The Integrated Reentry and Employment Strategies (IRES) Pilot Project

Findings and Recommendations

Palm Beach County, FL

May 2016

Council of State Governments Justice Center

- National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials from three branches of government

- Provides practical, nonpartisan advice informed by the best available evidence on criminal justice topics

JUSTICE ★ CENTER
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
Collaborative Approaches to Public Safety

the NATIONAL REENTRY
RESOURCE CENTER
A project of the CSG Justice Center

Corrections	Courts	Justice Reinvestment	Law Enforcement
Mental Health	Reentry	Substance Abuse	Youth

Overview
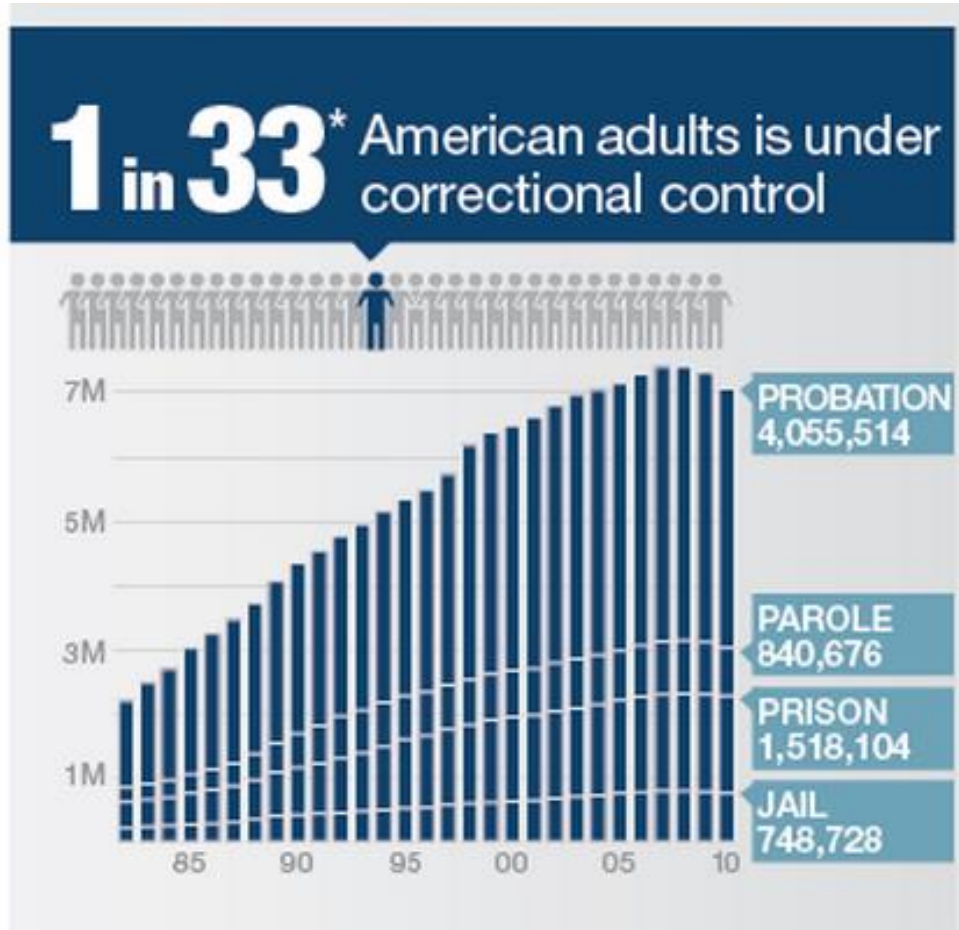
Goals and scope of pilot project

Findings

Recommendations

Overview

Goals and scope of pilot project

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Recommendations

# Reentry is a major challenge for communities across the country

1 in 33 * American adults is under correctional control

PROBATION
4,055,514

PAROLE
840,676

PRISON
1,518,104

JAIL
748,728

68% of people released from state prisons are rearrested within 3 years

50% of people released from state prisons are reincarcerated within 3 years

Employment is an important part of reentry
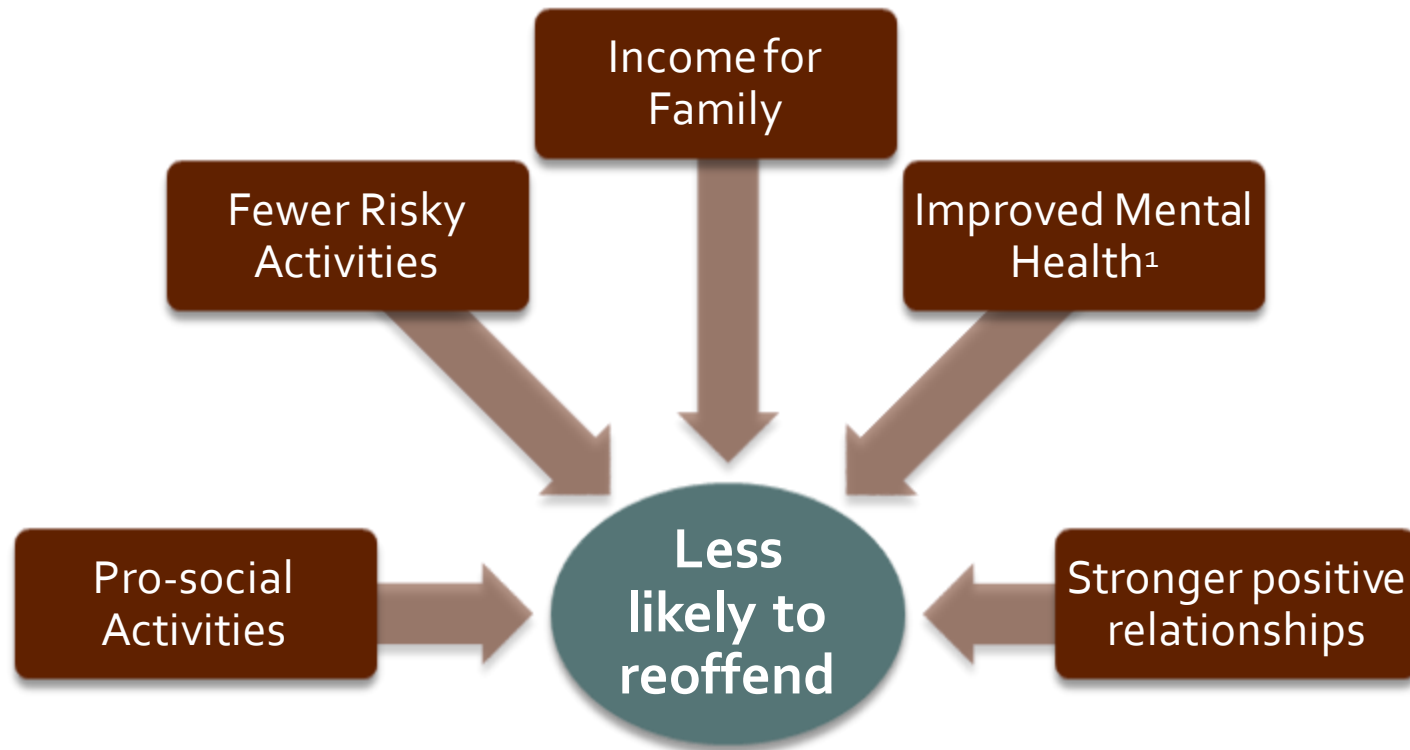
- Especially when earnings are above minimum wage[2]
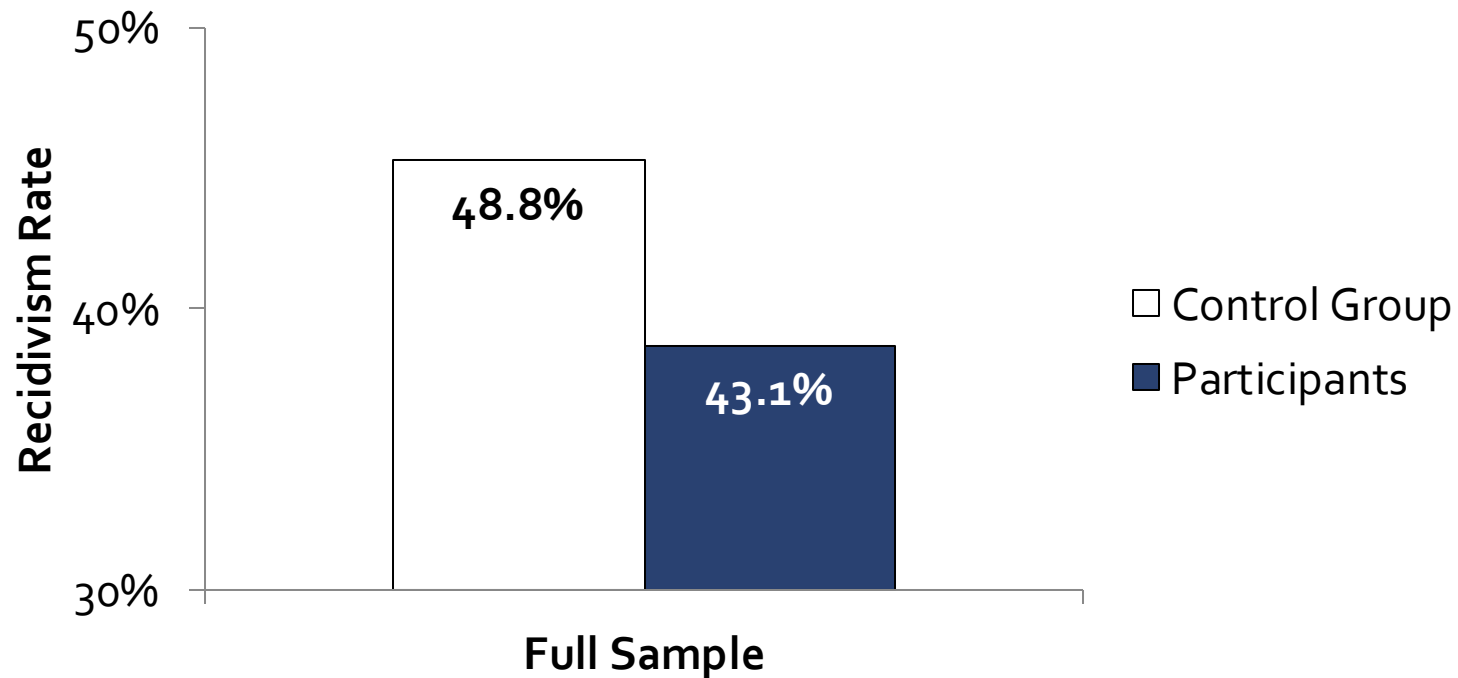- Especially with stable jobs[3]

However, limited research exists on the impact of employment programs on reducing recidivism

▸ Not everyone with a criminal record need the same services.
   ▸ Need to assess differences in job readiness and likelihood of recidivism

▸ Just connecting someone to a job has not been shown to reduce recidivism.
   ▸ Need to address people's underlying needs related to recidivism

▸ Higher-risk people require cognitive-behavioral interventions, while those services can make lower-risk people worse off.
   ▸ Need to match people to services based on assessments

SOURCE: Latessa, *"Why work is important and how to improve the effectiveness of correctional reentry programs that target employment"* (2012)

Some employment programs have been able to reduce recidivism

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) 3-Year Impact on Recidivism

Recidivism Rate

- 48.8% (Control Group)
- 43.1% (Participants)

