

# Executive Summary:

## Policy and Practice Guidance for the Future of Reentry

Across the nation, over 400,000 people return home from prison each year,<sup>1</sup> and millions more people cycle through local jails. Yet too often, they reenter their communities without stable housing, employment, identification, or access to health care, creating a set of circumstances that can lead to increased recidivism. Despite some progress, most reentry efforts remain fragmented across agencies, underfunded, and disconnected from the systems that shape long-term success.

The **Policy and Practice Guidance for the Future of Reentry** responds to this challenge by offering a unified framework for **state leaders and partners** to transform reentry into a coordinated, fair, and human-centered process.

Developed under the Reentry 2030 initiative, this guidance provides practical steps and policy options that enable states to align efforts across courts, corrections, supervision, workforce, housing, and health systems. The goal is clear: Ensure that every person leaving incarceration has the support, dignity, and opportunity to thrive.

Organized around **seven core principles**, the guidance details strategies to drive meaningful reform:

### 1. Integrated Approach to Courts, Corrections, and Community Supervision

Using a whole-of-government strategy, agencies share data, coordinate case planning, and provide continuous support from incarceration through full community reintegration.

### 2. Safe and Stable Housing

Prioritize housing resources, leverage vouchers, and forge partnerships with housing providers to address homelessness and insecurity among people returning home.

### 3. Economic Mobility and Meaningful Employment

Break down systemic barriers to work by reforming hiring and licensing policies and incentivizing employers to embrace second-chance hiring.

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2023 – *Statistical Tables* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2024), table 9, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p23st.pdf>.

#### **4. Pre- and Post-Release Educational Opportunities**

Expand access to in-custody and community-based education, training, and credentialing programs that create sustainable career pathways and economic stability.

#### **5. Treatment and Care Addressing Health and Behavioral Health Needs**

Integrate medical, behavioral health, and substance use treatment to ensure continuity of care and improved health outcomes for people reentering society.

#### **6. Strong Families and Social Networks**

Encourage family-centered policies that preserve relationships during incarceration and strengthen family bonds as a foundation for long-term reintegration.

#### **7. Access to Relief Mechanisms to Mitigate Barriers**

Expand expungement, record sealing, and certificates of qualification to remove lingering barriers that limit opportunity and civic participation.

---

Together, these principles represent a roadmap for states to **build systems that are coordinated, data-driven, and rooted in human dignity**. By implementing the strategies outlined in this guidance, states can not only reduce recidivism but also expand economic opportunity, improve community safety, and ensure that reentry becomes a pathway to restoration, not a return to incarceration.