

**The
Essex
County
Smart
Book:
A Resource Guide
for Going Home**

“Your Head Start for a Fresh Start”

2008

*Prepared for the New Jersey Department of Corrections, the
New Jersey State Parole Board, the Division of Criminal
Justice and the New Jersey Department of Labor and
Workforce Development*

By

Nancy Fishman, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice

Jeff Mellow, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

©2005. All rights reserved.

*Revised 2008 by New Jersey Department of Corrections
Office of Transitional Services*

Quick Reference: Useful Numbers and Hotlines

American Friends Service Committee

Prisoners Resource Center 1-973-643-2205

CDC National STD and AIDS Hotlines

Spanish: 1-800-344-7432

English: 1-800-227-8922

Addiction Hotline of NJ 1-800-238-2333

Alcoholics Anonymous 1-800-245-1377

Division of Disability Services (DDS) 1-888-285-3036

Division of Youth & Family Services 1-800-792-8610

Hyacinth AIDS Foundation 1-800-433-0254

Legal Services of New Jersey

Toll-free Hotline,

Mon.– Fri., 9 am – 4:30 pm 1-888-576-5529

Motor Vehicle Commission

Driver's License Suspension Hotline 1- 609-292-7500

Main Information 1-888-486-3339

NJ Transit

For routes, schedules, & fares

6am to Midnight, daily 1-800-772-2222

Narcotics Anonymous of NJ 1-800-992-0401

National Suicide Crisis Hotline 1-800-784-2433

New Jersey AIDS STD Hotline

(Beth Israel) 1-800-624-2377

Newark Emergency Services

for Families, Inc. 1-800-696-7063

Se habla español.

Parents Anonymous 1-800-843-5437

Newark One Stop Career Center

(also DVR) 1-973-648-3370

Social Security Office 1-800-772-1213

Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline

(Womanspace, Inc.)

Bilingual and TTY accessible 1-800-572-7233

UMDNJ - Sexual Assault Program 1-973-972-1325

(All 800 and 888 numbers are toll free.)

The Essex County Smart Book

Table of Contents

First Things First:

How to Use this Book

Getting Started:

I.D. and Other Documents

- A. Social Security Card
- B. Birth Certificate
- C. County I.D
- D. Driver's License
- E. Non-driver's State I.D.
- F. Certificates of Naturalization or Citizenship
- G. Alien Registration Card ("Green Card")
- H. Military Discharge Papers
- I. Passport 7
- J. High School Diploma/GED Certificate
- K. Prison Release papers

First Steps After Release:

Where Do I Go to Find

- A. First Stops
- B. Shelter
- C. Food
- D. Clothing
- E. Showers and Laundry
- F. Transportation
- G. Money

Taking Care of Yourself:

Getting Support

Taking Care of Yourself:

Health Care Resources

- A. Health Care Benefits: Am I eligible?
- B. General Health Care Providers
- C. Services for People with HIV/AIDS
- D. Services for People with Tuberculosis or Hepatitis
- E. Dental Care
- F. Substance Abuse Resources
- G. Mental Health Services/Individual Counseling
- H. Free Eyeglasses

Finding a Job: Employment

Assistance and Training Programs

- A. Things to Know Before You Start Your Job Search
- B. Help with Job Search and Job Training: Resources
- C. Legal Restrictions on Employment and Protections Against Discrimination
- D. Benefits for Employers Who Hire People with Criminal Records
- E. Opening a Checking or Savings Account.
- F. Public Libraries³⁷

Reconnecting With Family

- A. Family Counseling Resources
- B. Child Custody and Visitation
- C. Getting and Paying Child Support
- D. Domestic Violence Resources

Getting More Education

- A. GED classes
 - B. Higher Education
- Other Things You Need to Know
- A. Getting Legal Assistance
 - B. Checking and Correcting Your Criminal Record ("rap sheet")
 - C. Expungement: Cleaning Up Your Criminal Record.
 - D. Checking and Correcting Your Credit Record
 - E. Voting Rights
 - F. Registration of Sexual Offenders (Megan's Law)

The Game Plan

A Check List for Getting Started

Getting Ready to Apply for a Job

My Contacts and Phone Numbers

First Things First: How to Use this Book

The purpose of this book is to help you get ready to leave prison and return home, and to help you find the things you need to get back on your feet once you're there. It is specifically focused on what you'll need to know during the first weeks and months that you're back, which can be a hard time of adjustment. This book will not answer all of the questions you will face in preparing for and adjusting to being back in the community, but it can help you get started. It will also tell you where to go to get more information. **Unless a fee or charge is listed, all of the services and resources listed here are free.**

Each section of this book gives you some general tips and things you need to know, and provides addresses, phone numbers and other information about different programs and resources in Essex County. Things that you can do to get a head start before you are released are highlighted. Getting started early, before you get out, may be one of the best things you can do for yourself to make your first days home easier. In the back of this book, you will find a "**Game Plan**" for the first few weeks, a chart to help you plan ahead. We have also provided space where you can write down other useful phone numbers and appointments.

You won't find here every service or organization in Essex County, but, again, it should give you a place to start. The organizations that are listed can help refer you to other places in the area that can be of help to you. For more listings, and for up-to-date information about office hours and changes in policies, you can go to the website designed to help former prisoners in Essex County, www.newarksuccess.org.

GETTING FREE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

All of the public libraries listed on page 35 should be able to provide you with free internet access

Getting Started: Identification (I.D.) and Other Documents

In order to get a job, apply for public benefits (such as general assistance, food stamps or Medicaid) or other programs, get job training or apply for an apartment, you will need to have as many identification documents in hand as possible. While many people lose these documents when they are incarcerated, the good news is that you can begin to collect them again before you are released, by mail or with the help of your counselor. Below is a list of different documents and how to get them.

Helpful tip: Save any envelopes from bills or official mail. You might need these to prove your address.

A. Social Security Card

You can obtain a replacement card if you have a Social Security number (even if you don't remember what it is.) Or you can get a new card by mail from prison, or can get it after you are released by going to the social security office.

PRE-RELEASE: The New Jersey Department of Corrections has an agreement in place with the Social Security Administration that allows inmates in the release process to apply for a replacement Social Security Card. This service is offered through the Social Services Department of the Correctional Facility. The application and card are free. Once approved the card is sent to your correctional facility and will be issued to you upon your release from custody. For more information contact the Social Services Department at your correctional facility.

POST-RELEASE: You can also get the application by phone or by mail, or by walking into the Essex County Social Security Office at 970 Broad St. in Newark. The form SS-5 can also be downloaded from the Social Security website(www.ssa.gov/replace_sscard.html). You can fill it out there and show proof of identification.

Prison release papers count as proof of identification.

B. Birth certificate

The Office of Vital Statistics in the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has all New Jersey birth, marriage, and death records. The fee is **\$25**.

PRE-RELEASE: You can write a letter requesting a birth certificate, which must include the name at birth on the certificate, the exact date of birth, the exact city and municipality and county of birth, the full maiden name of mother and the name of father, if his name is on the certificate. You must include a photocopy of the identification for the person requesting the record (which may be you, but somebody else can request the birth certificate for you — they just have to state in the letter what their relationship to you is). Valid I.D. includes a photo driver's license or non-driver's state identification card, a photo I.D. and some other form of I.D. with an address, or two alternate forms of I.D. with an address. You can use a prison photo I.D. with documentation of the address of the prison. Mail your request to: NJ Vital Statistics —Customer Service Unit, P.O. Box 370, Trenton, NJ 08625-0370. It should take 6 to 8 weeks. If not received after 8 weeks please call 1-609-292-4087 and select option "status of current request". For more information and assistance contact the Social Services Department at your correctional facility.

POST-RELEASE: In addition to writing, you can go directly to the Bureau of Vital Statistics on the first floor of the Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton, on the corner of Warren and Market Sts. In-person counter service is from 8:30 to 4:00 and you can usually get the certificate on the same day. You will still have to have all the information listed above. For more information, there is also a website: www.state.nj.us/health/vital/. You can also usually obtain a birth certificate from the clerk's office in the city hall of the town where you were born.

C. County I.D.

Essex County no longer gives out county identification cards, but **if you are over 55, you can get a Senior Citizen Courtesy Card from the Essex County Clerk's office** (Hall of Records, Room 247, 465 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd., Newark). You must show proof of residence in Essex County (so you can only do this after you are released), proof of age, and provide a social security number.

D. Driver's License

If you do not have a driver's license, you will have to wait until you get out to get one, or to replace a lost card or renew an expired license, unless you are in a halfway house and

Motor Vehicle Services	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Auto Operator License
	Your Name
	Street
	City, State
X _____	

can go directly to the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC). If you think, or know, that your license has been suspended, you should find out for sure before you get out and figure out what you will have to do to get it back. If you were convicted of any kind of drug offense, your license will have been suspended.

PRE-RELEASE: Get a copy of your driver's license record, which is called an "abstract." You will have to get and send in a "driver history abstract request" form from the Motor Vehicle Commission (the "MVC"). You can get this form by calling 1-888-486-3339, or by mail: Motor Vehicle Commission, Abstract Unit, 225 East State St., P.O. Box 142, Trenton, NJ 08666-0142. Once you get and fill out the form, you will have to send it back with **\$10**. The abstract will tell you whether your license is suspended, and why. Depending on why it is suspended, you may be able to address some of the problems before you get out. For example, if your license was suspended because you failed to show up for a court date because you were incarcerated, you can write to the court and try to clear this up by mail. If you owe fines, you will probably not be able to pay these before you get out, but you should try to find out how much you owe, and to whom you owe them.

