



Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

Reentry Services

VOCATIONAL & LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT – APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

July 2023 – June 2025

Vocational and Life Skills Program Grant

Applications due: April 10, 2023

Eligibility

Applicants are limited to community-based organizations, community colleges, federally recognized or state recognized Indian tribes, or nonprofit organizations that provide vocational and life skills programming and services to adults who are incarcerated, who have been incarcerated within the prior eighteen months, or who are serving a period of supervision on either probation or parole.

The department, in awarding grants, shall give priority to programs, services, or training that result in meaningful employment.

Deadline

Applicants must submit their applications with all required supporting documentation to Tyler Goodrich at tyler.goodrich@nebraska.gov no later than April 10, 2023.

Contact Information

For questions regarding the application or application submission, contact Tyler Goodrich at 531-207-3009 Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. or e-mail tyler.goodrich@nebraska.gov.

Grant Award

Notification of grant award will be provided on or before May 1, 2023. The grant cycle starts in July 2023 and runs through June 2025. The entire annual allocation of \$3.5 million is available each year of the two-year grant period subject to appropriation. Total grant funding is contingent upon appropriation in FY 24, FY 25. There is no set limit on the number of organizations that may be awarded.

NDCS Reentry Services

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Section 1

NDCS Reentry Services

Vocational and Life Skills Program Overview

Reentry requires a systemic approach for incarcerated individuals to return to their communities. It is not a “program.” Rather, it is an intentional mind-set or method of facilitating used to prepare individuals to be contributing members of a community.

Successful reentry:

- Provides increased public safety by reducing the number of future victims
 - This is achieved by reducing the likelihood of continued criminal behavior, essentially lowering the recidivism rate
- Provides a plan for assessing and addressing risks and needs
 - This plan involves a reentry-focused case management system from first contact to release and community reintegration
- Provides for a smooth transition of an individual from incarceration or court-ordered supervision into his/her community
 - Facilitation of this transition includes a focus on discharge planning, family reunification, life skills and meaningful work
- Provides opportunities for career development and placement as a means of supporting oneself and one’s family
 - These opportunities are enhanced through targeted vocational and life skills training programs

The criminal justice system cannot fully achieve comprehensive reentry services and planning without community providers. This solicitation is a continuation of the work being done inside NDCS facilities, which creates a bridge for the individual to successfully return to the community.

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) is soliciting applications for vocational and life skills training programs to provide services to individuals who are currently incarcerated, under parole supervision, or under probation supervision. Eligible program participants may access services for up to 18 months following release or discharge from supervision.

An annual allocation of \$3.5 M is available each year of the two-year grant period. There is no set limit on the number of organizations that may be awarded.

Successful applicants will be capable of training this target population before and/or after release. Individuals receiving vocational and life skills training prior to release are more prepared to make significant strides toward a more positive reintegration to the community immediately upon release. Programs that deliver services inside and connect individuals to services on the outside further enhance the likelihood of successful reentry. These programs aid the department in increasing public safety, reducing recidivism, providing meaningful vocational and life skills training, and facilitating successful reentry as individuals return to their communities. Applicants must be able to identify how their program/services directly connect the participants with meaningful employment.

Section 2

NDCS Reentry Services

Timeline

February 22, 2023	Grant Announcement – Seeking Applicants
April 10, 2023	Grant Applications Due
April 10 – May 1, 2023	Review, Evaluation, Scoring of Applications
May 1, 2023	Notification of Grant Awards

Timeline – VLS Meetings

VLS Meeting Schedule for Grant Cycle Five	
August 4, 2023	Kick-off Quarterly Meeting
November 3, 2023	Quarterly Meeting
February 2, 2024	Quarterly Meeting
May 3, 2024	Quarterly Meeting
August 2, 2024	Quarterly Meeting
November 1, 2024	Quarterly Meeting
February 7, 2025	Quarterly Meeting
May 2, 2025	Closeout Quarterly Meeting

Grant Review Team

The Vocational & Life Skills (VLS) Program grant review team will consist of individuals from each of the following: NDCS Reentry Services, NDCS staff, State Probation, NDCS Adult Parole Administration, and the Board of Parole.