Full Sample

Legend:
- ☐ Control Group
- ■ Participants
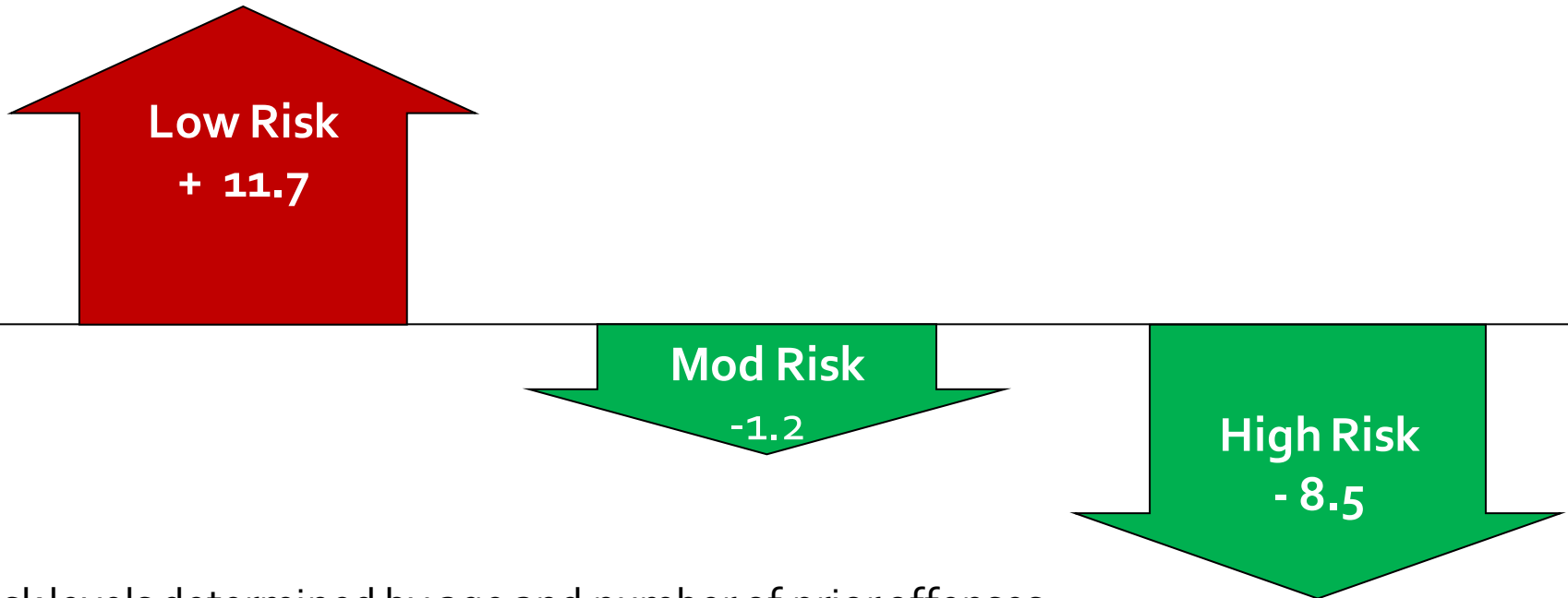
**Significance level = p<.05

SOURCE: Redcross et al, "*More than a job: Final results from the evaluation of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) transitional jobs program*" (2012)

Employment programs must consider risk levels when delivering services*

Differences in reconviction rates between CEO program participants and control group (years 1 and 2)†

Low Risk + 11.7

Mod Risk -1.2

High Risk - 8.5

* Risk levels determined by age and number of prior offenses
† Recidivism impacts for the high risk group were only statistically significant in year 2

SOURCE: Redcross et al, "*More than a job: Final results from the evaluation of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) transitional jobs program*" (2012)

Despite shared goals, workforce development and reentry fields are often not integrated

Workforce Development

Job readiness assessment

Address skill deficits that impact employment

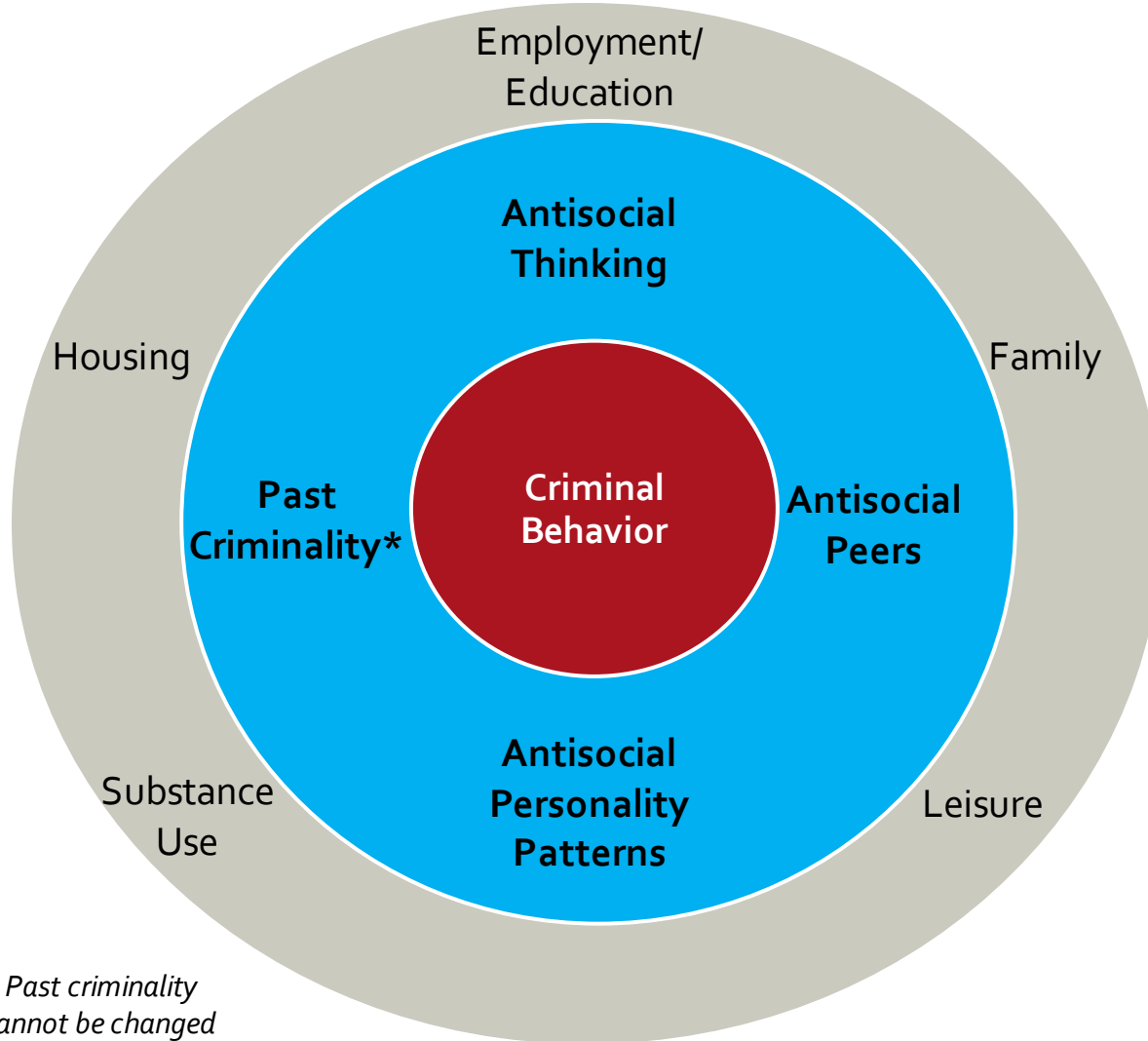Case management and wraparound support

Corrections & Reentry

Risk/needs assessment

Address needs that lead to reoffending

Case management and wraparound support

What are the predictors of recidivism, and how are they measured?

Employment/Education
Housing
Family
Antisocial Thinking
Criminal Behavior
Past Criminality*
Antisocial Peers
Antisocial Personality Patterns
Substance Use
Leisure

* Past criminality cannot be changed

Risk/Needs Assessments

- Administered by corrections agencies

- Measure criminogenic risk factors and specific needs that, if addressed, will reduce the likelihood of future criminal activity

- Help practitioners maximize limited resources

Why should **workforce development professionals** care about criminogenic needs?

The "Big 4" criminogenic needs affect one's ability to find and retain gainful employment

- ▸ Attitudes on the job
- ▸ Valuation of work
- ▸ Lacking self-control/self-regulation
- ▸ Having poor problem-solving or coping skills
- ▸ Having skills (soft or hard) to succeed on the job

Workforce agencies must address "Big 4" risk factors to see improvements in employment outcomes

What are the predictors of job readiness, and how are they measured?

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FRAMEWORK
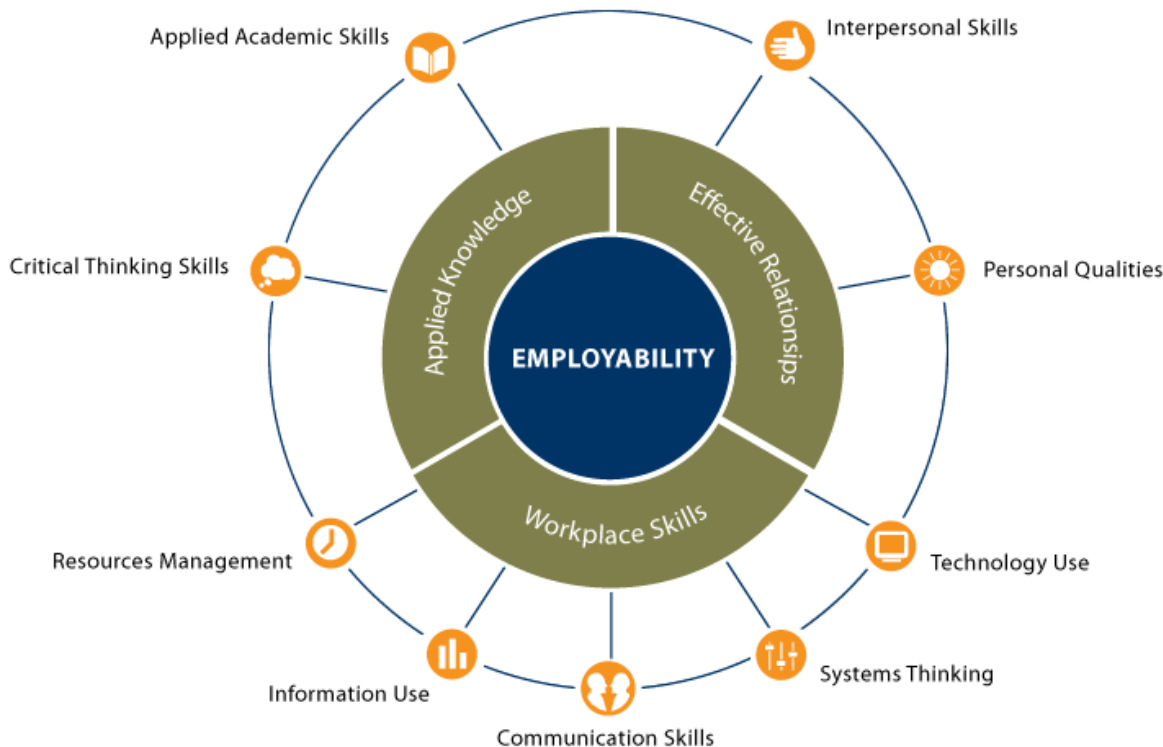
No national consensus on defining or assessing job readiness

Employability skills are general skills necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels, across all sectors

Why should **corrections/reentry professionals** care about job readiness factors?