POST-RELEASE: Once you are out, you can get a certified driving abstract by visiting one of these Motor Vehicle Commission offices in Newark, East Orange, or Irvington, or a MVC Regional Office in Wayne or Trenton.

You will still have to pay **\$10**. If your license was suspended for 6 months or more because of a drug conviction, the period of the suspension will begin from the time of your release. Other kinds of suspension, such as for failure to pay parking tickets, insurance surcharges, or child support, will last until you have paid the fine or worked out a payment plan. For questions

about suspension, call the suspension hotline: 609-292-7500.

MVC LOCATIONS IN ESSEX COUNTY

Newark: 228 Frelinghuysen Ave.

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Wed. 8:00 am - 7:30 pm; Sat. 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

East Orange: 55 Washington St.

Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Thurs. 8:00 am - 7:30 pm; Sat. 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Irvington: 10 Washington Ave.

Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Mon. 8:00 am - 7:30 pm; Sat. 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Regional Offices:

Wayne

1578 Route 23 North
Wayne, 07470

Services: Driver conferences, driver records, (issuances and inquiries), points and surcharge (inquiries), suspensions and restorations.

Hours: Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri 8 am – 4:30 pm, Wed 8 am-7:30 pm, Sat 8 am-12 pm

Trenton

1205 Stockton and Front Street,
Trenton, NJ 08611

Services: Driver conferences, driver records, (issuances and inquiries), points and surcharge (inquiries), suspensions and restorations.

Hours: Mon 8 am – 7:30 pm; Tue-Fri 8 am - 4:30pm; Sat 8 am – 12pm.

If all you need is to replace a lost or stolen license, you will have to bring identification to the MVC and pay **\$11**. The MVC now has very specific kinds of I.D. that are required: you will need to bring certain kinds of “primary” I.D. (birth certificate, passport, citizenship papers, etc.) and “secondary” I.D. (school records, marriage or divorce certificates, employee. cards, old driver’s licenses, etc.) and proof of your address. You can get a brochure on this new “Six Point” system from the DMV offices listed above, or from the Motor Vehicle Commission website, www.state.nj.us/mvc If your license has expired, you will have to go to the MVC to fill out a renewal application, and bring I.D. You may have to take at least the written test again. License renewal costs **\$24**. License reinstatement (after suspension) costs **\$100**.

E. Non-driver’s State I.D.

New Jersey provides a state photo identification card for non-drivers. **You can get this kind of official state I.D. even if your driver’s license is currently suspended,** so this may be a good option for you if it looks like it will

take you a long time to get your license back. You will still need to bring the kinds of identification documents described above, under the new "Six Point" system.

F. Certificates of Naturalization or Citizenship

You will need this for employment if you are not a citizen. In general, if you need to replace lost forms, you can contact the US Citizenship & Immigration Service or Application Support Centers to find out about identification and fingerprint verifications. There is a fee to process an application for replacement documents. The National Customer Service Hotline is 800-375-5283.

CITIZENSHIP LOCATIONS

Application Support Center

24 Commerce Ave.
Newark, NJ 07102

US Citizenship & Immigration Service

Peter Rodino, Jr. Federal Building
970 Broad St.
Newark, NJ 07102

G. Alien Registration Card ("Green Card")

To replace a missing Green Card, you must go to the US Citizenship & Immigration Service Office (see above), bring identification, and fill out form, I-90 or you can go to the website and download the forms at www.uscis.gov. It costs **\$260** for processing. **If you have any questions or concerns about your status as a result of your criminal conviction, call Legal Services of New Jersey (at 1-888-576-5529) before going to immigration.**

H. Military Discharge Papers

PRE-RELEASE: You can write to request a copy of your records (discharge papers called a "DD214") from the Veterans Benefit Administration in New Jersey, at 20 Washington Pl., 3rd Floor, Newark, NJ 07102, or the main records depository, NPRC, 9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. You can do this by letter, but it's better to use the official form, the SF-180, which you can get by writing to either the local or national offices listed above, or request from the local office by calling 800-829-1000. For more information and assistance, contact the Social Services Department at your correctional facility.

POST-RELEASE: In addition to requesting in writing, or going to the office listed above, you can go to the website www.vetrecs.archives.gov and follow the on screen instructions for requesting personnel records.

You will be asked to print out a signature page which can either be mailed or faxed and after they receive the form, the records will be mailed directly to you.

I. Passport

Although a passport may not seem like an important thing to have at this point, it can serve as easier form of widely accepted I.D. for you to have, although it does cost money. If you do not have one, after you are released, go to the Essex County Clerk's Office, 465 Martin Luther King Blvd. Room 245, in Newark, 973-621-4920. You will need to bring: an original or certified copy of a birth certificate with a raised seal and file date issued by Vital Statistics, a naturalization certificate, or a previous US passport; (photocopies aren't accepted). You will also need to furnish a social security number, and bring I.D., such as a valid driver's license, government identification or previous passport issued after your 16th birthday. The expired passport should not be more than 15 years old. However, if you do not have those forms of I.D., you can bring with you an identifying witness who has known you for at least 2 years and has a valid driver's license. In addition to this witness, you'll have to bring 3 other forms of I.D. You must bring 2 copies of a 2X2 face front photo. The cost is **\$97 for a first time adult and \$67 for renewal.**

You may also obtain a passport at most US Postal Services Offices.

J. High School Diploma/GED Certificate/High School Equivalency Degree (HSED)/Vocational School Certificates

It is very important to have records of any degrees, school completion certificates or work-related licenses that you may have. This will help you get a job, and can also provide additional identification if you need it. Before you are released, you can write to the school or agency that gave you your degree or certificate. Each of these will have separate procedures. You should also get copies of certificates for programs or classes completed while in prison.



K. Prison Release Papers

Make sure you hold on to your prison release papers. These can serve as identification in some circumstances.

First Steps After Release: Where Do I Go to Find...

The first days after you get out can be the toughest. This section will give you information to help you get on your feet: places to go for food, shelter, clothing, money, and other emergency needs. While every agency in Essex County isn't listed, we've listed places to help you get started, places that will work with people coming out of prison. Here are some pointers for the first days out:

BE PREPARED: Put all your paperwork and identification in one place, a folder or an envelope, and have it with you, so you can answer questions that people ask.

KEEP RECORDS: Write down the full names and phone numbers of people that you've talked to, and when you spoke to them. You can use the blank pages in the back of this book to take and keep notes. Keep copies of any money orders or receipts for things you've paid for, and any letters you've gotten from government agencies, the courts, or organizations that are helping you.

BE PATIENT: You are probably going to have to wait in a lot of lines for things, and be put on hold by telephone operators. You will meet a lot of workers who are trying to help a lot of people, not just you. Expect to wait. Expect that you may be sent to different offices and workers to get something taken care of. Try to be patient and be polite — it will help.

Below you'll find the names, addresses, phone numbers and descriptions of agencies and services that can help you. It is a good idea to call first to check that hours of operation haven't changed:

See the following pages for list of resources

A. First Stops

The agencies below provide either a range of services and/or can refer you to other places, depending on what you need.

FIRST-STOP AGENCIES

2-1-1/First Call for Help

Dial 211

1-800-331-7272 (Homeless Hotline)

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm

Emergencies and homeless calls are 24 hours/7 days a week.

2-1-1 provides 24 hour comprehensive human service information and referral for residents of Camden County. 211 can help you access information as well as connect you to resources that are available to you in the community. 2-1-1 is equipped for TTY callers and has a

language line that provides translation services for 140 different languages.

Newark Emergency Services for Families (NESF)

982 Broad St., Newark
800-696-7063 (24 Hour Hotline)
Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Fri. 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24, 41, 13, 39

Provides emergency services, including food and clothing and 24 hour referrals for shelter placements, through hotline. Will screen for other assistance available, including health services and rental assistance. Se habla español.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Prisoners Resource Center
972 Broad St., 6th Floor, Newark
973-643-2205
Hours: Mon., Tues., Fri. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
(General Criminal Justice Program office hours; more limited hours for PRC)
Bus lines: 24, 40, 13, 29

Provides referrals to services and programs, information about resources, and support groups for people coming out of prison.

B. Shelter

These are some of the places providing temporary places to stay.

MEN ONLY

Lighthouse Community Services

487 Washington St., Newark
973-802-1802
Hours: Open 7 days
Bus lines: 24, 13, 27



42 bed shelter for men, takes referrals from any agency. Space is limited, so call first. Length of stay determined on a case by case basis. Bring 2 forms of I.D. (can use prison release papers). Can bring up to 4 bags and lockers are available for storage.

Project Solution

712 Springfield Ave., Newark
973-371-5266
Hours: Open 7 days,
Lockout period from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Bus lines: 25, 96, 90, 13, 99 (transfer to 25)

81 bed shelter for men over 21, physically healthy and able to read, referrals from any agency, DOC, or Parole. Provides 2 meals per day.

MEN & WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN

Urban Renewal Corp.

224 Sussex Ave., Newark
973-483-2882
Hours: Open 7 days
Bus lines: 99, 7

Shelter and multi-service agency for men and women over 18, referral from any agency, DOC, or Parole. Must bring some form of I.D. Length of stay varies depending on agency program involvement.