Applications will be ranked following a review of each response, to include thoroughness, applicability to the NDCS Reentry Services and statutory requirements, and ability to meet requirements set forth in the application, using the points noted in section 4. The grant review team may follow-up to clarify information provided.

Program Evaluation Components/Requirements

Program evaluations will be conducted by the Nebraska Center for Justice Research at the University of Nebraska Omaha to identify how programs meet the objectives of lowering recidivism and obtaining and maintaining employment. The evaluation team will follow the evaluation guidelines specified in LB 896 that includes both process and outcome evaluation procedures. Evaluation activities include a review of program materials, site visits, observations of programming, interviews with key staff and participants, and analyses of recidivism, desistance, and cost-benefit. The qualitative process evaluation results will be used to contextualize the quantitative outcome evaluation results. Additional details on these evaluation activities are provided below.

The evaluation portion of the grant is funded through NDCS. Evaluation expenses are not necessary or allowable in the grant proposal. Information from the evaluations and data collection procedures employed under this grant may help your program secure additional outside funding in the future.

Evaluation Expectations

Programs are expected to comply with evaluation procedures. This requires the ability to use a data management system and work within set data protocols. In addition to the list below, other evaluation-related activities may be added as needed. Failure to comply with evaluation and/or data requirements may result in a partial or total loss of funding.

I. Review of Program Materials

A review of program materials will occur near the beginning of the evaluation cycle. *The evaluation team will request copies of all program materials prior to scheduling the first site visit.* This will allow the evaluation team to educate themselves on program operations and provide a foundation to assess fidelity to program models.

II. Site Visits

Evaluators will tour each program at the beginning of the grant cycle. *The evaluators will contact program leads to schedule a site visit. Program staff will provide evaluators with an overview of the program and describe how program materials are used by the program (intake forms, program handbooks, fliers, et al.).* The evaluation team will be available for additional site visits as needed to provide help with any questions or concerns with the evaluation process.

III. Program Data Collection

Programs will be responsible for entering data in the NDCS data management system. Training will be provided on the data entry and collection procedures. User guide materials will be made available in the event of staff turnover. Data monitoring may occur monthly, or as frequently as needed, to ensure that all the required information can be gathered with minimal additional impact on program staff and resources. The NDCS program manager and evaluation team will be available as needed to help with any data questions or evaluation concerns. Additional data on participants will be collected from other sources to measure recidivism, desistance, and additional outcomes relevant to the cost-benefit analysis (e.g., official agency data, employment).

The following variables must be collected for each participant in the program and uploaded to the data management system monthly, or more often if participant information changes.

- First and last name
- NDCS ID, if available
 - Date of birth and demographics will need to be collected if ID is not available
- Program offerings provided
- Location of program offerings
- Dates of program offerings (start and end dates)
- Program ending status (successful completion, incomplete, etc.)

IV. Programming Observation

The evaluators will need to observe aspects of programming during the grant cycle. *They will contact program leads to schedule the observation at a time that is convenient for the program.* During the observation, they will be assessing several criteria that can enhance the participant experience, such as facilitator preparedness, facilitator rapport, facilitator group management, and the facilitator's ability to be flexible with diverse learning needs.

V. Interviews with Key Staff

The evaluators will conduct interviews with a minimum of two key program staff each year. The interviews will be semi-structured and will take place on site. The interviews will touch on topics such as the respondent's background experience, program fidelity tools, screening and assessment details, program goals, successes, and challenges. *The evaluators will reach out to program leads to schedule these interviews.*

VI. Interviews with Program Participants

The evaluators will conduct interviews with a minimum of two program participants each grant cycle. These will be semi-structured interviews that may take place on site or in the community. The interviews will touch on topics such as how the participant got involved with the program, screening and assessment details, perceived program usefulness, and the participant's goals in participation. *The evaluators may reach out to program leads for assistance in scheduling these interviews.*