Dynamic Predictors of Recidivism (common among higher-risk individuals)[4]
• Presence of Antisocial Behavior
• Antisocial Personality Pattern
• Antisocial Cognition
• Antisocial Associates
• Poor Family and/or Marital Relationships
• **Low levels of performance and satisfaction in work/**school
• Lack of pro-social leisure activities
• Substance Abuse

The "Big 4" Risk Factors

Job-Readiness/ Employability Factors[5]
• Low education Level
• Lack of vocational skills
• Limited work experience
• Lack of "soft job skills"
• Negative attitudes about work
• Unrealistic expectations about work
• Logistical barriers to employment
• Physical health

Integrated Reentry and Employment Strategies (IRES) white paper released in 2013
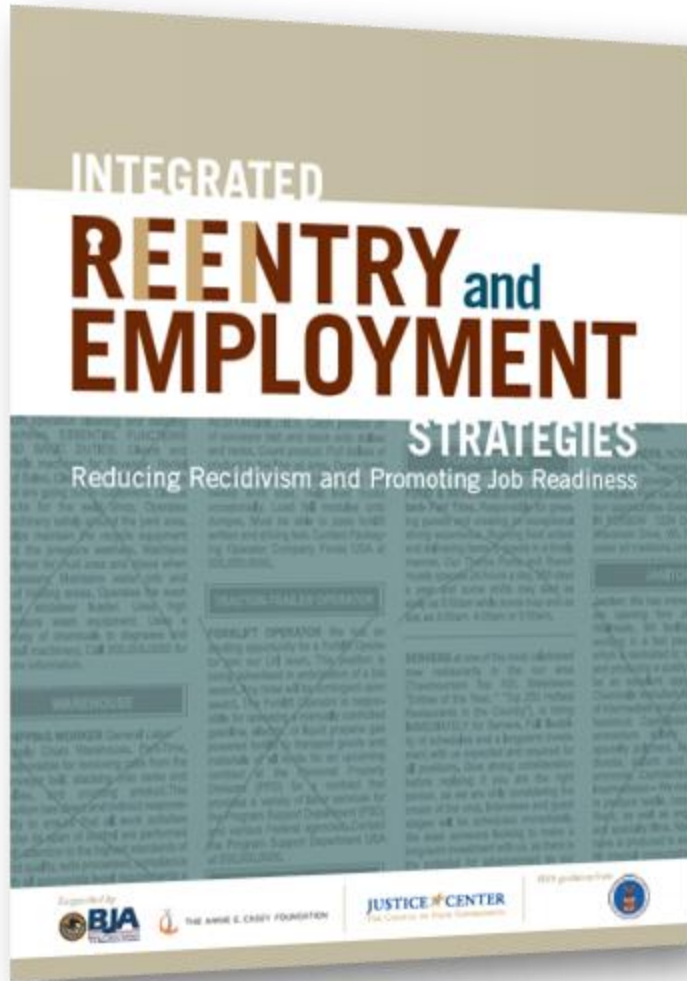
Secretary Thomas E. Perez,
U.S. Department of Labor

By sorting people based on risk and job readiness, we can connect them to appropriate employment services

Step 1: Assess Risk and Needs

Low or "Lower" Risk ← Risk and Needs Assessment with Objective, Validated Tool → Moderate/High or "Higher" Risk

This assessment measures individuals' risk of reoffending and related needs, and helps inform supervision policies and non-employment referrals/program placements that address criminogenic risk and responsivity needs

Step 2: Assess Job Readiness

Job-Readiness Assessment

| Lower Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 1) | Lower Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 2) | Higher Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 3) | Higher Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 4) |

Step 3: Deliver Targeted Services

Integrated Risk and Job-Readiness Packages

| GROUP 1 Employment Program Components | GROUP 2 Employment Program Components |

Less Intensive Application of Service-Delivery Principles for Groups 1 and 2

Integrated Risk and Job-Readiness Packages

Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

| GROUP 3 Employment Program Components | GROUP 4 Employment Program Components |

More Intensive Application of Service-Delivery Principles for Groups 3 and 4

Two pilot sites selected to test the IRES framework at a systems-level

Milwaukee Co., WI

Palm Beach Co., FL

Demonstrated leadership

Groundwork laid for change

Resource-rich area
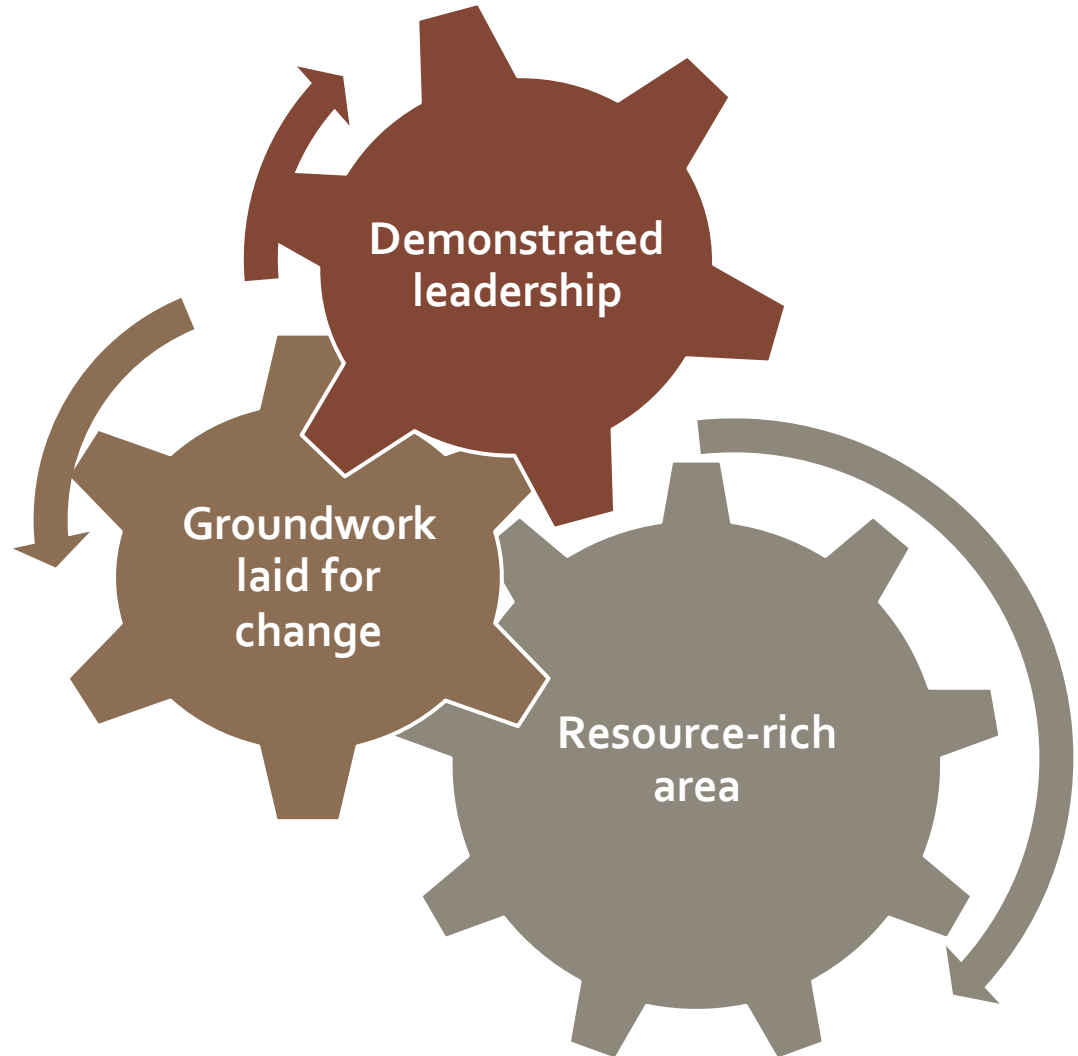
Goals of the IRES pilot project is to ensure people are prepared for work

Bridge workforce development and corrections / reentry fields

Match people to employment services using assessment results

Technical assistance approach

▸ **Lead applicant:** Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission (CJC)

▸ **Lead consultant**: Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center

▸ Support from expert partners

▸ Three-year project

▸ $300,000 in in-kind technical assistance and training

Technical assistance activities

Year One (completed)
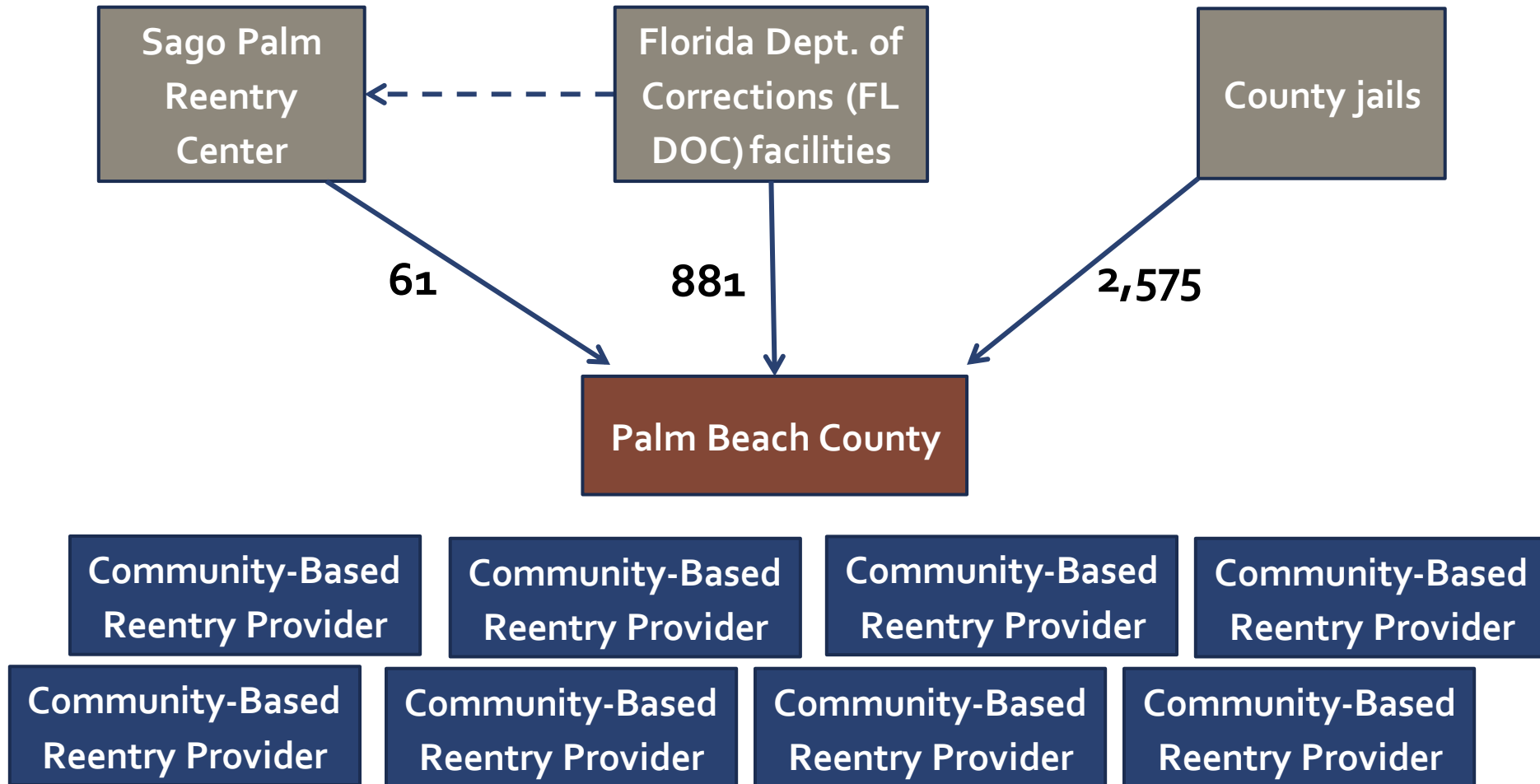Information Gathering and Planning

Year Two
Implementation

Year Three
Evaluation

Universe of people returning to Palm Beach County (PBC) from prison or jail (2014)

Sago Palm Reentry Center	Florida Dept. of Corrections (FL DOC) facilities	County jails

61   **881**   **2,575**

Palm Beach County

Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider
Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider	Community-Based Reentry Provider