United Community Corporation

31 Fulton St., Newark

973-642-0181

Hours: Open 7 days, 5 pm - 7 am

Bus lines: (unavailable)

30 day shelter with 46 beds for men, 18 for women, referrals or first come, first served. Parolees must bring parole papers and name of parole officer, otherwise bring I.D. (DOC I.D. or prison release papers okay). No storage for belongings available.

WOMEN ONLY

Missionaries of Charity

60 Jay St., Newark

973-483-0165

Hours: Open 7 days

Bus lines: 99, 7

Shelter for non-pregnant women over 18, referral preferred but not necessary. Women can stay 3 weeks but then cannot return again for 6 months.

WOMEN & CHILDREN

Isaiah House

238 North Munn Ave., East Orange

973-678-5882

Hours: Open 7 days

Bus lines: 41

Shelter for single women and women with children, referral by city or county welfare agencies, unless HIV+/person with AIDS regardless of welfare status: contact extension 3009 to find out if you can otherwise qualify.

Apostle's House

16-24 Grant St., Newark

973-482-8865

Hours: Open 7 days, 9:30 curfew

Bus lines: 13, 24, 59 (for 24 & 59, get off at Broad St., transfer to 13), 39, 27

Shelter for women with children, referral preferred, from NESF, welfare, or DYFS. Women can have a room with storage space for 2 to 3 months.

C. Food

There are three ways to get help with food: 1) public benefits to help purchase food, 2) food pantries that provide groceries, and 3) soup kitchens that provide hot or prepared food. Food stamps and other public benefits are discussed under the section in this book labeled "Money". Food pantries and soup kitchens are listed below.

FOOD PANTRIES

Bethany Baptist Church

275 West Market, Newark

973-623-8161

Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 11:00 am - 1:00

Bus lines: 21, 34

Referral letter needed; can be from DOC or Parole. Must bring photo I.D. One visit per 30 days.



First Hopewell Baptist Church

525 Orange St., Newark
973-485-8100

Hours: Wed. 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Bus lines: 34, 21

Need to bring proof of income, birth certificate and photo I.D. One visit per 30 days.

Isaiah House

238 North Munn Ave., East Orange
973-678-5882

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Bus lines: 41

Must have specific referral every visit, can be from any agency, clinic, church, etc. One visit per month.

Lighthouse Community Services

487 Washington St., Newark
973-802-1802

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Bus lines: 65, 66, 70, 59

Must have referral for every visit, DOC or Parole referral accepted.

Salvation Army (3 locations)

45 Central Ave., Newark
973-538-0997

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Bus lines: 24, 44

Bring prison release papers; picture I.D., proof of address. One visit every 30 days, after 15th of the month.

699 Springfield Ave., Newark
973-375-5933

Hours: Tues. - Fri. 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Bus lines: 25

No referral needed for first visit, but needed for next visits. Bring photo I.D. and social security card. One visit every 60 days.

430 Main St., East Orange
973-672-0262

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Bus lines: 21

Must be resident of the Oranges and show proof of address (rent receipt, utility bills, plus 2 forms of I.D.)and proof of any government benefits received. One food package every 90 days.

St. Ann's Church

103 16th Ave., Newark
973-642-4217

Hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs. 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Bus lines: 1

Referral required, listing name of individual and any dependents. One visit every 30 days, after 15th of the month.

SOUP KITCHENS

Missionaries of Charity

60 Jay St., Newark
973-483-0165

Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 9:30-10:30 am



Clinton Ave. Presbyterian Church

761 Clinton Ave., Newark
973-372-8408 Lunch
Wed - Lunch, Tue & Thur - Dinner

Roseville Presbyterian Church

36 Roseville Ave., Newark
973-483-3361
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur: 9 am -12 pm; Sat 11 am-1 pm

St. James RC Church

143 Madison St., Newark
973-344-8322
Mon 11:00-12:30 pm, Tue 9 am-12:30pm

Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

83 Elizabeth Ave., Newark
973-242-6712
Wed & Fri 12pm (Sept. – June)

First Hopewell Baptist Church

525 Orange St., Newark
973-485-8100
Sat 1-2 pm

St. James Social Service Corp.

604 MLK Blvd., Newark
973-624-4007
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri 1pm-2pm

Irvington Neighborhood

Improvement Corp.
346 Irvington Ave., Irvington
973-416-0909
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri 1pm-2pm

Lighthouse Community Services

487 Washington St., Newark
973-802-1802
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri, 12-1 pm

St. John’s RC

22 Mulberry St., Newark
973-623-0822
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri 8:30 am & 11:30 am

D. Clothing

The following places provide free or low-cost clothing.

FREE OR LOW-COST CLOTHING SOURCES
Newark Emergency Services for Families (N

982 Broad St., Newark
800-696-7063 (24 Hour Hotline)
Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Fri. 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24, 41, 13, 39

Free clothing bank on site, including work/professional clothing. Se habla español.



East Orange/Orange Community Development Corp.

490 Main St., East Orange
973-266-5315
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Bus lines: 94, 21
Free clothing and Thrift Store. Must have a referral and two forms of I.D. and must live in East Orange, Orange or Montclair.

Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corp.

346 16th Ave., Irvington
973-416-0909
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Bus lines: 90
Free clothing, Irvington residents have priority, must bring proof of residency.

E. Showers and Laundry

The following places provide free showers and laundry facilities.

FREE SHOWERS AND LAUNDRY FACILITIES

Newark Emergency Services for Families (NESF)

982 Broad St., Newark
800-696-7063 (24 Hour Hotline)
Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Fri. 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24, 41, 13, 39
Multi-service agency provides showers and washing machines. No referral needed.

Liberation in Truth

Open Door Drop-In Center
47-49 New St., Newark
973-424-9555
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Bus lines: 13
Multi-service agency provides showers and washing machines. No documents needed.

F. Transportation



There is no general program to provide assistance paying for transportation. Though NJ Transit no longer will accept release papers in substitute for bus tickets, many correctional facilities offer NJ Transit Bus tickets at a reduced rate.. Some of the programs listed in this book will provide bus passes or bus cards to help you participate in the program. If you need that help, make sure you ask. For specific bus line information contact NJ Transit: 800-772-2222 or <http://www.njtransit.com>. If you click on the “trip planner” section you can find out routes.

If you are going to drive places, remember that you **must** have a valid driver’s license, and you **must** have insurance for any vehicle that you are driving. New Jersey now has a “Dollar-A-Day Car Insurance Program” for low-income individuals who receive Medicaid and

who want to insure a car registered in their name. It costs **\$360** per year if you pay all at once and **\$365** if you pay in installments. You cannot get this insurance if your license or registration is revoked or suspended. For more information contact: 800-652-2471; <http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/dollaradayqna.htm>.

TRANSPORTATION FOR THE DISABLED

NJ Transit's Access Link

1-800-955-2321

Call between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, Mon. - Fri.

NJ Transit's Access Link paratransit service comparable to the local bus service. This service is specifically for people whose disability prevents them from using the local fixed route bus service. You must call to be interviewed in person to determine your eligibility.

G. Money

Once you get out, you will need a source of income, at least temporarily, until you can find a job. (see under "Finding a Job" for information about looking for work).

The DOC does not provide any "gate money," except for any money you may have in your inmate account. If it is possible to save any money before you get out, you should try to do so. Parole can give up to \$300 in emergency funds, based on need, but it's at their discretion — ask your parole officer.

You may be able to get some kind of public assistance ("welfare"), but not everyone qualifies. Here are the basics of what you'll need to know about getting benefits.



GENERAL ASSISTANCE (WFNJ-GA) AND TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY

FAMILIES (WFNJ-TANF) provide cash benefits, GA for single people and TANF for people who have their children with them. Both programs will require you to work or be actively looking for work and both have a five-year lifetime time limit. Work First New Jersey also has an Emergency Assistance program that you may qualify for if you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Emergency Assistance program can pay for things like food, clothing and transportation costs to look for housing, but also temporary rental or mortgage payment assistance and utility payments.

WFNJ-GA AND WFNJ-TANF APPLICATION SITES:

Newark or Irvington residents

18 Rector St., 9th Floor, Newark
973-733-3326.

**Montclair, Bloomfield, Roseland, Verona, Orange,
Fairfield, and N. Caldwell residents**

50 South Clinton St., 2nd Floor, East Orange
973-395-8165

NOTE: If you were convicted of an offense involving distribution or sale of drugs after August 22, 1996, you cannot receive cash benefits under GA or TANF. If you were convicted of an offense after that date that only involved possession of drugs, you may be able to get benefits if you completed or are enrolled in a licensed drug treatment program, or completed a program in prison and are drug free (you will have to submit to drug testing). If you apply for welfare and the case worker asks about your criminal background, you should answer truthfully and to the best of your knowledge. If you lie, you may be found "ineligible" and could also be prosecuted.

FOOD STAMPS provide a monthly sum to buy food. You apply at the same place you apply for cash benefits. If you were convicted after August 22, 1996 of a drug distribution or sales offense, you may still be able to get Food Stamps if you have completed or are enrolled in a licensed drug treatment program, or completed a program in prison and are drug free (you will be tested). Same goes for possession offenses.



