

Potential Barriers to Success

Virtually all funding for this sector is derived from federal funds. Changes in the new administration and Congress will have as yet unknown impact on local resources.

Meeting HUD Priorities

The veterans' services sector specifically supports the following HUD Priorities.

<b>HUD Priority</b>	
B7	Make communities more livable.
F1	Create affordable housing units, supportive housing, and group homes.
F2	Establish set-aside of units of affordable housing for the chronically homeless.
F3	Establish substance abuse treatment programs targeted to the homeless population.
F5	Establish counseling programs that assist homeless persons in finding housing, managing finances, managing anger, and building interpersonal relationships.
F6	Provide supportive services, such as health care assistance that will permit homeless individuals to become productive members of society.
F7	Provide service coordinators or one-stop assistance centers that will ensure that chronically homeless persons have access to a variety of social services

## **SECTOR 6: PRISON RE-ENTRY**

### *Overarching Goal*

To have enough resources to offer the programs, training, housing, medical services and employment options to assist ex-offenders gain self-sufficiency.

### *Sector Description*

The prison re-entry sector falls, primarily, under the purview of the Colorado Department of Corrections. Services are those traditionally identified with community reintegration, transitional services, and aftercare services and are provided through state and federal agency partnerships, faith and community based collaborations, case management, and direct support services. Local services include:

- transportation;
- clothing
- tools appropriate for employment (and verified by the employer);
- housing and some rent assistance;
- identification assistance;
- job search/employment assistance (e.g., application and resume preparation);
- child support;
- education;
- backpacks with hygiene items;
- medical access (including SSI, Vocational Rehabilitation, and prescription assistance);
- community services referrals; and
- financial budgeting.

Community Re-Entry Specialists work with facility case managers, education staff and community parole officers to support implementation of offender transition plans. These plans use the “case management model” in which multiple services are delivered and/or programs are utilized to assist the offender successfully transition back to the community. The goals are to ensure the offender can function successfully on his or her own and to enhance public safety through decreased recidivism.

During FY 2007, the local re-entry program served 402 offenders on parole. Success is measured by having ex-offenders staying out of the system for three or more years. The savings to the community is the cost of \$7 to \$90 per day for incarceration and the loss of a productive, taxpaying citizen.

### Progress in the Last Five Years

Offender re-entry can be a lengthy and difficult process. The past five years have seen increased stability within the state's re-entry program ensuring a continuum of support and connected services. Funding has increased moderately but rarely keeps pace with client need. Transitional housing has been secured through a local landlord for ex-offenders who have been "red carded" from the New Hope Shelter or who are not eligible due to past crimes. Increasingly, more support services are available due to improved communication between agencies.

### Current Gaps and Barriers

One of the largest, and continuing gaps, is the need for affordable and permanent housing. Many landlords will not rent to individuals with criminal records. Housing agencies have admissions criteria that excludes many ex-offenders. Expanded outreach and education is also needed in the employment sector as many are reluctant to hire felons. Additional training and apprenticeship programs could provide opportunities for ex-offenders to learn trade skills and workplace expectations. At the same time, they would provide employers the opportunity to gain confidence in ex-offenders as trustworthy employees.

Community resources, from basic supplies to basic skills, are critical for all ex-offenders. However, part of the re-entry process is enabling these individuals to give back to their community. Volunteering or a barter system (we will give you 'x' if you can follow-through with 'y') helps the ex-offender demonstrate that he/she is serious about personal success.