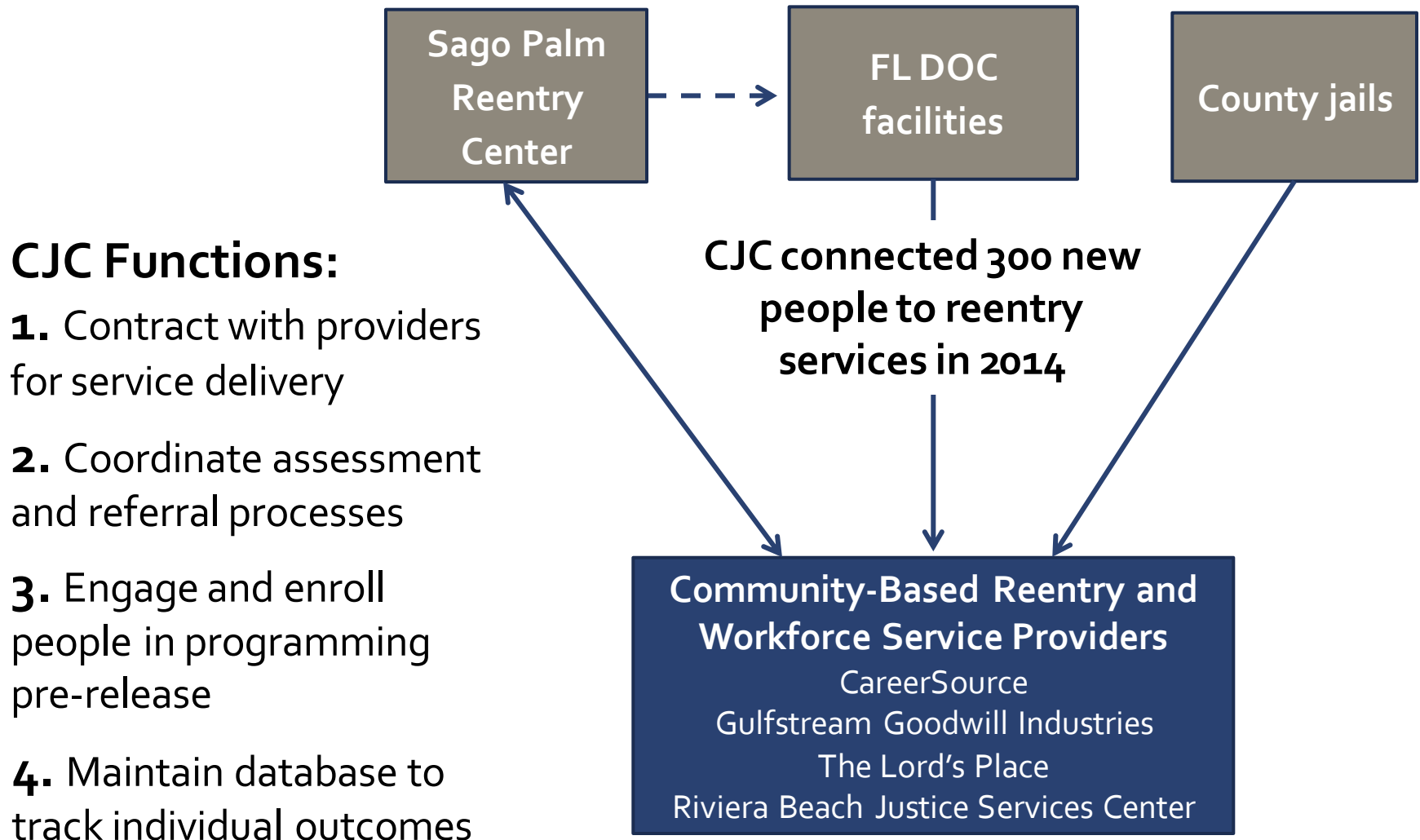# 46% of people released to PBC from FL DOC facilities and county jails return to West Palm Beach

Map represents return zip codes of 3,517 people released to PBC from FL DOC facilities and county jails in 2014
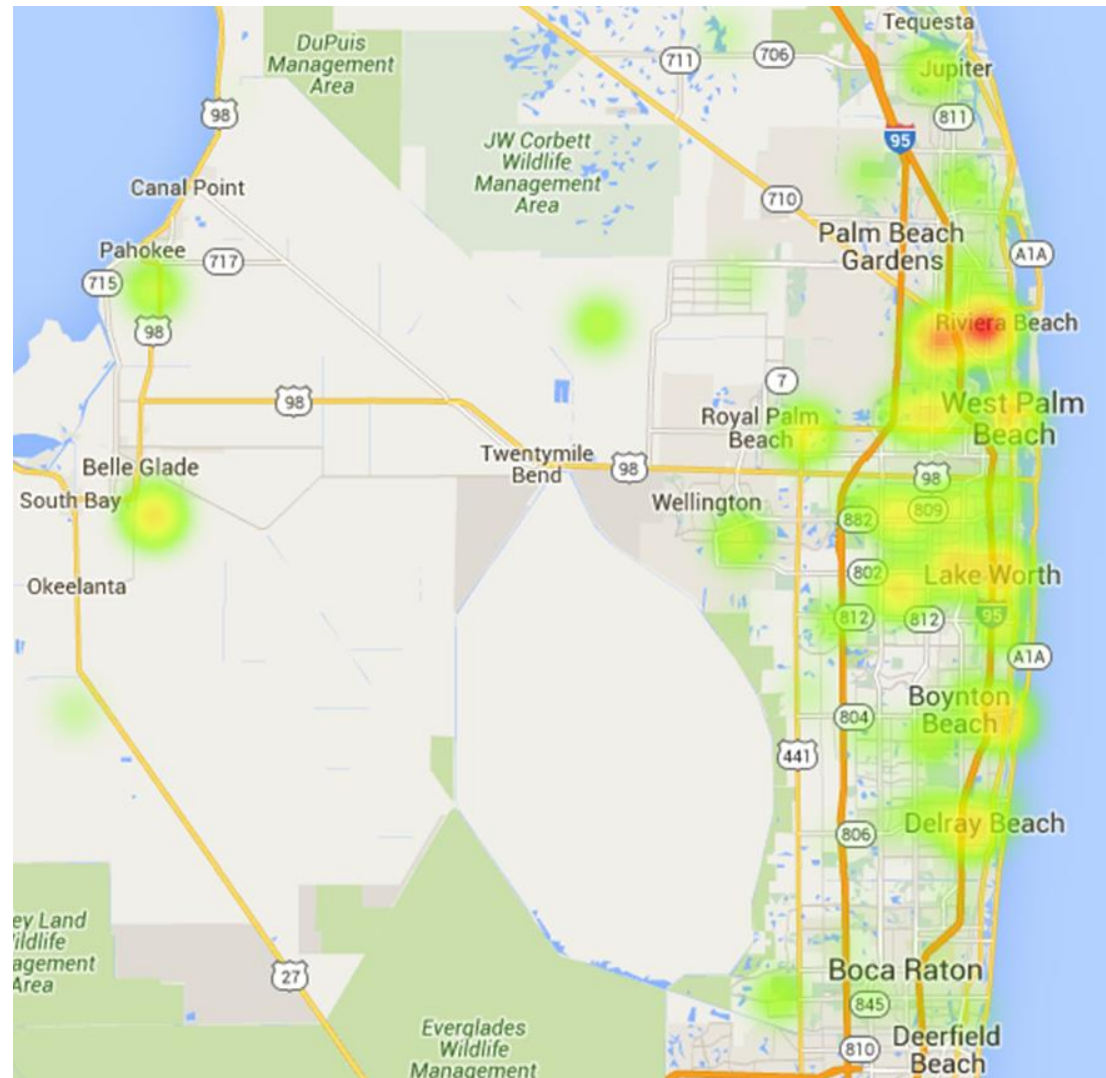
Role of Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) in connecting people to reentry services

Sago Palm Reentry Center

FL DOC facilities

County jails

CJC Functions:

1. Contract with providers for service delivery

2. Coordinate assessment and referral processes

3. Engage and enroll people in programming pre-release

4. Maintain database to track individual outcomes

CJC connected 300 new people to reentry services in 2014

Community-Based Reentry and Workforce Service Providers
CareerSource
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
The Lord's Place
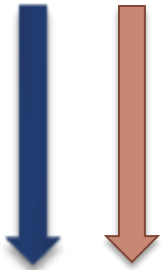Riviera Beach Justice Services Center

Scope of IRES pilot project in PBC and key research questions

~3,500 people released from FL DOC facilities and county jails each year into PBC
  - ➤ *What are their risk levels and service needs?*

~300 new people enrolled each year in CJC-contracted employment programming
  - ➤ *What are the assessment and referral processes?*