VETERANS BENEFITS: If you were receiving veteran's benefits, either for disability or a pension, and you were incarcerated for more than 60 days, you will have to get reinstated after you are released. If you were not receiving benefits and you are a veteran, you may be eligible for benefits or for some of their other programs and services, including healthcare. You can contact the VA for questions about benefits at 800-827-1000; the health benefit number is 877-222-VETS. The VA Benefit Administration is located at 20 Washington Pl., 3rd Floor, in Newark, 973-645-1441. **Be aware that the VA takes considerable time to make decisions. On average, it can take 273 days to process a new application for benefits.**

OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS: You maybe eligible for other cash benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits (if you are seriously disabled and cannot work) and the Women's, Infants, Children (WIC) program, which gives food vouchers to low-income parents. You can inquire about WIC at the city and county welfare offices.

Taking Care of Yourself: Getting Support

Coming home and readjusting to living on the outside can be tough, and there are places where you can get some support from people who have been through it already and know how the game is played. They can help you get back on your feet. Below are a few places to start. In addition, there are Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group meetings all over Essex County. To find a meeting near you, call 800-245-1377 (for AA) or 800-992-0401 (for NA). For other self-help group resources, call the New Jersey Self Help Clearinghouse at 800-367-6274.

Taking Care of Yourself: Health Care Resources



It is very important that you pay attention to your health during the period after you are released, and that you make sure you have a plan to get any prescriptions that you need filled and see a doctor if you have health conditions that need care. Also, stress and changes in routine can make many health conditions worse. Below, you'll find information on paying for health care and clinics and other resources in Essex County.

A. Health Care Benefits: Am I eligible?

In New Jersey, the **Medicaid** program provides healthcare benefits for some low-income people. If you gain custody of children under 18 when you are released, you may qualify if you are single, or if the main breadwinner in the household is unemployed, or isn't earning enough to support the family. Otherwise, if you are single, you will only qualify for Medicaid if you are low-income and are aged (meaning over 65), blind or so disabled that you are unable to work. If you are disabled and are applying for SSI, you will also be screened for Medicaid at that time. If you qualify for General Assistance benefits, you will get some very basic health care benefits through Medicaid ("Plan G"). **Medicaid is a separate program from GA or TANF, so you don't**

have to be getting those benefits to qualify for Medicaid. For questions about Medicaid eligibility, you can call 1-800-356-1561. To apply for Medicaid in Essex County, go to the Essex County Department of Citizen Services, Division of Welfare, at 18 Rector St., 9th Floor, 973-733-3000.

If you are a veteran, you may be eligible for health care benefits through the **Veteran's Administration**, which provides a "Medical Benefits Package" for enrolled veterans. You can call 877-222-VETS for more information about eligibility and applying for benefits.

If you are HIV+ or have AIDS, you may also be eligible for the **AIDS Drug Distribution Program (ADDP)**, which provides help paying for AIDS medication for people who don't have other ways of paying. **You can apply for this program before you are released.** To apply, contact the **AIDS Drug Distribution Program** at 1-609-588-7038 or toll free 1-877-613-4533, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. You can also contact the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation at 155 Washington St., Newark, at 973-565-0300 or call the state's hotline 877-613-4533. In Essex County, you can also contact the Newark Planning Council at 973-733-4402.

Easter Seals New Jersey provides information, referrals and loans of medical equipment (including wheelchairs) to people in need. For information call 732-974-2180 or 732-974-1042.

B. General Health Care Providers

Even if you do not have Medicaid or other health insurance or benefits, Essex County has clinics that provide primary health care at low cost, sliding scale or for free. They are listed below. Most hospitals have charity care and you should ask about this if you go to a hospital emergency room for treatment.



NEWARK COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Broadway Health Center

741 Broadway, Newark
973-483-1300
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 p.m.
Bus lines: 13, 27

Dayton St. Health Center

101 Ludlow St., Newark
973-565-0355
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 p.m.
Bus lines: 41, 21

James White Manor

516 Bergen St., Newark
973-648-0866

Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 9:00 am - 1:00 pm;
Wed. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Bus lines: 99, 72

All of these centers accept Medicaid and some insurance plans, but also provide services on a sliding scale basis, additional fees for x-rays and lab work. Primary and preventive care. Staff there can help you apply for Medicaid or other benefits if you may be eligible.

NEWARK HOMELESS HEALTH CARE PROJECT

973-621-9560 ext. 26

Multiple locations:

Special Care Clinic

110 William St., Newark

Mon. through Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Salvation Army

65 Pennington St., Newark

Tues. and Thurs. 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Harmony House

278 South Orange Ave., Newark

Mon. and Wed. 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Goodwill

79 University Ave., Newark

Tues., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. 4:40 pm - 7:30 pm

Urban Renewal

224 Sussex Ave., Newark

Mon. through Thurs. 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

This project provides basic medical care services from different locations around the city, for people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. No documents or fees are required. You can walk in or make an appointment in advance. They do medical screening, immunization, prescription services, and make referrals for substance abuse and mental health services.

EAST ORANGE PRIMARY CARE CENTER

444 William St., East Orange

973-675-1900

Hours: Mon., Wed. 9:00 am - 7:00 pm

Tues., Thurs., Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 21, 41

Accepts Medicaid and some insurance plans, but also provides services on a sliding scale basis, additional fees for x-rays and lab work.

IRVINGTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Family Health Center

832 Chancellor Ave., Irvington

973-237-5999

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Offers a full range of preventive and medical care including pediatric care, family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, dental care, HIV counseling and testing. Accepts Medicaid and some insurance plans, but also provides services on a sliding scale basis; fees for x-rays and lab work.

NEWARK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

110 William St., Newark
973-733-7614

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Thurs. 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Bus lines: 66, 5, 70, 13

Provides Diabetes/High Blood Pressure Screenings, Hepatitis Screenings, PAP Smears, Asthma Services, Routine Blood work, Adult Immunizations, Hearing and Vision Testing. Must be a Newark resident and show proof of residency and proof of income. Fees are on a sliding scale (\$15 and up).

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF METRO NJ

151 Washington St., Newark
973-622-3900

Hours: Mon., Tues., Fri. 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Wed., Thurs. 8:30 am - 7:00 pm

Bus lines: 13, 27, 25, 34, 39

Provides gynecological exams, pregnancy testing/counseling, STD testing/counseling, emergency contraception. Sliding scale fees based on income and family size, Medicaid accepted.

C. Services for People with HIV/AIDS

In addition to the clinics listed above, a number of places in Essex County offer care and support services specifically for people with HIV and AIDS.

PROJECT CONNECT

Hyacinth AIDS Foundation
155 Washington St., Suite 206, Newark
973-565-0300

Hotline: 800-433-0254

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 25, 34, 29, 39

The Hyacinth Foundation provides HIV testing and counseling, case management, treatment advocacy, some financial support for housing and utility payments, support groups, information about legal rights and benefits, "buddy" services, and other help. Project Connect is a support group for people released from prison who are HIV+ or have AIDS, meets twice a month on the first and third Wednesday of each month, from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

NORTH JERSEY COMMUNITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE (NJCRI)

393 Central Ave., Suite 301, Newark
973-483-3444

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Bus lines: 24, 34, 21

Provides HIV care and treatment services, and testing. Support groups meet from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm: Men's HIV Group (Tuesday), Double Trouble (HIV and Substance Abuse) group (Wednesdays), and Women's HIV group (Fridays). A Gay and Lesbian Group meets from 5:30 - 7:30 pm, first and third Wednesdays of each month. Lunch or dinner is provided at all meetings. Also help with transportation and prescription assistance. Will assist in discharge planning for HIV+ inmates soon to be released back into the community who need to be connected with medical and social services.

ISAIAH HOUSE/POSITIVELY SPEAKING

238 North Munn Ave., East Orange

973-678-5882

Hours: Open 7 days

Bus lines: 41

Special Services at Isaiah House provides confidential HIV testing and counseling, support groups, short term shelter and food assistance; some rental and utility assistance is available for East Orange residents only.

AIDS RESOURCE CENTER

505 West Market St., Newark

973-481-0009

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 24, 21

Provides case manager by appointment, home delivered meals, educational workshops, support group (Mon., Tues., and Thurs. 1:30 to 3:00 pm), food pantry. Need to bring photo I.D. and referral.

ST. BRIDGET'S RESIDENCE

Catholic Community Services

404 University Ave., Newark

973-799-0484

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 24

Multiple services for people with HIV/AIDS: emergency housing, counseling, family support, meals, recreational activities and workshops, health, substance abuse, stress reduction. Transitional housing for men only.

NJ AIDS/STD Hotline

UMDNJ/65 Bergen St, Newark

1-800-624-2377 – 24 hours/7 days a week

The hotline gives referrals, general information, counseling, testing locations and treatment information.

D. Services for People With Tuberculosis and Hepatitis C

In addition to the general medical care facilities listed above, there are a few services especially for people with tuberculosis and hepatitis C.

**TUBERCULOSIS CARE CENTER,
ST. MICHAEL'S MEDICAL CENTER**

268 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Newark

973-877-2960

Appointments 973-877-5080

Hours: Call for appointment

Bus lines: 99, 72, 76, 24

Provides therapy and case supervision for people with active/high risk tuberculosis. Also a clinic for people with hepatitis C, but with a very long waiting list, need referral and an appointment.

HEPATITIS C SUPPORT GROUP

HCV Anonymous-Alanon Association

384 7th Ave., Newark

973-483-7071

Hours: Wed. 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Bus lines: 96, 34

Meets every Wednesday from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.

E. Dental Care

Most of the locations listed below don't provide free care, but do have a sliding scale for those without insurance. Waiting lists can be long.