VII. Recidivism and Desistance Analysis

The evaluators will conduct a recidivism analysis per the guidelines specified in LB 896. The evaluators will likely measure recidivism as returns to NDCS facilities at six months, one year, and three years. The evaluation team recognizes that recidivism measurement can be limited by institutional administrative data and focuses on a 'failure event' rather than a success. Thus, the evaluators also plan to provide desistance measures that assess progress towards movement away from criminal behavior. *Other than regular data entry, these outcome evaluation efforts will not require any additional work on behalf of VLS grantees.*

VIII. Cost-Benefit Analysis

The evaluators will conduct a cost-benefit analysis as specified in LB 896, if applicable. A cost-benefit analysis is a quantitative way to assess the financial costs and benefits of a program intervention. Costs may include program staff, participant needs, and the facilities required to provide a space for the intervention. Benefits may include positive monetary gain because of the intervention, such as holding employment and contributing to taxes, or reduced incarceration and healthcare costs. *To conduct this analysis, the evaluators may request cost information from the NDCS accounting staff and the program staff.*

Application Instructions

1. Providers who wish to submit an application shall complete the application form, program narrative, budget summary and narrative, and references (Sections 3-6)
2. Completed grant application forms (Sections 3, 4, 5 & 6) shall be scanned in pdf format, and emailed to Tyler Goodrich, Vocational & Life Skills Program Manager at tyler.goodrich@nebraska.gov. Supplemental information such as brochures, research and data may be scanned and attached as pdf files.
3. Applications are due no later than 5:00PM Central Standard Time, Monday, April 10, 2023
4. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated from April 10, 2023 through May 1, 2023. During the review process a representative of NDCS Reentry Services may contact the provider for further information.
5. Providers that have been selected may be required to meet with the grant review team prior to final award notification. Notification will be provided on or before May 1, 2023.
6. Questions regarding the application may be directed to Tyler Goodrich via e-mail at tyler.goodrich@nebraska.gov or by phone at 531-207-3009.

Section 3

Application

In submitting this grant application, I hereby certify that:

1. I have received sections 1-8 of the NDCS Reentry Services Grant Application
2. Attached to this application form are completed sections 4, 5 and 6
3. This grant application is submitted by, or on behalf of, the party that will be responsible for the delivery of services should a grant be awarded
4. The provider, if selected, will comply with the requirements set forth in NAC Title 71, Chapter 1 and the application
5. All information provided is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge

Signature of Authorized Official

Date

Name of Signatory: _____

Applicant/Organization: _____

Title: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Section 4

NDCS Reentry Services

Program Narrative

Please follow the outline described below, adhering to the following headings/questions. Each application will be evaluated on the thoroughness and applicability of responses provided for each section listed below.

A. Organization Information

- Organization Name
- Primary Contact/Title
- Phone
- Email
- Website Address
- Governing Structure

B. Organization Mission

- Provide your organization's mission statement and describe how your organization's mission relates to increasing public safety and reducing recidivism.

C. Experience with Target Population

- Describe your organization's experience working with individuals who are incarcerated, on parole, under the supervision of State Probation or who have held one or more of those statuses within the past 18 months.
- If your organization has not previously worked with this population explain the current client population and how the skills and opportunities provided to these individuals can meet the special needs of clients with current or previous criminal justice system involvement.

D. Experience with Evidence-Based Practices/Programs (EBP)

- See appendix I for link to EBP information
- Describe your organization's definition of EBP
- Describe your organization's experience delivering EBP. This should include descriptions of specific program delivered and/or practices utilized with your clients.

E. Program Description

- Describe in detail the proposed program, to include:
 - What services will be delivered
 - How services will be delivered
 - Where services will be delivered
 - Duration of the program
 - What research or data supports this program
 - Explain the specific learning objectives or outcomes participants will meet through your program
 - Identify any certifications, licenses, or degrees the participants will earn through participation in your program
 - Provide a flowchart or other graphic depiction of how clients progress through your program, from intake to completion
- Describe the criteria for participants' successful completion of your organization's program and provide the current successful completion rate for your clients.
- Theory of Change (TOC) is a notable resource in planning long term goals that will result in positive outcomes. See appendix II for the TOC description.