3 contracted community-based reentry service providers + workforce development board offer employment programming
  - ➤ *Who are providers best equipped to serve?*
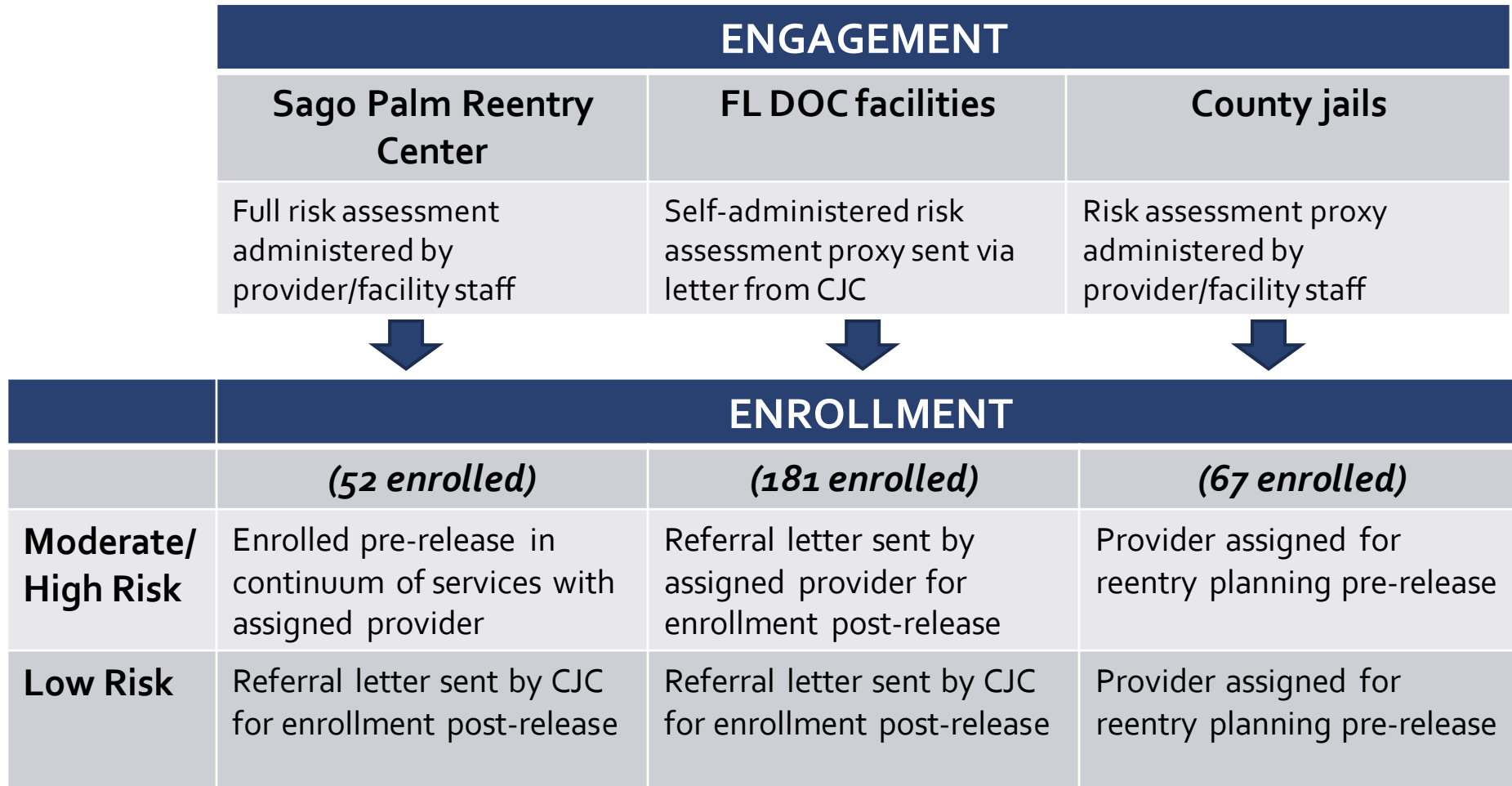
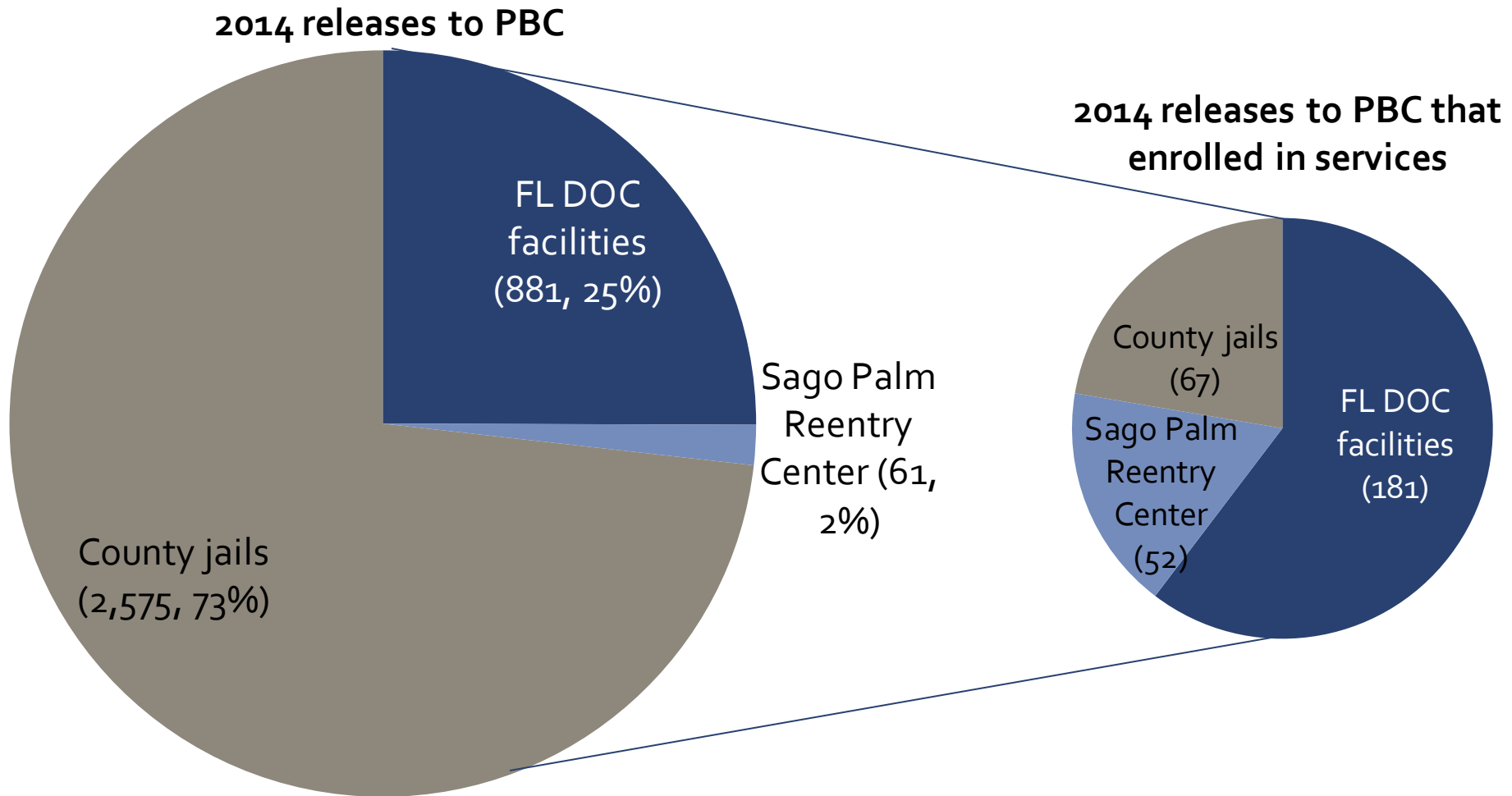# Overview

Goals and scope of pilot project

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CJC process for engaging and enrolling people returning to PBC in employment programming

ENGAGEMENT		
Sago Palm Reentry Center	**FL DOC facilities**	**County jails**
Full risk assessment administered by provider/facility staff	Self-administered risk assessment proxy sent via letter from CJC	Risk assessment proxy administered by provider/facility staff

ENROLLMENT			
	(52 enrolled)	*(181 enrolled)*	*(67 enrolled)*
Moderate/ High Risk	Enrolled pre-release in continuum of services with assigned provider	Referral letter sent by assigned provider for enrollment post-release	Provider assigned for reentry planning pre-release
Low Risk	Referral letter sent by CJC for enrollment post-release	Referral letter sent by CJC for enrollment post-release	Provider assigned for reentry planning pre-release

9% of people returning to PBC from FL DOC facilities and county jails enroll in services through CJC

2014 releases to PBC

FL DOC facilities (881, 25%)

Sago Palm Reentry Center (61, 2%)

County jails (2,575, 73%)

2014 releases to PBC that enrolled in services

County jails (67)

Sago Palm Reentry Center (52)

FL DOC facilities (181)

Program enrollment rates are highest for releases from Sago Palm Reentry Center

	Released	Enrollment Rate
Sago Palm Reentry Center	61	85% (52)
FL DOC facilities	881	21% (181)
County jails	2,575	3% (67)*

* Short jail stays impact program staff's ability to contact all eligible people about programming. In 2014, 135 people were contacted (5% of the total being released). About 50% of those contacted enrolled in programming.
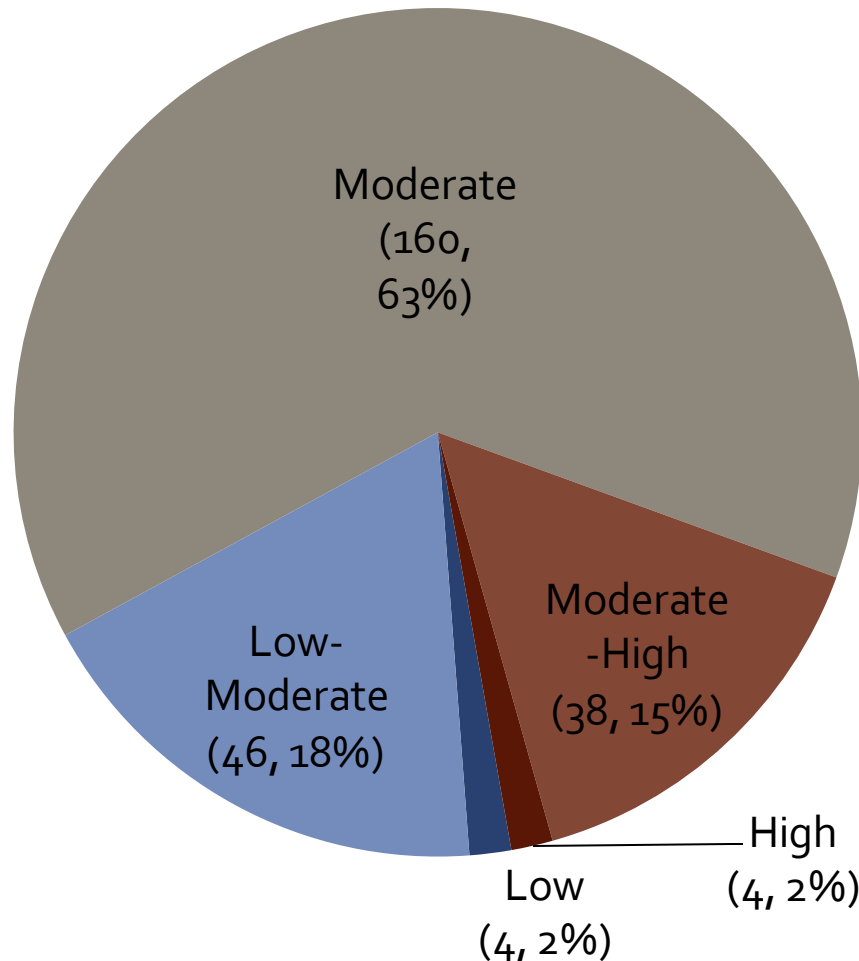
Data represents 2014 releases

Between Oct-Dec 2015, 75% of people in FL DOC facilities that received a letter responded

▸ In October 2015, CJC started tracking response rates for "letters of reentry service interest" sent to people in FL DOC facilities

▸ Between Oct-Dec 2015, 300 letters sent
  ▸ 233 people (75%) responded, 173 were assessed at moderate or high risk of reoffending

CJC contracted services are prioritized for people assessed at a higher risk of reoffending

Risk profiles of 2014 release to PBC that enrolled in services

Pie chart segments:
- Moderate (160, 63%)
- Low-Moderate (46, 18%)
- Moderate-High (38, 15%)
- Low (4, 2%)
- High (4, 2%)