MOUNTAINSIDE HOSPITAL

Bay & Highland Aves., Montclair
973-429-6887
Hours: Call before coming
Bus lines: 72, 93
Anyone with insurance or ability to pay is eligible, fees on a sliding scale available.

NEWARK COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

741 Broadway, 973-483-1300
101 Ludlow St., 973-565-0355
516 Bergen St., 973-648-0866
Anyone with insurance or ability to pay is eligible, fees on a sliding scale available.

NEWARK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

110 William St., Newark
973-733-7614
Only serves Newark residents, must show proof, sliding scale fees, \$15 and up.

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL (UMDNJ)

150 Bergen St., Newark
973-972-4300
Hours: Call for appointment
Bus lines: 21, 34
Anyone with insurance or ability to pay is eligible, fees on a sliding scale available., some charity care (free).

F. Substance Abuse Resources

Getting clean and staying clean if you've got a problem with alcohol or drugs will be a major task for you if you want to stay out of trouble. Many of the health clinics, support centers and other resources listed in this guide can help refer you to treatment that most fits your needs. Listed below are some of Essex County's treatment resources and each of these will also help with referrals if they can't help you. If you want treatment, you should also ask your parole officer for help — beds in treatment facilities are hard to come by, and they can help get you in. Also, you can call the Division of Addiction Services hotline at 800-238-2333.

DETOXIFICATION

St. Michael's Medical Center

268 Martin Luther King Blvd., Newark
973-877-5000
Hours: 7 days, call first.
Bus lines: 99, 72, 76, 24
Voluntary In-patient detoxification unit

Ambulatory Detoxification Program

Catholic Community Services
1160 Raymond Blvd., Newark
973-596-3858
Hours: 7 days 9:00 am - 9:00 pm
Bus line: 13, 27, 24
Outpatient detoxification program.

Strathmore Treatment

57-59 New St., Irvington
973-373-2010
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 6:00 am - 10:30 am
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Bus lines: 70, 25
Methadone maintenance and detoxification center. No referral or appointment required. Need photo I.D. Admissions every Mon., Tues., and Fri. evenings.
Cost \$148.

OUTPATIENT AND RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT**Integrity House**

97-99 Lincoln Park, Newark
973-623-0600
Bus lines: 24, 13, 27, 62, 40, 39, 70, 41
Provides outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment and social services for adults, inmates (as a halfway house), adolescents, and their families. Makes referrals to other agencies and treatment programs. Multiple sites.

CURA, Inc.

75 Lincoln Park, Newark
973-622-3570
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Bus lines: 13, 27
Treatment and rehabilitation for Spanish speaking individuals, drug and/or alcohol abuse. Adult long and short term residential programs, outpatient program, adolescent residential program, residential program for women with children, and for those with HIV/AIDS .Se habla español.

Newark Renaissance House

62-80 Norfolk St., Newark
973-623-3386
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Bus lines: 24
Has intensive outpatient program for women, including pregnant women and women with children, with daycare provided for young infants and young children.

Turning Point, Inc.

125 Fairview Ave., Building 14, Cedar Grove
973-239-4600
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Residential treatment for alcoholism and drug dependency. Call for admission information. Also has an outreach program in Newark.

East Orange Substance Abuse Treatment Program

160 Halsted St., 1st Floor, East Orange
973-266-5200
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 6:30 am - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24

Outpatient alcohol and drug treatment, HIV testing, counseling, and other services.

The Bridge, Inc.

1065 Clinton Ave., Irvington
973-372-2624
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 9:00 pm
Bus lines: 25
Intensive outpatient counseling for alcohol and drug addiction.

**Chemical Dependency Intensive Outpatient Program
(IOP) Atlantic Behavior Health Access Dept. —**

Mountainside Hospital
1 Bay Ave., Montclair
888-247-1400
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Counseling available Mon., Weds., Thurs., 6:00 - 9:30 pm Outpatient treatment for substance abuse.

G. Mental Health Services/ Individual Counseling

While the medical care and drug treatment facilities listed in this booklet may be able to assist you with medication for mental health issues, and some counseling as well, there are also places to go to get counseling and therapy and other mental health services. Some of these services require Medicaid or other insurance, but some will also have sliding scale payments.

UMDNJ

215 South Orange Ave., Newark
973-972-6421
Hours: Mon - Fri 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Bus lines: 21, 34, 31, 99
Individual and family counseling. Sliding scale fees, from \$25 to \$120 per session. Appointment required— call first.

MORRISTOWN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

100 Madison Ave., Morristown
888-247-1400
973-971-4700
Outpatient treatment for substance abuse. In order to receive outpatient service from this facility, first the patient must call 888-247-1400 to make an appointment to be evaluated.

FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE

29 Park St., Bloomfield
973-743-3737
Crisis line: 973-266-4480
Hours: Mon. and Thurs., 1:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Tues., Weds., Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Outpatient mental health counseling for individuals, couples and families. Appointment required.

NEW HOPE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

277 Coit St., Irvington
973-373-5100
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 7:30 pm
Bus lines: 39, 90, 26

Individual mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment. Adult and child psychiatric day treatment. Also outpatient alcohol and substance abuse counseling/treatment. Accept most insurance and Medicaid, sliding scale fees for others. Call for an appointment.

NEWARK BETH ISRAEL MEDICAL CENTER

Community Mental Health Center
210 Lehigh Ave., Newark, NJ 07112
Hotline: 973-926-7444
973-926-7446
Emergency mental health treatment, medication, individual counseling
24 hours/7 days per week.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (COPE)COPE Center

104 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair
973-783-6655
Hours: Mon. - Wed., Fri. 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Bus lines: 34, 28, 29, 11
Individual mental health and substance abuse treatment and counseling, anger management, parenting workshops. Accepts Medicaid, sliding scale fees for others.

CRISIS INTERVENTION UNIT (EAST ORANGE GENERAL HOSPITAL)

300 Central Ave., East Orange
973-266-4478
Hours: 24 hrs. a day 7 days a week
Bus lines: 24, 44
24 hour crisis hotline and emergency psychiatric services for families.
Appointment required for non-emergency services.

PSYCHOMETRIC SERVICES

24 Commerce St., Suite 624–626, Newark
973-353-0005
Hours: call for appointment
Bus lines: 13, 24, 27, 31, 34, 39
Sex offender therapy. Referral by parole. \$150 fee.

PROJECT LIVE, INC.

408 Bloomfield Ave., Newark
973-481-1211
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 11, 28, 29, 72
Residential, rehabilitation, vocational and support services to adults from Essex County who have a serious and persistent mental illness. Residential services include 24-hour-supervised to more independent living.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES —MT. CARMEL GUILD

1160 Raymond Blvd., Newark
800-227-7705
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24
Offers outpatient psychotherapy (including family, individual and group), assessment information and referral, educational support services, inpatient psychiatric services and substance abuse treatment, children's case management, day treatment services.

H. Free/Low Cost Eyeglasses/Eye care



NEW EYES FOR THE NEEDY

549 Millburn Ave., Short Hills, NJ 07078
973-376-4903

Hours: Mon. - Thurs., 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Fri. 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Provides vouchers to receive prescription glasses. Call the above number and ask for an application to fill out. If you qualify, they will send a voucher that can be used to pay for glasses in your community.

Finding a Job: Employment Assistance and Training Programs



Getting a job is usually one of the most important things people need to do when they get out of prison. You need money coming in to support yourself and help your family and you want to get on with your life and do something productive. Not everyone can get to work right away — sometimes things like getting drug treatment, dealing with your housing, health or family situation may come first. For most people, though, finding work is the first step to getting back on your feet. It will be very challenging to get a job once you have been in prison, but it is not impossible, and you need to be persistent and patient. Below are some pointers on job searching, and information about resources that can help you find a job or get training for the job you want.

A. Things to Know Before You Start Your Job Search

BE PREPARED: Have all your documents in order— I.D., school diplomas and training certificates. If you do not have a resume, make sure you have a list of any work experiences you've had, and schools and training programs you've completed, with names and addresses, so you can fill out applications. Figure out who your references will be and have their information handy: a former employer, a pastor or priest, a teacher or coach, somebody who knows you and can speak well of you.

PRESENTATION MATTERS: Look as neat, clean and organized as possible, no matter what the job is. Be polite and respectful, even when people are not polite and respectful to you, and many won't be. Making the person you want to help you or hire you mad won't get you the job you want.

TALKING ABOUT YOUR CRIMINAL RECORD:

If you are asked about your criminal record, you should not lie. If you do, and you are later found out, you'll probably be fired for the lying, even if the record wasn't going to be a problem. It is easy for employers to perform criminal background checks, and many do. Before you apply for a job, think about what you will say when you are asked about your criminal background: you can be up front, but still stress what your strengths are, what you have to offer, what you have learned from your experience. Practice with a friend. While it is important to be honest, you should only answer the interview or application questions that you are asked. If you are asked, for example, about any felony convictions during the past 7 years, you don't have to volunteer information about misdemeanors, arrests that did not lead to convictions or convictions from more than seven years ago. But, if you are going to have to work around appointments with your parole officer, or other requirements of parole, keep in mind that you will have to work this out with your employer, which means telling him or her that you are on parole, even if you are not asked.

