

# REDUCING STATEWIDE RECIDIVISM:

## CHECKLIST FOR STATE REENTRY COORDINATORS



**STATE REENTRY COORDINATORS** are uniquely positioned to ensure that the policies and practices that go into a recidivism-reduction initiative are being implemented effectively, both in corrections settings and in the community. This checklist is designed to guide reentry coordinators' oversight of these line-level implementation activities. The checklist also enumerates key policy and performance expectations that align with the goals of the Corrections Administrators' Checklist, and can be used to record the following key information about implementation:

1. Implementation lead(s): It is not expected that reentry coordinators should undertake all of this work alone. Rather, they need to work closely with program managers, line staff supervisors, and other individuals with decision-making authority to ensure the policy and performance expectations within this checklist are being implemented. An individual who is well positioned to oversee implementation activities should be identified for each item in the checklist.
2. Implementation status: Once implementation leads are identified, the reentry coordinator should work closely with those individuals to assess the extent to which a policy or performance expectation is being implemented [not at all implemented (N); not implemented, but planned (PL); partially implemented (P); or fully implemented (F)].

<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Make recidivism reduction an agency priority and set reduction goals for specific programs or policy changes</b>					
	<i>Defining success as meeting recidivism-reduction goals and using goal-oriented management is essential for establishing agency-wide buy-in.</i>					
Goal 1 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Recidivism goals are clearly defined, ambitious but realistic, and reflect input from the different individuals and organizations that will ultimately impact whether those targets are met						

*Goal 1 continued on page 2*

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Goal 1 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Supervisors and managers are able to effectively communicate the value of recidivism reduction to front-line staff						
Short-term reduction goals are updated annually to reflect changing circumstances that may impact their feasibility or relevance						
Staff are familiar with the recidivism-reduction goals related to specific programs or policy changes and know how their work contributes to recidivism reduction goals						
Staff have opportunities to provide feedback on policies and procedures that they feel may promote or undermine efforts to achieve the goals of recidivism reduction						
The reentry coordinator and other managers are able to provide regular feedback to administrators about what policy or programmatic adjustments are needed to meet goals						

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<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Focus resources on the individuals who are most likely to reoffend</b>					
	<i>Recidivism reduction is only possible when services and treatments are focused on individuals that are most likely to recidivate.</i>					
Goal 2 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
All individuals are assessed for their risk of recidivism at intake						
All individuals are assessed for their risk of recidivism at the start of community supervision						
All individuals are screened for mental health and substance abuse issues and further assessed if one of these issues is flagged						
Moderate- and high-risk individuals are assessed to determine which dynamic criminogenic risk factors need to be addressed through programming						
Risk and needs assessments inform classification (in addition to other relevant factors) and drive case-management decisions, including program referrals and placements						
Staff explain to inmates the purpose of the assessment process and the extent to which information will be shared						
Staff obtain collateral information to inform assessments and follow procedures for validating the accuracy of that information						
Prison staff, probation and parole officers, and community-service providers are trained to perform assessments and to use the results to inform case-management plans						

*Goal 2 continued on page 4*

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Goal 2 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Reassessments are conducted when offenders complete case-plan goals, a change in supervision status occurs, or timeframes for updating information (set in advance by the agency) are met						
Supervisors observe assessment processes to ensure staff are conducting and using assessments correctly and observations are reflected in staff performance evaluations						
Access to programming in prison and in the community is prioritized for high-risk individuals						
Community supervision officers use risk and needs information to determine the appropriate length and intensity of supervision and to match individuals to community treatment						
Courts and judges are provided with risk- and needs-assessment information to help inform post-conviction sentencing decisions that may impact the reentry process						
Information-sharing procedures—consistent with federal and state confidentiality regulations—are in place to avoid redundancies and to ensure all agencies and community-service providers can access necessary risk and needs						
The risk-assessment instrument is revalidated and cut-off scores are adjusted at regular intervals to respond to changing characteristics of the offender population						
The cut-off risk scores provide significant distinction between high-, moderate- and low-risk groups (the recidivism rate for the high-risk group should be two to three times higher than for the low-risk group)						

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<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Establish programs and practices that have been shown to reduce recidivism and ensure they are implemented with fidelity</b>					
	<i>Reducing recidivism requires providing high-quality programs that are based in science and address the factors related to an individual's likelihood to reoffend.</i>					
Goal 3 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Prison- and community-based programs are designed to effectively address the factors that make individuals more likely to recidivate and enhance responsivity to treatment						
The overall number of hours and intensity of treatment is tailored to sufficiently meet the needs of moderate- and high-risk individuals (200+ hours for high-risk individuals versus 100 hours for moderate-risk individuals)						
Program staff are trained on how to implement program models with fidelity						
Supervisors monitor and observe programs to ensure staff are operating with fidelity to the program model and observations are reflected in staff performance evaluations						
Responsivity factors, such as mental illnesses, learning disabilities, low motivation, and preparedness for change are considered in program placement determinations						
All staff are trained in methods that promote responsivity, including communication techniques that strengthen intrinsic motivation						