98% of people enrolled are higher risk
(Low-Moderate, Moderate, Moderate-High, and High)
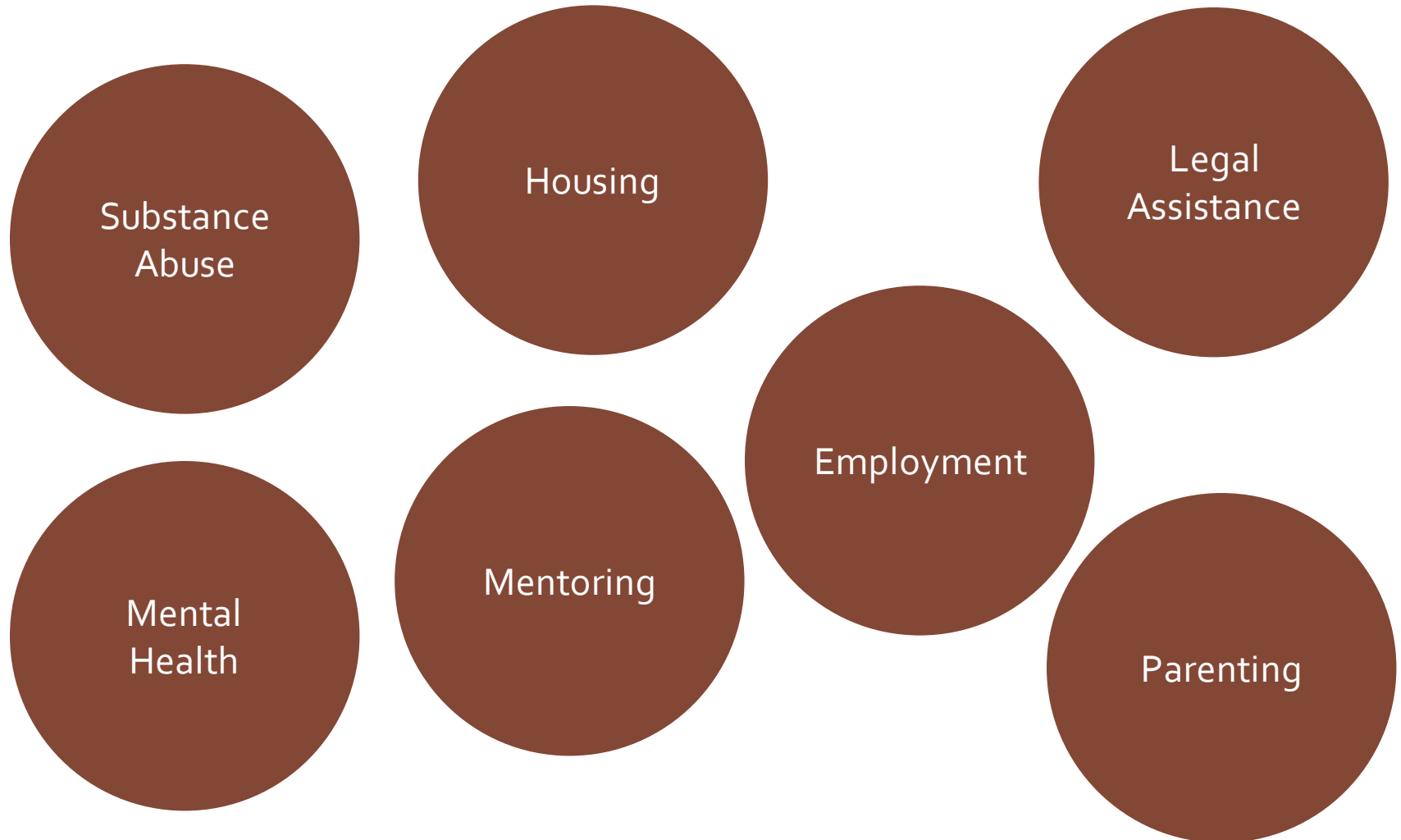
2% of people enrolled are lower risk
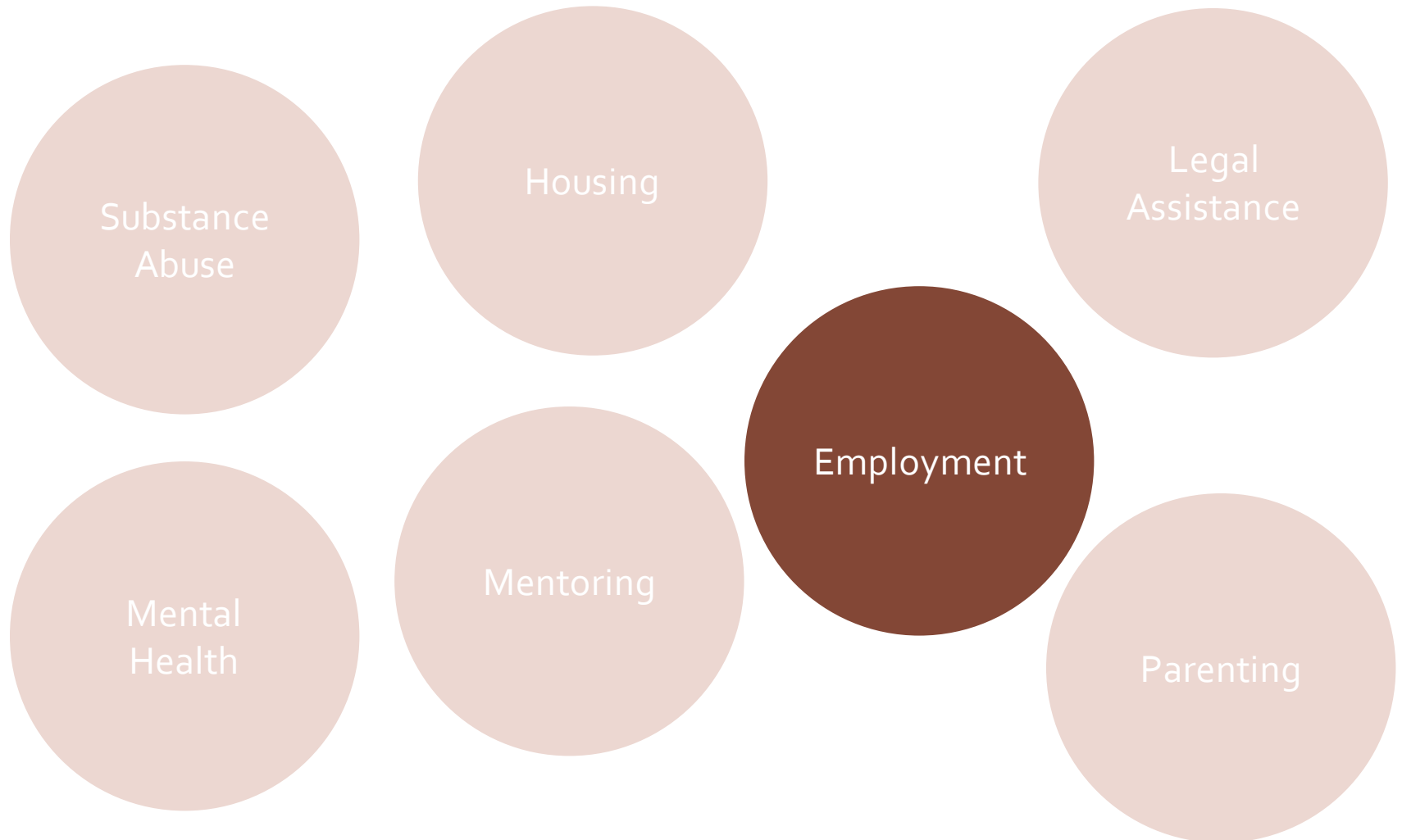(Low)

* Risk scores missing for 48 people (16%)

Key takeaways and opportunities

▶ CJC-contracted community-based reentry providers administer risk and needs assessments pre- or post-release.

▶ Program enrollment is prioritized for people assessed at a high risk of re-offending.

▶ Of all people returning to PBC from FL DOC facilities and county jails, only 9 percent (300 new people) enrolled in programming through the CJC in 2014.

▶ Enrollment rates are highest for people returning from Sago Palm Reentry Center, where community-based reentry service providers begin programming pre-release.

Robust landscape of community-based agencies, including faith-based, offering critical services

Substance Abuse

Housing

Legal Assistance

Employment

Mental Health

Mentoring

Parenting

Robust landscape of community-based agencies, including faith-based, offering critical services

Substance Abuse

Housing

Legal Assistance

Mental Health

Mentoring

Employment

Parenting

CJC contracts with 3 reentry providers and partners with workforce board to deliver employment services

Career Source*	The Lord's Place
El Sol Jupiter Neighborhood Resource Center	Matthew 25 Ministries
Florida Training Services, Inc.	**Riviera Beach Justice Services Center**
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries	The School District of Palm Beach County
Jesus and You (J.A.Y.) Outreach Ministries	Team of Hope

* Contract not needed for services

Reentry providers and workforce board make referrals to other providers for specialized services

Career Source* *transitional job opportunities*	**The Lord's Place** *homeless services*
El Sol Jupiter Neighborhood Resource Center *serves immigrant population*	Matthew 25 Ministries *serves people convicted of sex offenses*
Florida Training Services, Inc. *apprenticeship opportunities*	**Riviera Beach Justice Services Center** *serves people returning to Riviera Beach*
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries *serves people with disabilities*	The School District of Palm Beach County *GED preparation services*
Jesus and You (J.A.Y.) Outreach Ministries *faith-based services*	Team of Hope *serves people returning to Boynton Beach*

* Contract not needed for services

Reentry providers and workforce board are accessible to most high density release areas

Map represents return zip codes of 3,517 people released to PBC from FL DOC facilities and county jails in 2014

Pins indicate locations of 3 contracted community-based reentry service providers and county workforce board
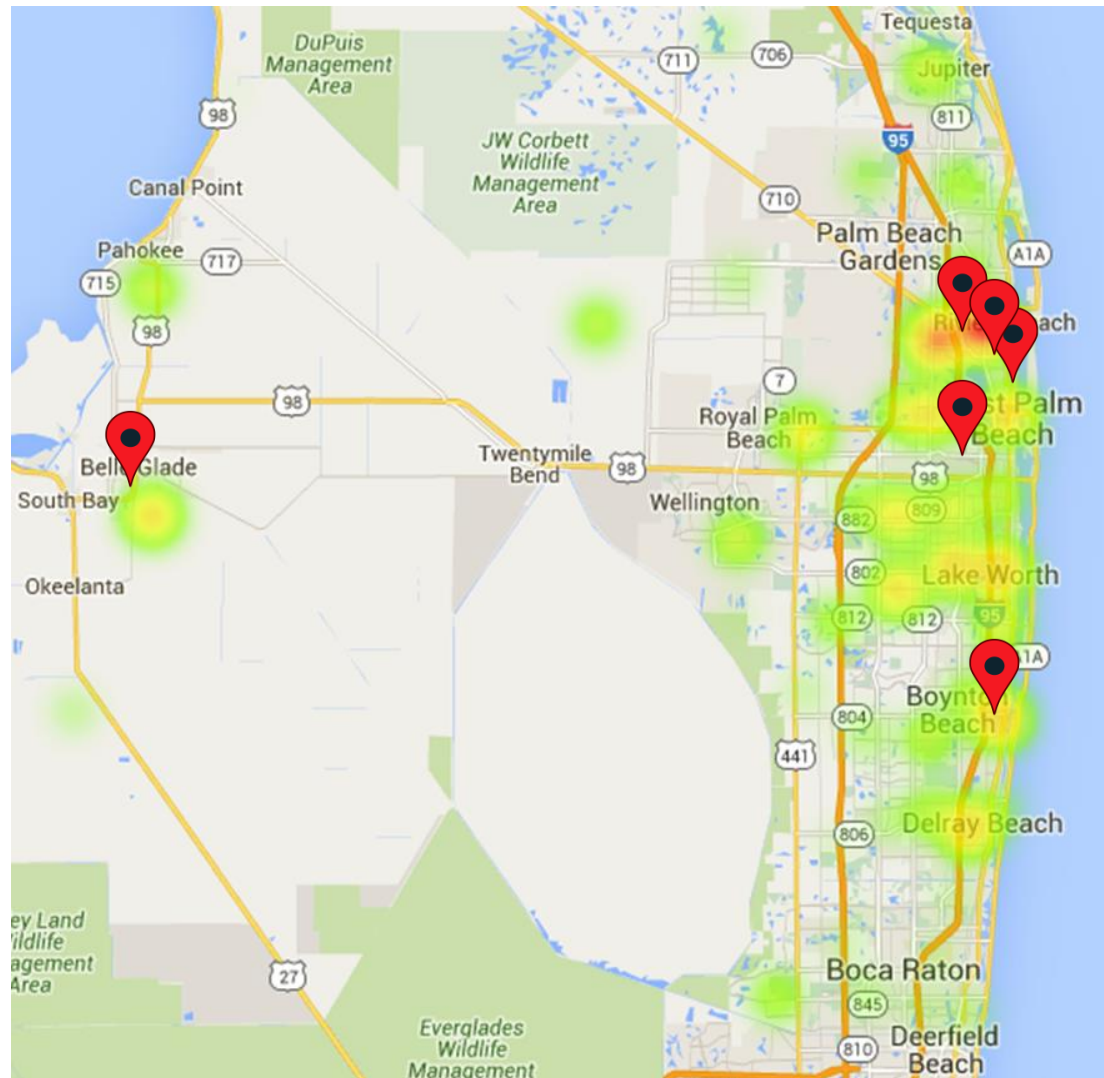
LSI-r assessment includes Education / Employment subdomain to assess job readiness

▸ **LSI-R assessment: Education/Employment Domain**

  ▸ Employment: Current employment; History of unemployment; Reasons for termination