**IT'S A JOB FOR RIGHT NOW, IT'S NOT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE**

When you are first starting out, especially if you've been out of the job market for a while, or have never had a job, you need to build a work history, and, of course, you need to make some money. Take whatever job you can get for now — it doesn't have to be the exact job you want, or what you eventually want to be doing. Do this job well —even if it's not a great job —and it can help you get a better one in the future. A year of good job performance will make your criminal record matter less.

**B. Help with Job Search and Job Training:
Resources**

The following are good places to start when looking for a job.

NEWARK ONE STOP CAREER CENTER

(Mayor's Office of Employment and Training and
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR))
990 Broad St., Newark
973-648-3370

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Bus lines: 24, 13, 27

This facility has offices of the major state and city agencies that link people with jobs and training. Job listings, placement in job training classes, counseling for men and women who have been out of the job market. Office has individual assigned to working with people coming out of prison. DVR has vocational rehabilitation services for those with a physical, emotional or mental disability. Bring I.D., prison release papers, some proof of address. If applying for vocational rehabilitation services, must have some documentation of disability.

OTHER ESSEX COUNTY ONE STOP CENTERS:

990 Broad St., Newark
973-733-8183

Hours: Mon - Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Bus lines: 24, 13, 27

50 S. Clinton St., 5th Floor, East Orange
973-395-8600

Hours: Mon, Wed. and Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Bus lines: 23, 24

57 Park St. 2nd Floor, Bloomfield
973-580-5550

Hours: Mon - Fri. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Bus lines: 28, 29, 11

SETH BOYDEN COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

755 Frelinghuysen Ave., Newark
973-645-1072

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10:00 am - 2:00 pm;

Fri. 6:00 - 9:00 pm

Bus lines: 107

Multi-service center set up by the State Parole Board, serving parolees and others in the South Ward. There is a One Stop Career Center specifically directed to individuals with criminal records, adult and young adult computer literacy classes, workshops on issues like driver's license suspension, expungement, child support and no-fault divorce.

NEW COMMUNITY CORPORATION

Workforce Development Center
201 Bergen St., Newark
973-824-6484

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 31, 99

Provides specialized, intensive training in various occupations — Medical Training: Home health aide, C.N.A. Medical Assistance, Medical Billing Specialist; GED Preparatory; Automotive Technician; Personal Computer Office Specialist; Cisco Networking. Must be Newark resident and have a GED/diploma (unless you're taking the class there). Scholarships and some tuition coverage from financial aid if you qualify.

THE FIRST OCCUPATIONAL CENTER OF NEW JERSEY

391 Lakeside Ave., Orange
973-672-5800
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 41

Multi-service agency providing vocational rehabilitation, job training and job placement services in a range of occupations, including commercial driving and repair, janitorial services, food service, recycling. Agency also runs multiple businesses which employ individuals, including those with criminal records and those living in halfway houses.

LA CASA DE DON PEDRO

39 Broadway, Newark
973-481-4713
Hours: Mon., Thurs., Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tues. - Wed. 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Bus lines: 13, 11, 23, 27, 72, 92

Multi-service agency offers classes in job search techniques and hands-on practice in using One Stop computers to access internet job and resume banks, directories of training opportunities, etc. Job readiness and job placement assistance, literacy, ESL and GED classes. Also has credit union and provides financial literacy classes. Se habla español.

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF NEW JERSEY

31 Evan Terminal Road, Hillside
973-355-3663
Hours: Call for information

Bus lines: (unavailable)
Food bank serving food pantries and soup kitchens in New Jersey, hires former prisoners. Also has foodservice industry training program, provides training in food preparation and service.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES

Workforce Development
321 Central Ave., Newark 973-268-3160
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Bus lines: 24, 44, 99

Offers range of job training programs for adults. Must have referral from One Stop Career Center or from welfare office.

NORTH WARD CENTER NEWARK BUSINESS AND TRAINING INSTITUTE (NBTI)

341 Roseville Ave., Newark
973-268-8900
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Bus lines: 11, 28, 29, 34

Provides training programs, including food service, ESL and Adult basic education, GED classes.

WISE WOMEN'S CENTER (ESSEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE)

303 University Ave., Newark
973-877-3395
Hours: Mon - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Bus lines: 1, 21, 25, 34, 29, 66

Career services primarily for women. Provides job preparation, computer training, counseling, domestic violence services. Support for women in nontraditional careers. Parenting classes for men and women.

C. Legal Restrictions on Employment and Protections Against Discrimination

If you are interested in getting a job and building a career in a particular area, you should make sure that it isn't one that is forbidden to someone with the kind of criminal conviction that you have on your record. There are about 22 categories of jobs in New Jersey that exclude people with convictions (which conviction it is varies by job). These include: aircraft/ airport employees; paid public school employees, school bus drivers and school crossing guards; bank employees; bartenders and waiters in establishments where liquor is served; housing authority and municipal police and parking enforcement officers; New Jersey Turnpike Authority employees; liquor retail, wholesale manufacturing or distributing employees; paid firefighters; child care center employees; community residences for individuals with developmental disabilities. A much larger number of jobs require that you disclose your criminal record, and that employers perform background checks; some of these, however, also require that employers consider evidence of rehabilitation. These include most jobs in the healthcare and counseling fields (including drug and alcohol counseling) and social workers. If you are going to begin training in a particular field, make sure you find out from the training course whether there are any restrictions that will keep you from getting a job.

PROTECTIONS FOR LICENSED OCCUPATIONS:

If you are not absolutely barred from a position because of your conviction, New Jersey law says that you cannot be denied a professional license simply because of your conviction unless the crime for which you were convicted relates to the occupation you want to enter. If the licensing board or agency wants to deny you a license because the crime is related to the occupation, they have to explain, in writing, that they have considered certain factors like the seriousness of the crime, the circumstances of the crime, the date and your age when convicted, whether the crime was an isolated or repeated event, social conditions, and evidence of rehabilitation. You can ask your parole officer about applying for "certificate of rehabilitation," which can be used in your license application.

D. Benefits for Employers Who Hire People With Criminal Records

As you look for a job you can tell employers that the federal government has programs to support employers who hire people coming out of prison.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT

An employer who hires people with criminal records is eligible to receive a Work Opportunity Tax Credit, a small rebate on their federal taxes. For more information you or the employer can call 1-800-792-888 or 1-609-292-8112, or go to the internet at http://www.state.nj.us/njbiz/s_wotc.shtml.

FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM

The Federal Bonding program provides bonding or “insurance coverage” for employers who hire individuals with criminal histories who are otherwise qualified but cannot get jobs due to their backgrounds. You can get information about this program from the New Jersey Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training Services at 1-609-777-3203.

E. Opening a Checking or Savings Account



After you’ve gotten a source of income, you may want to open a checking or savings account. A checking account is a great idea because many jobs provide direct deposit, and your check is automatically deposited into your account on payday. Using checks to pay for your bills is also cheaper than using money orders. To open a checking account you usually need a picture I.D. (driver’s license or non-driver state I.D.), proof of address, birth certificate, and a social security card. You can also request a debit card with your account, which you can use just like a credit card already.) You can get a debit card for either a checking account, or a savings account, but with a savings account you can earn interest on the money you’ve saved. Fees for these accounts will vary depending on the type of account and bank. Many banks now offer free checking.

F. Public Libraries

Your local public library can be a good resource for your job search. Public computers provide internet access (and help using the computer), job and course listings, and other local directories. Libraries also often carry the government forms mentioned in this guide, and librarians can help you find other information that you need.



LIBRARIES

Bloomfield Township Free Public Library

90 Broad St.
973-566-6222

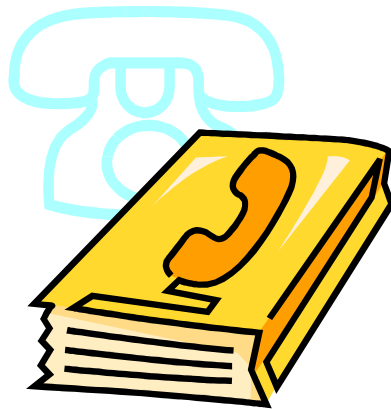
Newark Public Library
5 Washington St.
973-733-7784

East Orange Public Library
21 South Arlington Ave.
973-266-5600

Irvington Public Library
346 16th Ave.
973-372-6400

Montclair Free Public Library
50 South Fullerton Ave
973-744-0500

Orange City Public Library
348 Main St.
973-673-0153



New Jersey...

Guide To...

How to...

Directory ...

Reconnecting with Family

As you prepare to come home, you may be thinking about reuniting with family members, including those you may not have seen for a long time. You may be excited to see your kids, your spouse, your parents, and others who are part of your family, and they may be glad to see you home, but your return can be stressful for you and for them. All kinds of issues can come up, and you may need some help solving some of the problems that arise. This section provides some information and resources to help solve these issues.



A. Family Counseling Resources

The following places can provide support, marital and family counseling and parenting classes to help you reunite with your family.

FAMILY SERVICE BUREAU OF NEWARK

393 Central Ave., Newark

973-412-2056 (to make an appointment)

Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Bus lines: 24

Offers mental health services, counseling, crisis intervention, and substance abuse services. Family Service Counseling includes couple, family and group therapy to assist with problems including marital conflict, stress and anger management, parent-child conflict, child abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse, at-risk youth, domestic violence, post-traumatic stress, depression and anxiety. Referrals are accepted from other community providers as well as from the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Service and Family and Criminal Court.