F. Program Relevance

- Identify how this program relates to the objectives of preparing individuals for employment as they reenter the community, through which recidivism is lowered.
- Identify how this program relates to obtaining and maintaining employment:
 - Process for matching a participant in a job relevant to their skills
 - Employment retention strategies for participants

G. Relevance to the Nebraska job market

- Explain how the proposed program relates to the overall job market needs in Nebraska (provide relevant statistics).
- Provide the current rate of employment in Nebraska for individuals who have successfully completed your program (if existing program).
- Describe partnerships or other connections you maintain with employers in the community who are willing to provide employment opportunities to program participants.

H. Collection of Data and Evaluation of Effectiveness

- Data collection requirements are identified in Section 2 of the grant announcement.
- Describe how your organization will be able to track and report this information.
- If this is an existing program, an additional five (5) points will be awarded in this section for data providing proof of effectiveness.

I. Current Status and Funding of Program

- Indicate whether the proposed program currently exists or will be developed as a new program from the funds received under this grant.
- If existing, please identify how the program is currently funded.
- If new, please describe how the program will become self-sufficient, or work toward self-sufficiency, so it can continue in the absence of future grant funding.
- If existing, add data that supports program success.

Section 5

Budget Summary and Narrative

Complete each of the following sections applicable to this grant request by providing the required financial information and a narrative as to how this budget item will be used in meeting the grant objectives. Grant funds cannot be used for construction.

- A. **Personnel** – list each position by title and name of employee, if available. Show the annual salary rate and the percentage of time to be devoted to the project. Compensation paid for employees engaged in grant activities must be consistent with that paid for similar work within the applicant organization.

Name/Position	Annual Salary	% Time Devoted	Grant Amount

- B. **Fringe Benefits** – Fringe benefits should be based on actual known costs or an established formula. Fringe benefits are for the personnel listed in budget category (A) and only for the percentage of time devoted to the project.

Name/Position	Annual Benefits	% Time Devoted	Grant Amount

- C. **Travel** – Itemize travel expenses of project personnel by purpose (e.g., staff to training, advisory group meeting, secondary work location). Show the basis of computation (e.g., two people attending two days training at \$X lodging, \$X meals, \$X mileage). Indicate source of Travel Policies applied and are they in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104790>).

Purpose of Travel	Location	Item	Computation	Grant Amount

- D. **Supplies** – List items by type (office supplies, postage, training materials, copying paper, books, and expendable equipment costing less than \$1500).

Supply Items	Computation	Grant Amount

E. **Consultants/Contracts** –

Consultant Fees - For each consultant enter the name, if known, service to be provided, hourly or daily fee, and estimated time on the project. Consultant fees in excess of \$450 per day require additional justification and prior approval from the NDCS.

Name of Consultant	Service Provided	Computation	Grant Amount

Contracts – Provide a description of the product or service to be procured by contract and an estimate of the cost. Applicants are encouraged to promote free and open competition in awarding contracts. A separate justification must be provided for sole source contracts in excess of \$50,000.

Item	Location	Computation	Grant Amount

- F. **Other Costs** – List items (e.g., telephone, reproduction, rent) by major type and the basis of computation. For example, computation would identify the square footage and the cost per square foot for rent or a monthly rental cost and how many months to rent.

Description	Computation	Grant Amount

Budget Summary

Category	Grant Amount
A. Personnel	
B. Fringe Benefits	
C. Travel	
D. Supplies	
E. Consultants/Contracts	
F. Other Costs	
Total Project Costs:	

Section 6

References

References: Provide three (3) professional references. Include contact information and context of relationship (e.g., contractual agreements, provided/received services, et al.) for each.

Reference 1

Organization:	
Primary Contact:	
Primary Contact's Title:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Context of Relationship:	

Reference 2

Organization:	
Primary Contact:	
Primary Contact's Title:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Context of Relationship:	

Reference 3

Organization:	
Primary Contact:	
Primary Contact's Title:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Context of Relationship:	

Section 7

General Information about Post – Grant Award Reporting Requirements

This grant is based on a reimbursement plan for all grant approved monthly expenses. The monthly expense reporting is due by the 15th of the following month. However, for the fiscal year end close, expenses for May and all prior months will be due no later than June 8th. Normal reimbursement time to grantee is within 45 days, with all reporting requirements fulfilled accurately.

