

MASS. REENTRY SERVICES

Essential for Recidivism Reduction

THE CHALLENGE

Recidivism rates in Massachusetts are extremely high: more than **2/3** of people leaving county jails and more than **1/2** of those leaving state prisons in 2011 were re-arraigned within **3 years** of release.¹

- 45% of people released from maximum security state prison facilities returned to the community without any supervision.¹
- Over 1/3 of FY2014 state prison and county jail releases maxed-out their sentence with no post-release community supervision or case management.¹
- The Department of Correction released over **3,000** individuals in 2016; **69%** exited directly to the street from medium or maximum security.
- Recently released inmates are **120 times more likely** to die from overdose than non-inmates, especially in the first months following release. (Mass. Dept. of Public Health)

"Depending on how you do the math, we have somewhere between a 40 and 50 percent recidivism rate, and we should be thinking real hard about how to reduce that. I would like to know a lot more about what models, what programs, what approaches in other states have had the biggest impact on reducing recidivism, because our goal as a state, our goal as a nation, should be to do what we can to help people find a way into positive, productive employment in society."

– Governor Baker, Aug. 3, 2015

A REENTRY CONTINUUM WITH EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS

- Prison-based reentry services and treatment are a good start but research shows they lose their benefit without a continuum of follow-up services in the community. **Community-based programming is proven to be more effective at changing behavior for the long-term.**
- Community-based reentry services are essential to recidivism reduction and have been acclaimed by policymakers at the federal, state, and local level.
 - Post-release supervision in a halfway house utilizing evidence-based principles of risk, needs, and responsivity **reduces recidivism by up to 25% for high-risk individuals**.²
- Community-based residential reentry services provide safe housing, workforce development, and case management that builds connections and stability for returning citizens.
- The federal Bureau of Prisons releases **75%** of returning citizens through **202** residential reentry centers contracted with private community agencies across the country, with a **5-month** average length of stay.

States around the country are funding their continuum of community-based reentry services.

- **Michigan** allocated over **\$13 million** in 2016 for local prison reentry supports.
- **Ohio** allocated over **\$66 million** in 2017 for state-contracted halfway houses.
- **New Jersey** contracts with non-profit agencies for **2,657** residential community release beds.

THE BIG GAP IN MASS. REENTRY SERVICES

Massachusetts has not committed the resources needed for effective reentry. In fact, the state budget dedicates less than \$100,000 statewide for community-based residential reentry services.

Due to federal and state cutbacks, funding for reentry has continued to decrease even while criminal justice reform is pending at the State House:

- **Span Inc.** closed in August 2017 upon losing funding after over 40 years of providing community case management and substance abuse services to citizens returning from incarceration to the Boston area.
- **Overcoming the Odds**, a Boston Police, DOC, and CRJ partnership, ended in 2016 after 3 years of providing housing and case management to high-risk individuals returning to the Boston area.
- **The Worcester Initiative for Supportive Reentry** ended in 2016 after 5 years.
- **The Boston Reentry Initiative** reduced its scope in 2016 after 16 years of operation.
- **McGrath House**, the only Boston residential reentry program specifically for women, is closing in 2018.
- **Brooke House** and its Transitional Housing program in the Fenway neighborhood is in jeopardy of closing in 2018 after over 50 years in operation, due to recent reductions in county and state contracts.

THE SOLUTION

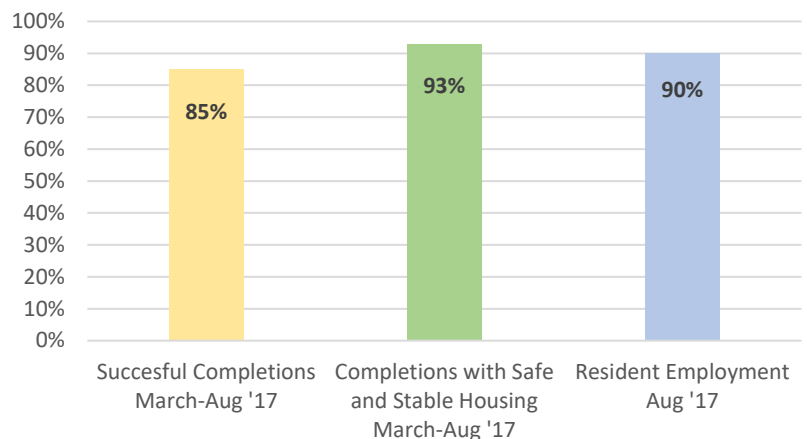
The Massachusetts State Legislature should allocate \$5 million annually for community-based residential reentry services to provide a continuum from behind the wall supports to community services and supervision, in line with the criminal justice legislation.

The Justice Reinvestment Working Group report released in February 2017 recommended Massachusetts “establish funding for critical reentry programs and supports” but funding has not yet materialized.

CASE EXAMPLE: Brooke House, a community-based residential reentry program, has demonstrated success providing:

- ❖ Supportive case management and facilitated connections to resources for employment, housing, substance use, and mental health services;
- ❖ Coaching and guidance for positive actions and health family relationships and reintegration;
- ❖ Assessment and case planning based on risk, needs, and responsivity; and
- ❖ Supervision and accountability.

Brooke House Achieves Great Outcomes for Successful Completions, Housing, and Employment



“By taking an encompassing approach that includes legislative, administrative and funding components, I believe that we can make lasting change. I am particularly invested in ensuring that support programming – for example job training, substance addiction programs, and help securing housing - is of the highest quality.”

-Speaker Robert DeLeo Feb. 21, 2017

¹ Mass. Justice Reinvestment Work Group, Council of State Governments

² Lowenkamp, C., & Latessa, E. (2002). *Evaluation of Ohio's community-based correctional facilities and halfway house programs.*; Ostermann, M. (2009). *An analysis of New Jersey's Day Reporting Center and Halfway Back programs: Embracing the rehabilitative ideal through evidence based practices.*; University of Cincinnati, (2010). *Follow-up Evaluation of Ohio's Community based Correctional Facility and Halfway House Programs- Outcome Study: 2010.*; Lee et al. (2012) *Return on investment: Evidence-based options to improve statewide outcomes.*