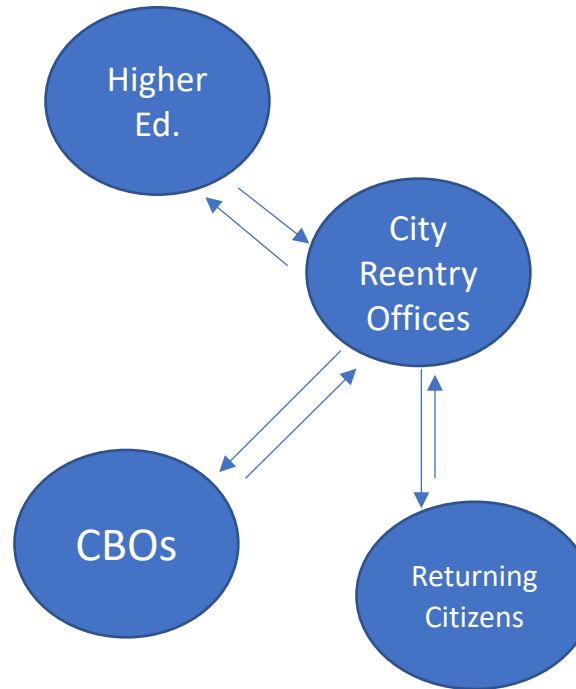
- ◆ Collaborate with business leaders and other city agencies to identify housing, employment, and pathways to other opportunities.

The landscape scan also produced two other findings, stated here as recommendations:

- ◆ Cities and their reentry offices should pursue options to improve operations, demonstrate their impact, and describe their cost-effectiveness by placing a greater emphasis on tracking and sharing results. In addition, the reentry field needs concerted investment in evaluation and replicability of promising practices, to understand more deeply what works best.
- ◆ City reentry offices should consider joining cross-city efforts to heighten visibility, momentum, and connections across the field. They can do so by forming and participating actively in a national network of city reentry offices focused on sharing high-quality practices and policies, informed by persons with lived experience.

## Municipal Reentry Leaders Network

The Municipal Reentry Leaders Network (MRLN) encourages adoption of promising, evidence-based practices, embedding and expanding reentry services and support via policy and budgets, and measuring results. This unique collaborative of city-led reentry center directors, as well as leaders from community-based organizations, returning citizens and higher education reentry initiatives from across the country provides ongoing engagement for municipalities to achieve these goals to increase public safety for all.



### Benefits



**Learn** about promising reentry approaches in other jurisdictions



**Track** federal policy development & budget trends



**Connect** regularly with fellow reentry program leaders and those with lived experience



**Collaborate** across working groups around reimagined approaches to reentry



**Obtain** referrals to and hear from experts



**Cross-connect** and align reentry initiatives with other public safety initiatives