Terms and Conditions of Award:

- A. This grant shall be in effect for the designated period of July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025, unless otherwise terminated or suspended by NDCS.
- B. Total grant funding is contingent upon the continued appropriation of FY 23/24 and FY 24/25 grant funds.
- C. The terms and conditions of award and budget may be modified only by written amendment, executed by both parties. No alteration or variation of the terms and conditions shall be valid unless made in writing and signed by both parties.
- D. Program and financial records will be maintained in accordance with the Secretary of State Record Retention Schedule 124 (https://sos.nebraska.gov/sites/sos.nebraska.gov/files/doc/records-management/Schedule-124StateAgencies_GeneralRecords.pdf).
- E. The Grantee assures NDCS the grant funded program will be conducted and adhered to in accordance with all applicable state/federal statutes and regulations.
- F. Administration and performance of the project shall be executed in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat 83-904 and Nebraska Administrative Code Title 71, Chapter 1, Vocational and Life Skills Program.
- G. Grantee will work in coordination with NDCS to evaluate program's efficiency and effectiveness.
- H. Participation in program visitation and evaluation by and under the direction of NDCS will be supported by the grantee.
- I. Services must be based upon grant proposed program.
- J. Grantee shall make its employees aware of the provisions in Neb. Rev. Stat 28-322.01 through 28-322.03, providing it is a felony for individuals working for or under contract with the Department of Correctional Services to engage in sexual contact or penetration with an inmate or parolee, and that no inmate nor parolee is legally capable of giving consent to any such relationship.
- K. Grantee is required to ensure work eligibility status of their employees using the E-Verify Program, or an equivalent federal program designated by the United States

- Department of Homeland Security or other federal agency authorized to verify the work eligibility status.
- L. Grantee shall comply with all applicable local, state and federal statutes and regulations regarding civil rights laws and equal opportunity employment (Neb. Rev. Stat. §48-1101 to 48-1125).
 - M. NDCS will conduct criminal background checks on all grantee staff members who wish to enter facilities. Grantees are encouraged to employ individuals with criminal histories. Criminal records will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and grantee staff will not be denied access based solely on their criminal record.
 - N. Grantee will comply with all fiscal and data evaluation reporting requirements listed in the grant announcement. Other data may be requested as determined through the program evaluation process.
 - O. Grantee will attend all program evaluation training offered by NDCS.
 - P. The grantee shall submit a State of Nebraska Substitute Form W-9 & ACH Enrollment Form for the purpose of reimbursement.
 - Q. The grantee may request a one-time advance for salaries and benefits for the first month of the program. To request such, the grantee shall submit a letter listing estimated salaries and benefits by position for the month. Other expenses for the first month will be submitted for reimbursement as described in R. below.
 - R. The grantee will be required to submit monthly reimbursement requests by the 15th of the following month during each grant year awarded. Grant years align with the State fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. Grant funds awarded must be spent within each grant year.
 - S. With each monthly reimbursement request, the grantee must include accounting documentation including, but not limited to: general ledgers, employee time sheets/paystubs, and copies of invoices for all purchases. Provide rosters of names, positions, and percentages of work on the grant for the employees paid with the grant fund. Invoices from independent contractors shall be submitted by the grantee with proof of payment required for reimbursement.
 - T. Payments will generally be processed within 45 calendar days, assuming reports and supporting documentation are acceptable.
 - U. All expenses must be previously approved budget items from the grant application.
 - V. All travel must be documented, including dates, mileage, start and stop locations, purpose of trip, signature of person traveling and approval. Provide a copy of detailed receipts with the documentation to support the travel reimbursement. A credit card receipt that only shows a total is not acceptable. No alcohol can be on any receipts for reimbursement of meals.
 - W. Rent payments must have a copy of the lease sent with the initial request and then invoices to support the monthly charges.
 - X. Copies of utility and phone bills should only be the billing page documenting the total and not the itemized bill showing each individual charge.
 - Y. Grantee shall scan and submit all reimbursement documents electronically to DCS.VLSPayments@nebraska.gov along with an updated NDCS Grant Financial Report.