THE LEAGUERS

303 Washington St.

3rd Floor, Newark

973-643-0300

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 5:30 pm.

Bus lines: 34, 1, 21, 25

Offers various workshops and activities to enhance the skills of parents and provides specific programs that enable fathers to take an active role in the lives of their children and family.

YOUTH CONSULTATION SERVICES

284 Broadway, Newark

973-482-8411 (Mon. - Fri. 9 am - 5 pm),

all other times call 973-497-4735

Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Bus lines: 13

Serves families from the East and North Wards of Newark. May be self-referred or be referred by various governmental or community agencies, including the school system, police department, DYFS, hospitals, or family court. Family Crisis Intervention program serves children and families in crisis from the North and East Wards of Newark. Provide short-term family crisis intervention and counseling.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

395 So. Center St., Orange
973-675-3817
Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Fri. - 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Bus lines: 24
Provides therapeutic services for youth and their families.

FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE OF MONTCLAIR

204 Claremont Ave., Montclair
973-746-0800
Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE OF BLOOMFIELD

29 Park St., Bloomfield
973-743-3737
Hours: Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.
Social services organization specializing in services for families. Crisis intervention, plus workshops, support groups, childcare, mentoring, and referral information to help keep families healthy and together.

MAIN ST. COUNSELING CENTER

8 Marcella Ave., West Orange
973-736-2041
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Bus lines: 71 drops you off on Prospect Ave.
Outpatient mental health counseling for individuals, couples and families.

CHILDREN’S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

76 South Orange Ave., East Orange
973-762-5887
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Bus lines: 92, 31
Offers programs which support incarcerated and/or released parents in strengthening relationships with their children: effective parent-child communication skills, ideas for home and community activities that build family bonds, strategies for effective involvement in child’s educational growth and school related issues and the, parent-child literacy program.

PARENTS ANONYMOUS

42 Chestnut St.
East Orange
800-843-5437 (24 hour hotline)
Hours: Call to confirm group times at different locations



Group Locations

Choices, Inc.
169 Roseville Ave., Newark
973-481-1889
Group hours: Mon., Tues., Fri. - 6:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Thurs. 1:00 - 2:30 pm
Bus lines: 34, 96
Provides an on-going, weekly group where parents and their children come together to learn new skills, transform their attitudes and behaviors, and create long term positive changes in their lives. Child care available.

B. Child Custody and Visitation

Establishing visitation and gaining custody of your children once you are released is not an overnight procedure. If you had custody of your kids at the time you were incarcerated, and no family was able to take care of them, they may have been placed in foster care. If this is the case, and you do not know your child's case manager's name or number, contact the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), at 973-648-7275, or 1-800-531-1091. You will have to make an appointment with the case manager for an interview. They may not be willing to give you information over the phone. You'll be asked a series of questions in order to assess when and if you will be given visitation rights, so that you may reestablish your relationship with the child and hopefully gain custody again. This is just a quick overview of what to do and what you can expect.



Call DYFS and ask to speak to your child's case manager. For example "Hi, my name is _____. I have recently been released from prison. My child _____ has been under foster care while I have been incarcerated. I would like to speak to the case manager so that I can make an appointment with him or her." Make an appointment.

Be sure to make it to the appointment on time, and call if you are running late or need to reschedule. Bring paper and pencil to write down any information the case manager gives you. **This is your chance to ask questions so take advantage of it!!**

Be prepared to talk about your criminal background, and any problems that you may have such as alcohol or drugs. The case manager can ask you if you have a place to live and other personal questions in order to assess whether you are eligible to establish visitation with your child. If you can, ask a friend or relative to help you practice answering these kinds of questions. Make sure to pay attention to what the case manager says and ask about anything that you do not understand. The impression you make in the interview is important. If you feel yourself getting angry, ask for a cup of water, and take an extra breath to cool down. Answer questions honestly, even about things like substance abuse, because the case manager may be able to assist with getting into treatment or with other help you may need. The best way to help your child is to help yourself first.

Make sure you leave the office with any or all documents that the case manager gave you regarding your child, and remember to ask for a business card from the case manager, in case you have questions later on.

If you were convicted of any violent or sexual offenses against children, you may be unable to live with or regain custody of your children.

C. Getting and Paying Child Support

Whether you have custody of your children on your own when you get out, and need help from an absent (“noncustodial”) parent, or you do not have custody of kids who need your support, child support payments will be an important part of your life after you are released. Some basic information is included below, as well as other places to go to get more information. **Child support, custody and visitation issues are very complicated, and if you can get a lawyer, you should.** Contact the Legal Services of New Jersey hotline, from 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, at 888-576-5529, or the Essex County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service 973-622-7753. You can also contact Essex-Newark Legal Services, at 5 Commerce St., 2nd Floor, Newark, 973-824-3000, or the Essex County Legal Aid Association, Hall of Records, Room 118, 465 Dr. MLK Blvd., Newark, 973-622-0063. The Prisoner’s Self Help Legal Clinic is another resource however this agency is only accessible on the web at www.pshlc.org

GETTING AND ENFORCING A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

If you have custody of your children, and want financial support from the noncustodial parent, you can apply for child support at the Essex County Court Family Division, at 212 Washington St., 10th Floor, Newark, 973-693-6667. There is a one time \$6 fee. You can also call 1-877-NJKIDS1 for more information about this. If you are receiving public assistance, there is no fee, and Work First New Jersey TANF can help with the application, locating the absent parent, and paternity testing, but you will also not get most of the money paid in support while you are receiving public assistance, because it will go to pay back the state for what has been paid to you. The Child Support Enforcement Division of County Probation, which helps enforce child support orders, is located on the 11th floor of 212 Washington St. The phone number is 973-693-5600.

PAYING CHILD SUPPORT

If you have kids that you did not have custody of before you went to prison, there may be a child support order

requiring you to pay a certain amount every month for their support. Even if you did not go to court — if, for example, the parent with custody filed for the order while you were incarcerated — the court can still order you to pay child support. The amount you pay in child support is tied to your income, and if the court does not know your income, they will assume you are working 40 hours a week at minimum wage. Child support payments are usually taken out of your paycheck. If you have not paid at all or missed payments, you will owe “arrearage.” Unless you got a modification of your child support order when you went into prison (see below), the amount of arrearage that you owe will have continued to grow while you were inside. When you come out, and get a job, they can begin to take out not just the monthly amount you owe for child support, but more money to pay back the arrearage (up to 65% of your pay in total). They may also suspend your driver’s license. Here are some things you can do:

PRE-RELEASE: Before you are released, you can seek a modification of a child support order, based on your change in circumstances (incarceration). You would be asking the court to reduce the amount you owe, so that arrearage do not continue to build up while you are in prison. This process can be done without a lawyer but it is complicated, because you have to fill out and send the appropriate papers to court, the other parent or his or her lawyer, and to the Probation Division. The forms you need and the instructions are available at the state judiciary website: www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/infm.pim.pdf, or may be available in your prison law library.

POST-RELEASE: You can find out how much you owe, and whether there is an existing child support order by going to the Family Division at the Essex County Court, 212 Washington St., 10th Floor, Newark. If you have not been paying child support, you should be aware that there may be a warrant issued for your arrest — this may have been addressed at the time you were being released, but you should still call before you go there: 973-693-6667. Tell them who you are, that you have just been released from prison and want to find out about how to pay your child support, and ask if there is a warrant. You can ask if they will “recall” the warrant so that you can come in, possibly work out a payment plan, and get a modification of the child support order.

D. Domestic Violence Resources

The following places provide counseling, support and shelter or referrals to shelter in domestic violence situations. You can also call the 24 hour hotline from the New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women: **1-800-572-SAFE**

THE SAFE HOUSE

P.O Box 1887
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
973-759-2154 (hotline)

IRVINGTON COUNSELING CENTER

21-29 Wagner Pl., Irvington
Hours: Mon., Tues., Wed. 9:00 am - 9:00 pm
Thurs. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Domestic violence counseling for individuals, couples, families and groups, Support groups, Batterer group counseling.

LA CASA DE DON PEDRO

23 Broadway, Newark
973-483-2703
Hours: Call for appointment
Bus lines: 13, 11, 23, 27, 72, 92
Crisis intervention program assists women in need of counseling, guidance, shelter and support to escape abusive spouses and violent environments. Individual, group and family counseling. Se habla español.

BABYLAND FAMILY SERVICES

755 South Orange Ave., Newark
973-484-4446 (24 hour hotline)
The Family Violence Program Hotline is 24 hours a day.

Getting More Education

Although getting more education may not be part of your short term plans, it certainly should be something to think about for the future, especially if you do not have a high school diploma or a GED. Your chances of getting a job that pays a living wage, and of moving forward in a career will improve with more education, and not having the high school diploma or GED will simply lock you out from a lot of opportunities.

A. GED Classes

The places in Essex County below offer classes to help you prepare for the GED exam. Call for exact times and procedures. Many locations offer classes at low cost or no cost.

GED LOCATIONS

Bernie Edmondson Community Education Center
74 Halstead St., East Orange
973-266-5640

Caribbean Haitian Council

26 Ashland Ave., East Orange
973-678-5059

Montclair Neighborhood Development Corporation

228 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair
973-744-9094

Ad House, Inc.

13 Clinton Pl., Newark
973-372-0457

ASPIRA Inc.