  ▸ Education: Highest grade level; Suspensions or expulsions

  ▸ Social: Peer interactions, Authority interactions

Employment-related questions in the LSI-r are relevant, but have limitations

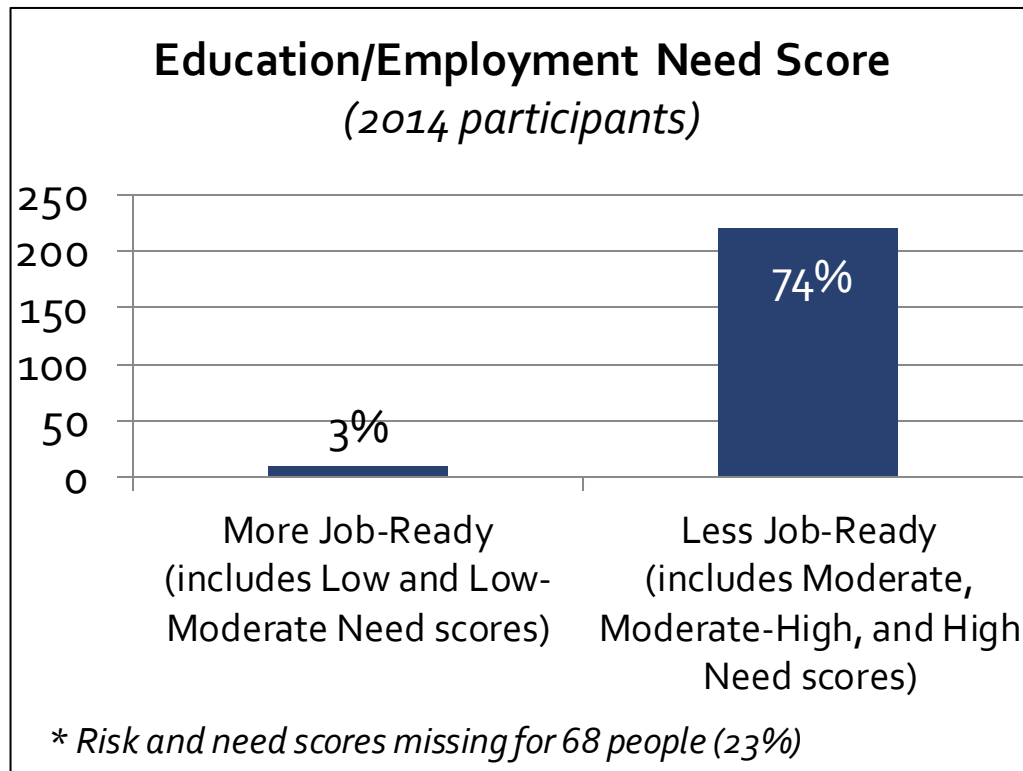▶ **LSI-R assessment: Education/Employment Domains**

   ▸ Employment: Current employment; History of unemployment; Reasons for termination

   ▸ Education: Highest grade level; Suspensions or expulsions

   ▸ Social: Peer interactions, Authority interactions

Education/Employment Need Score
(2014 participants)

74%

3%

More Job-Ready
(includes Low and Low-Moderate Need scores)

Less Job-Ready
(includes Moderate, Moderate-High, and High Need scores)

* Risk and need scores missing for 68 people (23%)

Broad measures indicate need, but not nuanced about specific skill gaps

Relatively static measures do not demonstrate progress at standard and consistent intervals

Reentry providers and workforce board supplement LSI-r with post-release assessments

	Education	Vocational training	Work history (number of jobs, duration)	Current employment / earnings	Job skills	Personal goals
Career Source (American Job Center and PREPARE)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries						X
The Lord's Place	X	X	X	X	X	X
Riviera Beach Justice Services Center	X	X	X	X	X	X

How workforce services are delivered should be based primarily on risk of recidivism

	Lower Risk	Higher Risk
Service Delivery Principles	**Less Intensive Application for Lower-Risk Individuals**	**More Intensive Application for Higher-Risk Individuals**
Engagement	Avoid intensive engagement and case management	Intensive case management and use of cognitive-behavioral approaches
Timing	Timing is still important, but less of a priority for lower-risk individuals	Connect with individuals shortly after release from jail/prison
Incentives	Incentives are less of a priority and need for lower-risk individuals	Enhance motivation through communication and incentives
Coordination	Community supervision should not be intensive, and supervision officers do not have to play as active role	Work closely with community supervision officers, who can assist with intensive engagement
Structured Time	Avoid disrupting existing pro-social ties	Structure time in a pro-social environment

What employment services are delivered should be based primarily on job readiness

More Job-Ready ← → **Less Job-Ready**

Primary Focus:
Finding and Retaining Employment

- Non-transitional Subsidized Employment
- Job Development and Coaching
- Retention and Advancement Services
- Financial Work Incentives

Primary Focus:
Promoting Job Readiness

- Education and Training
- Soft-/Cognitive-Skill Development
- Transitional Job Placements
- Non-skill-Related Interventions

Considerations with matching people to reentry service providers and workforce board

▸ Review of reentry providers and workforce board is based on a point in time analysis, and services may change based on funding

▸ Reentry providers and workforce board could partner to provide more comprehensive service packages to other risk-need groupings

▸ With added capacity or slight changes, some reentry providers and/or workforce board will be equipped to serve other risk-need groupings

▸ Job readiness should change over time, so a person could move from one set of reentry providers or workforce board to another over the course of programming

Reentry providers and workforce board specialize in offering targeted services based on risk

Lower Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 1)	Lower Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 2)	Higher Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 3)	Higher Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 4)
CareerSource (American Job Center) **Gulfstream Goodwill Industries** **Riviera Beach Justice Services Center**	**Riviera Beach Justice Services Center**	**CareerSource (PREPARE)*** **The Lord's Place**	**CareerSource (PREPARE)*** **The Lord's Place**
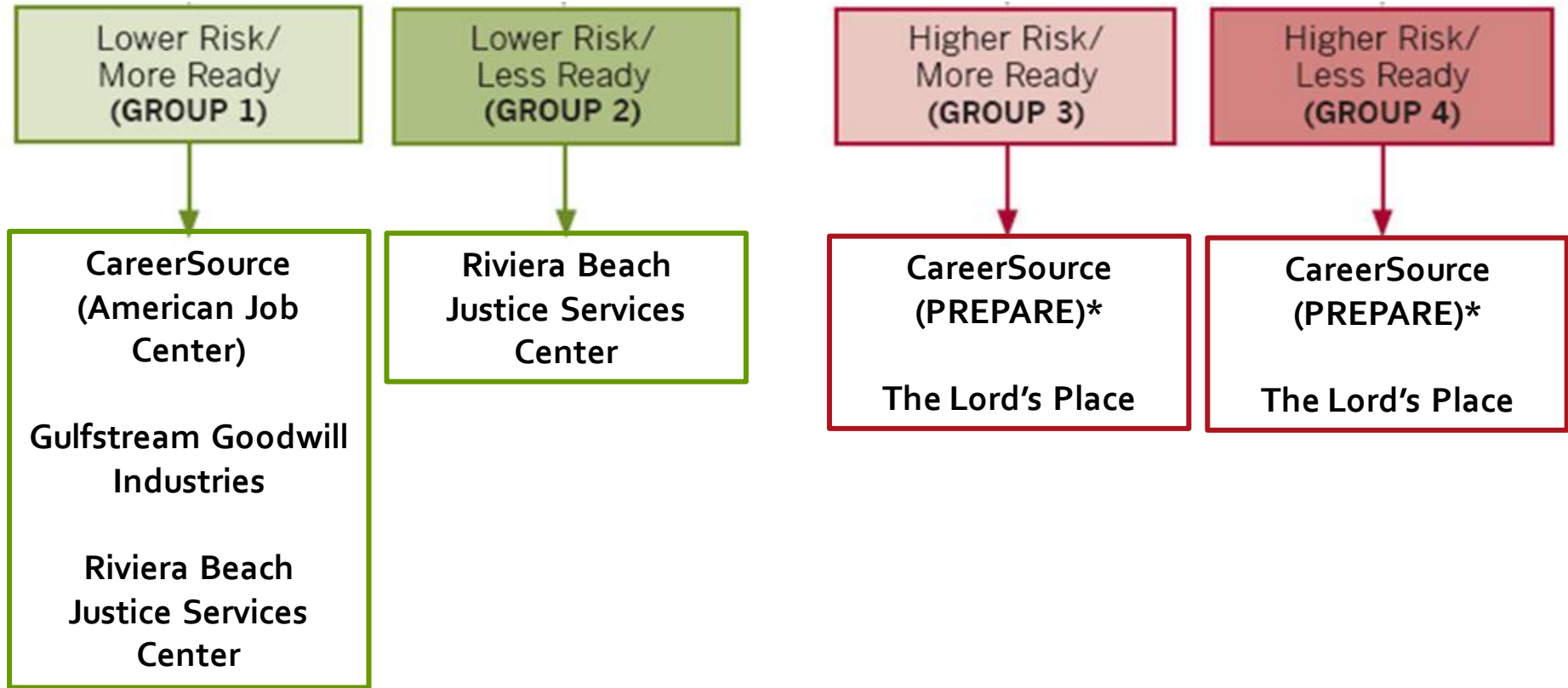
* Only offered to PBC jail population

Current services and way they are delivered does not meet the needs of people returning to PBC