Z. Grantee shall provide documentation for all equipment purchased at a unit cost of \$5000 or more. This equipment will be considered NDCS inventory and placed on the NDCS fixed asset inventory. All fixed asset inventory items must be returned to NDCS at the end of the grant period.

AA. If grant funds are not expended in accordance with the instruction of the proposed grant program, NDCS may require that all grant funds or any portion thereof be returned by a means to be determined by NDCS.

Section 8

NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 71 – DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Chapter 1 – Rules and Regulations

001 Rules relating to the administration of the Vocational and Life Skills Program. Under provisions of Legislative Bill 907, One-hundred third Legislature, Second Session, 2014, the following rules and regulations shall govern the procedures for the NDCS Vocational and Life Skills Program.

001.01 Definitions

001.01A Grant Recipient – shall mean a qualifying provider with a qualifying program as defined in Section 001.02

001.01B Department – shall mean the Department of Correctional Services

001.01C Vocational Training – shall mean an organized training provided with the intended result of learning a job skill and obtaining employment

001.01D Life Skills Training – shall mean an organized training provided with the intended result of preparing an individual for employment

001.01E Participant – shall mean a state inmate, parolee, felony probationer or former state inmate or felony probationer up to 18 months after his/her discharge from a state prison, parole or state probation

001.02 Qualified Provider

To be eligible, the provider and program must meet at least one of the requirements 001.02A-D and at least one of the requirements in 001.02E-F

001.02A The provider must be a community-based organization

001.02B The provider must be a community college

001.02C The provider must be a federally-recognized or state-recognized Indian tribe

001.02D The provider must be a non-profit organization

001.02E The provider's proposed program must provide vocational training with the desired result of participant employment

001.02F The provider's proposed program must provide life skills training with the desired result of participant employment

001.03 Grant Application Process

The grant application must include at least the following information: the Department may request additional information in the application or following submission of the application:

- A description of the provider and its primary function
- A description of the program for which funds are being requested
- A plan for collecting data and evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed program
- A detailed budget for the program, including requested funds and other funds used for the same program

001.04 Award Limits

The Department will determine the grant award based on the grant recipient's application and ability to meet the program objectives.

001.05 Disbursements

Vocational and Life Skills Program grants shall be disbursed as outlined in the grant announcement and grant award document. Grant awards may be increased up to the full amount requested if additional funds are available during the fiscal year.

001.06 Performance Requirements

The grant recipient shall submit reports (including financial reports meeting the requirements outlined in the grant award document and special conditions) to the Department on a quarterly basis and a final performance report upon completion of the grant award cycle. The reports shall include, but are not limited to, the following components. Monitoring of the project is required.

- The types of programming
- The cost per participant for the program, service or training provided
- The number of participants served, including the number of participants who successfully completed the program
- The effectiveness of the program or progress toward evaluation of same

001.06A The Department will monitor the progress of the program in accordance with grant requirements. The Department shall conduct site audits regularly and review business records pertaining to the awarded program and general accounting practices of the grant recipient.

001.07 Fund Disposal

The Department shall retain any funds not distributed to community-based organizations, community colleges, federally-recognized or state-recognized Indian tribes or nonprofit organizations for future distribution. These funds shall not be used for any purpose other than grant awards to providers.

Appendix I

The Principles of Effective Interventions

Research supports several principles for effective offender interventions. The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) highlights eight principles in its "Evidence-Based Policy and Practice" initiative. They are listed below in developmental sequence. Resources for implementing program interventions are also listed below.