*Goal 3 continued on page 6*

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Goal 3 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Risk, needs, and responsiveness assessments are used to develop individualized programming plans that coordinate the delivery of services for individuals during their period of incarceration						
Community-service providers that have been vetted for the quality of their services are encouraged to make contact with individuals pre-release to provide treatment and facilitate the continuity of care upon release from prison or jail						
Prior to an individual's release, corrections staff, community supervision officers, and treatment providers develop an individualized transition plan that integrates supervision and treatment based on risk- and needs-assessment information						
Prior to their release, individuals are enrolled with community-service providers to receive needed services						
Community-based services and supports are most intensive in the first few months following release, when a person is most likely to reoffend						
Program-quality assessment tools (such as the correctional program checklist) are conducted on at least an annual basis and used to improve program implementation						
Program evaluations are conducted on a regular basis (every three to five years) and used to modify, augment, or eliminate rehabilitation and treatment programs						

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<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Implement community supervision policies and practices that promote successful reentry</b>					
	<i>Community supervision should promote successful reentry by addressing individuals' criminogenic needs and applying appropriate responses to violations in a swift and certain manner.</i>					
Goal 4 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Prior to an individual's release, community supervision officers are assigned and engaged in transition planning						
Probationers and parolees are informed of the sanctions and incentives for specific behaviors at the start of community supervision						
Sanctions and incentives are tailored to the risk and needs profiles of individuals under community supervision						
Judges approve a continuum of sanctioning options at sentencing that can be applied administratively by the supervising officer in a way that is proportionate to the seriousness of violations and the individual's risk of recidivism						
Community supervision officers can administratively modify conditions of supervision in response to changes in the behavior of the individual being supervised						
Positive reinforcements and incentives are incorporated into the supervision process and used appropriately to encourage positive behavior changes						
Incentives are delivered immediately upon completion of a specific goal and sanctions are delivered immediately after misconduct or a violation occurs						

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Goal 4 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Supervisors review recommendations for revocation before they are approved in order to ensure they are warranted, based on the seriousness and type of the offense and risk level of the individual						
Community supervision officers are provided training in communication techniques that promote intrinsic motivation for positive change (i.e., enhance responsivity)						
Community supervision officers are trained to understand and respond effectively to the special needs of individuals with mental illnesses, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders						
Place-based supervision is promoted through the use of satellite offices in neighborhoods with high concentrations of returning individuals and site visits to individuals' homes						
Supervisors confirm the number and quality of site visits conducted by probation or parole officers through observation and other reporting mechanisms, and those findings are reflected in performance reviews						
Informal social controls (e.g., family and community members) are engaged to facilitate community reintegration						
Aftercare plans are developed with the input of community-service providers prior to discharge from supervision						

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<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Measure recidivism-related outcomes and establish a reporting process that promotes accountability for results</b>					
	<i>Collecting data and tracking progress is essential for promoting buy-in and support and for fine-tuning recidivism-reduction strategies.</i>					
Goal 5 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
Written policies such as memorandums of agreement (MOAs) or memorandums of understanding (MOUs) have established which agency, organization, or person is responsible for data collection, quality control, and analysis						
The responsible party has established what the key sources of data will be, how they will be collected, where those data will be stored, and how they can be queried						
Data are collected on intermediate outputs, including the adoption of new policies, staff trainings, treatment or program referrals, increases in required assessments being conducted, etc.						
Data on short-term outcomes are collected to indicate progress toward recidivism-reduction goals, such as changes in individual attitudes, behaviors, or responsiveness to services						
To track progress, data on recidivism (including whether an occurrence results from a revocation or new crime and an individual's characteristics—e.g., risk level, mental health, age, race, and gender) are collected on a regular basis and recidivism rates are compared against baseline rates						

*Goal 5 continued on page 10*

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Goal 5 Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status				Comments
		N	PL	P	F	
User-friendly, transparent, and routine reports on progress toward meeting intermediate and long-term goals are regularly shared with the corrections administrator and other senior staff and made publically available						
Supervisors and managers hold performance management meetings with staff to discuss data findings, identify areas that need improvement, and reward staff for progress						
Data are used to inform budget decisions, such as expanding programmatic capacity, funding a new program to attend to identified needs, shifting resources across jurisdictions based on different recidivism rates, etc.						
Program measurement and data collection processes are tested for accuracy, reliability, and utility						
Staff involved in the data collection process (e.g., reporting assessment information) are trained on appropriate collection methods and monitored to ensure those procedures are being followed						
Proper information-sharing relationships are in place through informal or formal means such as MOUs or MOAs and there are policies in place to ensure confidentiality						

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