Lower Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 1)	Lower Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 2)	Higher Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 3)	Higher Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 4)
2 (1%)	**2 (1%)**	**9 (4%)**	**219 (94%)**
CareerSource (American Job Center) **Gulfstream Goodwill Industries** **Riviera Beach Justice Services Center**	**Riviera Beach Justice Services Center**	**CareerSource (PREPARE)*** **The Lord's Place**	**CareerSource (PREPARE)*** **The Lord's Place**
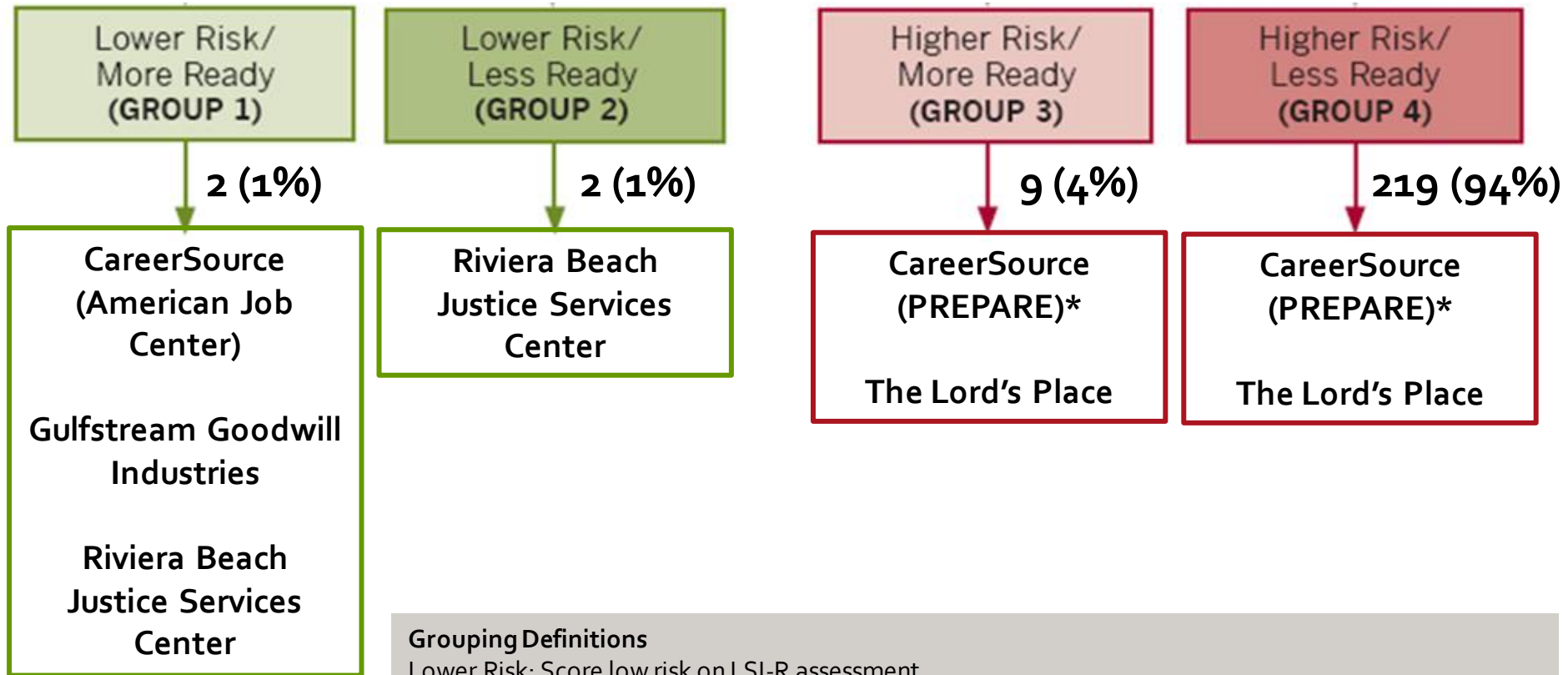
Grouping Definitions
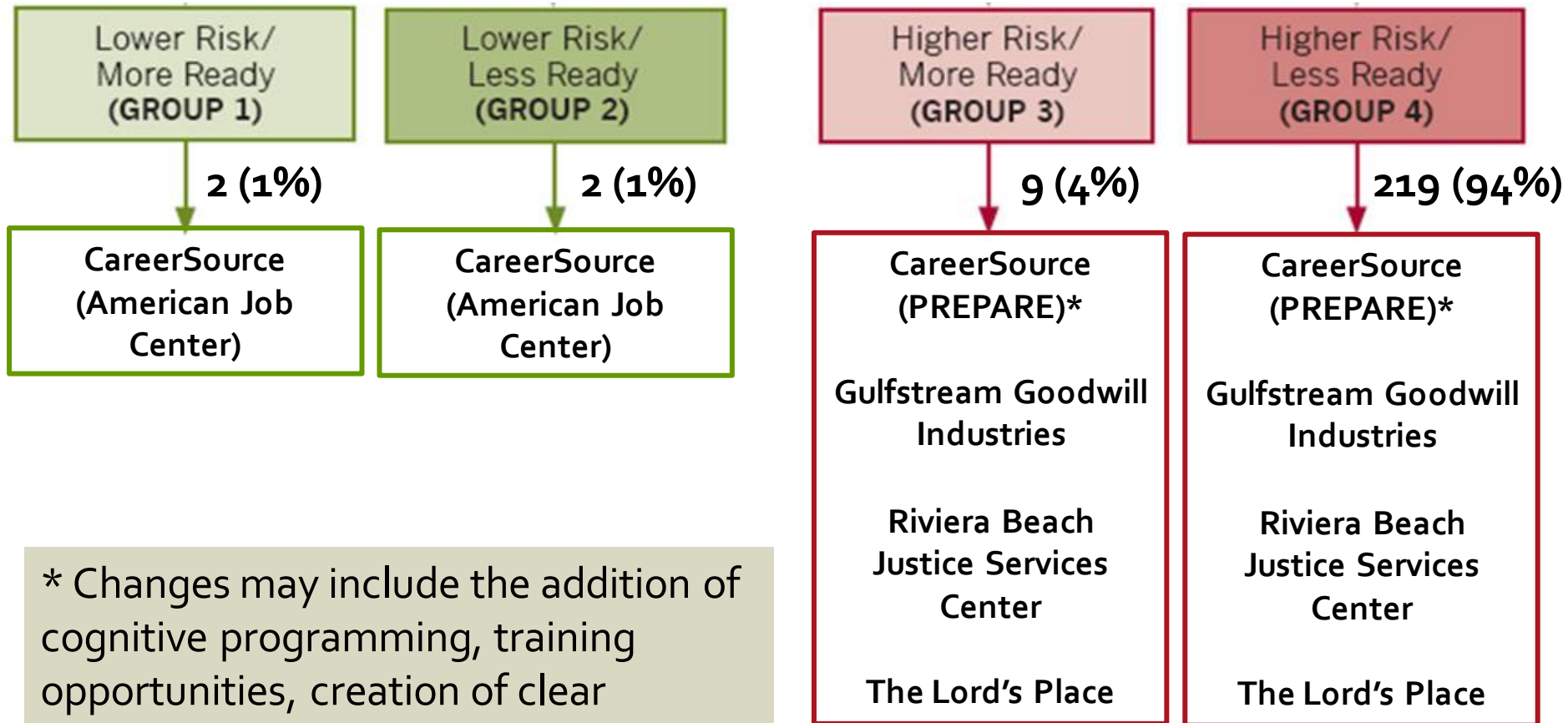Lower Risk: Score low risk on LSI-R assessment
Higher Risk: Score low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high, or high on LSI-R assessment
More Ready: Score low or low-medium on LSI-R assessment Education/Employment domain
Less Ready: Score medium, medium-high, or high on LSI-R assessment Education/Employment domain

Only offered to PBC jail population

Reentry providers and workforce board may serve additional people with relatively minor changes*

Lower Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 1)	Lower Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 2)	Higher Risk/ More Ready (GROUP 3)	Higher Risk/ Less Ready (GROUP 4)
↓ 2 (1%)	↓ 2 (1%)	↓ 9 (4%)	↓ 219 (94%)
CareerSource (American Job Center)	CareerSource (American Job Center)	CareerSource (PREPARE)* Gulfstream Goodwill Industries Riviera Beach Justice Services Center The Lord's Place	CareerSource (PREPARE)* Gulfstream Goodwill Industries Riviera Beach Justice Services Center The Lord's Place

* Changes may include the addition of cognitive programming, training opportunities, creation of clear services tracks, or the allocation of additional funds.

* Only offered to PBC jail population

Current data collected and timing of collection makes program impact evaluations difficult

▸ Phase I (Pre-Release Services)

    ▸ Completion: post-release enrollment

▸ Phase II (Identification and Basic Needs)

    ▸ Completion: obtain identification and public benefits (as needed)

▸ Phase III (Housing and Treatment)

    ▸ Completion: obtain housing and complete treatment outlined in transition plan

▸ Phase IV (Employment)

    ▸ Completion: obtain verifiable employment

▸ Phase V (Maintenance and Sustainability)

    ▸ Completion: maintain employment and housing for six months

Key takeaways and opportunities

▸ CJC facilitates high levels of coordination among reentry providers and workforce board.

▸ Not all reentry providers or the workforce board deliver services to target underlying criminogenic needs.

▸ Employment programming is not consistently targeted to people's assessed level of job readiness.

▸ Risk and needs assessment information is maintained in a database accessible to reentry providers and workforce board.

   ▸ The data collected makes program impact evaluations difficult.
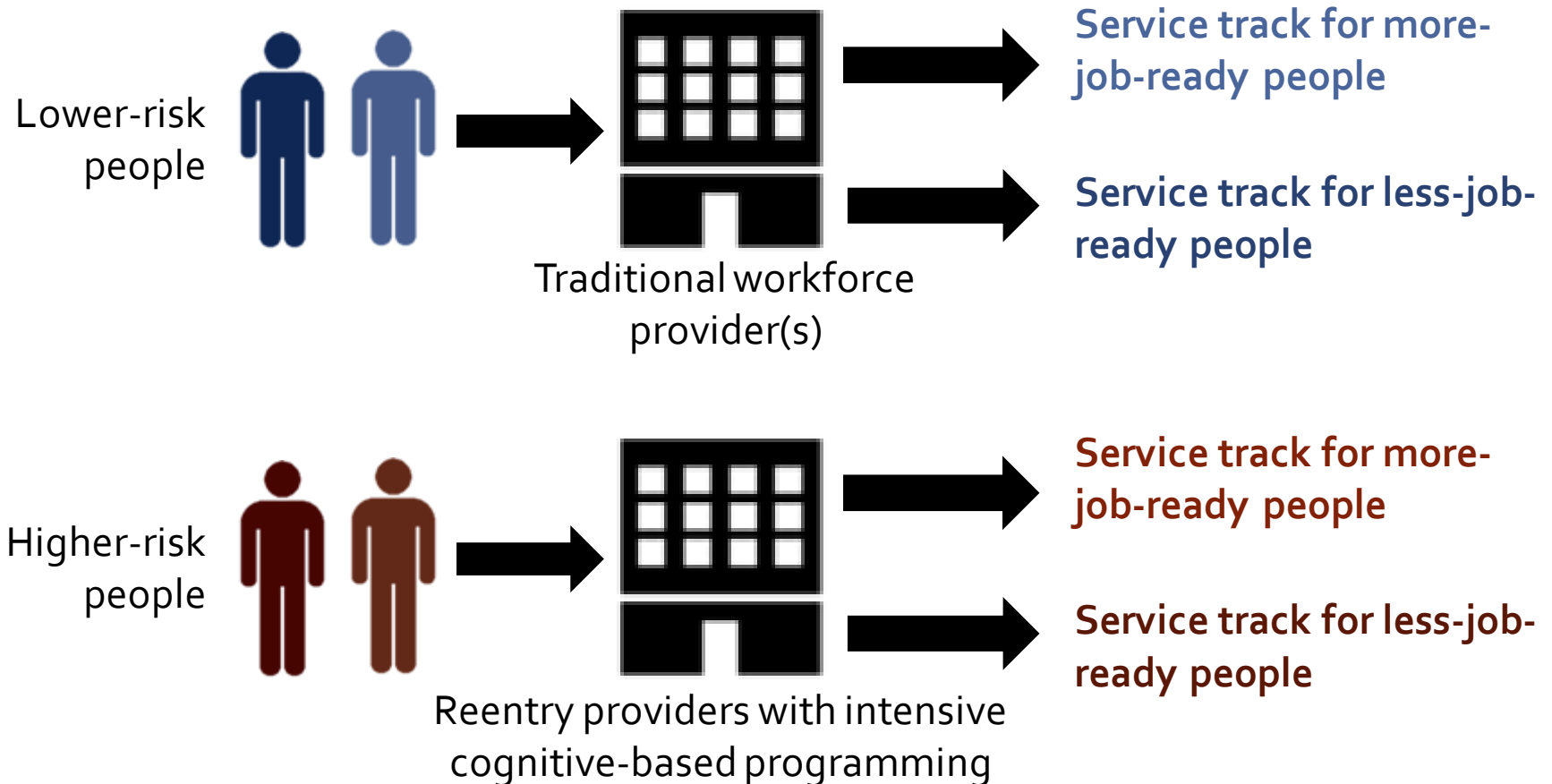
Overview

Goals and scope of IRES pilot project

Findings

Recommendations

1. Formalize system-level process for referring people to reentry services based on risk, and build capacity

Lower-risk people

Traditional workforce provider(s)

Service track for more-job-ready people

Service track for less-job-ready people

Higher-risk people

Reentry providers with intensive cognitive-based programming

Service track for more-job-ready people

Service track for less-job-ready people

1. Formalize system-level process for referring people to reentry services based on risk, and build capacity

▸ Formalize partnership with CareerSource for referring people at lower risk of reoffending

▸ Build capacity of contracted reentry service providers to meet the needs of people at higher risk of reoffending

▸ Ensure service contracts are aligned with evidence-based principles

▸ Develop protocols for cross-program referrals

  ▸ Providers conduct LSI-r proxy for "walk-ins" and refer to appropriate reentry provider or workforce board based on results

  ▸ Establish case management protocols that can be facilitated across reentry providers and workforce board

2. Ensure providers are equipped to deliver differentiated services based on assessed job readiness

▸ Partner with business community/industry associations to define what it means to be "job ready"

▸ Establish protocol for provider-level job readiness assessments

▸ Develop differentiated service tracks at the program-level based on job readiness

▸ Ensure service contracts are aligned with core components of effective workforce programming

3. Increase enrollment rates in employment services contracted through CJC

▸ Request risk assessment data from FL DOC

▸ Explore opportunities for increased pre-release engagement of people in FL DOC facilities, such as video conferencing

4. Define data tracking intervals and ensure consistent reporting

▸ Redefine "completion" as a data tracking tool

  ▸ Develop standard intervals for reporting

▸ Ensure consistent use of database among reentry providers and workforce board for tracking referrals, assessments, progress, and service delivery

Summary of recommendations

▸ Formalize system-level process for referring people to reentry services based on risk, and build capacity for serving higher-risk people

▸ Ensure providers are equipped to deliver differentiated services based on assessed job readiness

▸ Increase enrollment rates in contracted employment services

▸ Define data tracking intervals and ensure consistent reporting

Technical assistance activities

Year One (completed)
Information Gathering and Planning

Year Two
Implementation

Year Three
Evaluation

Questions?

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www.csgjusticecenter.org/subscribe

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