Source: (<http://nicic.gov/theprinciplesofeffectiveinterventions>)

1. **Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs** - Assessing offenders' risk and needs (focusing on dynamic and static risk factors and criminogenic needs) at the individual and aggregate levels is essential for implementing the principles of best practice.
2. **Enhance Intrinsic Motivation** - Research strongly suggests that "motivational interviewing" techniques, rather than persuasion tactics, effectively enhance motivation for initiating and maintaining behavior changes
3. **Target Interventions**
 1. **Risk Principle** - Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
 2. **Need Principle** - Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
 3. **Responsivity Principle** - Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, gender, and culture when assigning to programs.
 4. **Dosage** - Structure 40% to 70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3 to 9 months.
 5. **Treatment Principle** - Integrate treatment into full sentence/sanctions requirements.
4. **Skill Train with Directed Practice** - Provide evidence-based programming that emphasizes cognitive-behavior strategies and is delivered by well-trained staff.
5. **Increase Positive Reinforcement** - Apply four positive reinforcements for every one negative reinforcement for optimal behavior change results.
6. **Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities** - Realign and actively engage pro-social support for offenders in their communities for positive reinforcement of desired new behaviors.
7. **Measure Relevant Processes/Practices** - An accurate and detailed documentation of case information and staff performance, along with a formal and valid mechanism for measuring outcomes, is the foundation of evidence-based practice.
8. **Provide Measurement Feedback** - Providing feedback builds accountability and maintains integrity, ultimately improving outcomes.

Important information to consider from the research:

- Correctional staff members need to work with justice-involved persons to ensure they have the tools needed for success in the community.

- Correctional and community staff members must understand the importance of working with ***moderate- and high-risk*** individuals rather than low-risk individuals in order to demonstrate that their program can decrease recidivism.
- The most effective organizational-change strategies involve supervision and coaching of staff to reinforce the expected way of doing business—training alone is not sufficient.

Important questions to ask before you launch your program:

- Who are you targeting for your program?
- Do the risks and needs of your target population match the services and supports you have funded through your grant, or you are proposing to fund through the grant application?
- When and how are the risks and needs of your target population assessed?
- Following the risk/need assessment, are the services, supervision, and interventions recommended developed with the individual?
- Are these interventions based upon a systematic assessment of individual levels of risk and criminogenic needs?
- How are services coordinated for your target population as they move from the institution to the community?
- How is programming that began during incarceration linked to the programming that the individual receives in the community?
- How are supervision and treatment resources prioritized for moderate and high-risk individuals?
- Are your interventions cognitive-behavioral based?
- Have staff members been trained to appropriately use cognitive-behavioral interventions and strategies?
- What data is collected about individuals reentering communities?
- Do you collect case-level data on which of your program participants have: (1) housing, (2) employment, (3) substance abuse treatment [if necessary], (4) mental health treatment [if necessary], and (5) social support?

Appendix II

Theory of Change

A theory of change is essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. In other words, a theory of change explains why your agency, in your community, will use a certain set of practices in order to produce a desired set of outcomes.

In developing a theory of change for your agency, you should:

- Identify long-term goals (e.g., stable employment, reduced recidivism)
- Work backwards from these long-term goals to identify the preconditions or requirements necessary to achieve those goals and explain why these preconditions are necessary and sufficient. (e.g., resources, staff training, staffing, office space)
- Identify your basic assumptions about the context and how they relate to your goals (e.g., types of clients, local job needs, local economy, existing re-entry resources)
- Identify the interventions that your initiative will perform to create your desired change. (e.g., education, job training, resume-building)
- Develop indicators to measure your outcomes to assess the performance of your initiative. (e.g., program completion, achievement of stable employment, avoidance of re-incarceration). These indicators allow you to determine program success

What Is the Value of Creating a Theory of Change (TOC)?

Community initiatives are sometimes planned without an explicit understanding of the early and intermediate steps required for long-term changes to occur; therefore, many assumptions about the change process need to be examined for program planning or evaluation planning to be most effective. A TOC creates an honest picture of the steps required to reach a goal. It provides an opportunity for stakeholders to assess what they can influence, what impact they can have, and whether it is realistic to expect to reach their goal with the time and resources they have available.

Adapted from Anderson, A. (2005). *The community builders approach to theory of change: A practical guide to theory and development*. New York: The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change.

Adapted from www.theoryofchange.org