390 Broad St., Newark
973-484-7554

Community Agencies Corporation of NJ

25 James St., Newark
973-621-2273

Essex County College

303 University Ave., Newark
973-877-1894

Essex County Division of Employment and Training

545 Maple Ave., Newark
973-648-3599

Essex County Vocational & Technical High School

300 North 13th St., Newark
973-483-5466

Friendly Fuld Neighborhood Center

165 Court St., Newark
973-642-3144

International Youth Organization

703 South 12th St., Newark
973-621-1100

Ironbound Community Corporation

432 Lafayette St., Newark
973-465-0947

La Casa De Don Pedro

39 Broadway, Newark
973-481-4713

Literacy Volunteers of America

303 University Ave., Newark
973-733-9404

New Community Corporation

201 Bergen St., Newark
973-242-2009

Newark Board of Education

973-733-8397

Newark Business Training Institute
346 Mt. Prospect Ave., Newark
973-268-8900

One Stop Career Center
990 Broad St., Newark
973-648-3370

Urban Renewal Corporation
224 Sussex Ave., Newark
973-483-2882

West Side High School
403 South Orange Ave., Newark
973-733-6977

*Preparing
for the
GED*



B. Higher Education

If you already have a high school diploma or a GED certificate, you may want to move forward and get your associate's degree, bachelor's degree or graduate degree. Below are phone numbers for Essex County.

LOCAL AREA COLLEGES

Bloomfield College, Bloomfield
973-748-9000 ext. 230

Caldwell College, Caldwell
973-618-3500

Essex County College, Newark
973-877-3000

Gibbs College, Livingston
973-369-1023

Harrison Institute, South Orange
973-762-8979

Montclair State University, Upper Montclair
973-655-4444

New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark
973-596-3000

Rutgers–Newark, Newark
973-353-5205

Seton Hall University, South Orange
973-761-9000

CAN I GET FINANCIAL AID?

To pay for this, you will probably try to get some financial aid. If you are applying for any federal financial aid programs after release (such as Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, Federal Family Education Loans, etc.), you are not restricted unless you have a drug-related offense. For possession offenses, a first offense means one year

of ineligibility (after your conviction), a second offense, two years, and third offense means you are “indefinitely” ineligible, which to the government means permanently ineligible. For a sales or distribution crime, a first offense has two years of ineligibility; a second offense makes it permanent. Private financial aid or loan programs may not have any restrictions.

Other Things You Need to Know

A. Getting Legal Assistance

To get assistance with civil (not criminal) cases, you can contact the toll free hotline for **Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ)**, which provides both information and referrals, **888-576-5529**. You can also contact **Essex-Newark Legal Services**, at 5 Commerce St., 2nd Floor, Newark, **973-824-3000**, or the **Essex County Legal Aid Association**, Hall of Records, Room 118, 465 Dr. MLK Blvd, Newark, **973-622-0063**. The Prisoner’s Self Help Legal Clinic is another resource however this agency is only accessible on the web at www.pshlc.org.

B. Checking and Correcting Your Criminal Record (“rap sheet”)

Since employers, landlords and others will be performing criminal background checks and getting copies of your criminal record, it is important that you know what is on it, and that it is accurate. You will also be prepared to answer any questions about your background. You will have to go into your local police station and make an appointment to be fingerprinted on a State Applicant Fingerprint Card (SBI19). On that card you will have to include your full name, social security number, date of birth and purpose for the record check. You then mail the card, with a cover letter listing the purpose of the request, the name of the person whose records are being requested, and the address where the records should be sent, to:

State Section of Identification
Records and Identification Bureau
New Jersey State Police
P.O. Box 7068
West Trenton, NJ 08628
1-609-882-2000 ext 6425
1-609-530-4856 fax

You must include a \$30 money order or cashier’s check, certified check, or business check made

payable to: DIVISION OF STATE POLICE-SBI. No personal checks are accepted.

C. Expungement: Cleaning Up Your Criminal Record

You may have heard about expungement as one way to clean up your criminal record as you get some distance from your old arrests and convictions. Unfortunately, expungement is fairly limited in New Jersey. You can expunge any arrest that did not lead to a conviction at any point. You can expunge “disorderly persons offenses,” which are low level offenses in New Jersey, after 5 years, and most municipal ordinance offenses after 2 years. for “indictable offenses” (felonies), can be expunged 10 years from the date of conviction, payment of any fine, satisfactory completion of probation or parole or release from incarceration, but whichever is latest. The most serious of these offenses, such as murder, kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, robbery, arson, perjury and distribution, sale or possession with intent to distribute of controlled dangerous substances (drugs), **can never be expunged**. Expungement is a broader remedy for offenses committed as a juvenile. Legal Services of New Jersey has published a guide to cleaning up your record through expungement. To get a copy of the book, which costs **\$15**, call 888-576-5529, or go to the LSNJ website, where you can download it for free: <http://www.lsnj.org/english/crime/municipalcourt/learningyourrecord.cfm>.

D. Checking and Correcting Your Credit Record

While New Jersey allows employers to look at your criminal record, many employers — and others like landlords and mortgage companies — will use a credit report instead of or in addition to the state’s records. Credit records are maintained by private companies and generally have information about your debts, your history of paying bills and other financial matters, but may also have information about your criminal record. That information may not be correct, and the law does offer you some protections. For example, if an employer uses a credit record to deny you a job, they have to tell you this, and give you the name, address and phone number of the agency that provided the report, and the agency must give you a copy of that information on your request. They cannot charge you money for that request if the employer used the report to deny you a job. If the records of the credit agency contain incorrect



information, they must investigate and correct inaccurate information.

You can get ahead of the curve by getting a copy of your credit record and making sure there isn't any incorrect information on it. New Jersey residents are allowed one free credit report each year. Three companies that provide this service are:

EQUIFAX INFORMATION SERVICES, LLC:

Write to them at P.O. Box 74041, Atlanta, GA, 30374, or call 800-685-1111. By mail, be sure to include your full name, current address, Social Security number, and most recent former address for file-matching purposes.

TRANSUNION PERSONAL CREDIT REPORT:

PO Box 1000, Chester PA 19022
Call 1-800-888-4213.

EXPERIAN:

PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013
Call 1-800-397-3742.

E. Voting Rights

New Jersey law does not allow you to vote while you are in prison, or while you are on probation or parole for an indictable offense (disorderly persons offenses don't disqualify you). **Once you have completed your parole or probation term, you may register to vote.** Make sure that you are registered in the county in which you reside. Applications for registration can be obtained from the Division of Elections, the Commissioners of Registration office in the County where you live or from your Municipal Clerk. Registration forms are also available in various State agencies and at Motor Vehicle Commission offices and can be obtained while transacting agency business. If you are not sure, you can visit http://www.state.nj.us/lps/elections/vote_doe.html. You will be able to download a voter's registration form and mail it in. This site also explains who can register to vote and where you can register.

F. Registration of Sexual Offenders (Megan's Law)

Sex offenders are required to register with the police under Megan's Law. Offenses include: aggravated sexual assault; sexual assault; aggravated criminal sexual contact; endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child; luring or enticing and, if the victim were a minor and the offender not a parent, kidnapping; criminal restraint and false imprisonment and promoting prostitution of a child under 18. You will

be registered prior to release, but must re-register your home address at least 10 days prior to any move with the law enforcement agency with which you were registered when released. You will also need to verify your address annually or every 90 days if you are a repetitive and compulsive offender.

The Game Plan

Your first weeks out after leaving prison can be overwhelming. This section is set up to help you get organized and keep yourself on track towards your goals. First, think about what those goals are — what do you want or need to get done in your first week out? In your first month out? Where do you want to be in six months? There are lots of things that other people need you to do — your parole officer, for example, and your family — but you also need to think about what you expect from yourself.

Places to stay

Appointments to make? Doctors? Job help? Employers? Applying for benefits?

People I need to see or call:

Who? _____

Who? _____

Your First Weeks Out

Here is a basic calendar to use to plan your first days out of prison. Below it, there are some questions to ask yourself about what you plan to do. You can mark appointments and tasks on the calendar, and write in dates in the small boxes.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun	Sun	Sun	Sun
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tue	Tue	Tue	Tue
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wed	Wed	Wed	Wed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thu	Thu	Thu	Thu
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri	Fri	Fri	Fri
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat	Sat	Sat	Sat

For how long? _____

For how long? _____

For how long? _____

When? _____

When? _____

When? _____

Where/phone number? _____

Where/phone number? _____

Where/phone number? _____

Other things I need to do (get I.D., get prescriptions, go to a support group, etc.):

Notes: _____

I.D. Checklist

Documents	Have?	Need?
Social Security Card	_____	_____
Birth Certificate	_____	_____
County I.D.	_____	_____
Driver's License	_____	_____
Non-driver's I.D.	_____	_____
Certificate of Naturalization	_____	_____
Green Card	_____	_____
Military Discharge Papers	_____	_____
Passport	_____	_____
High School Diploma or GED Certificate	_____	_____
Prison Release Papers	_____	_____

Notes:

Getting Ready to Apply for a Job

In addition to personal information, most jobs ask questions about your background and experience. If you don't already have a resume, use this space to list information to fill out a job application, or for an interview. Don't forget to include dates.

Education

Dates

(For example: list high school, GED, or other education, and include any trade or vocational certificates.)

Work Experience

Dates

References

Phone Numbers

(List people who know you and can speak well of you.)

My Contacts: Important Names and Phone Numbers

Parole Officer: _____

Parole Number: _____

Parole Office: _____

Address: _____
