

State of Iowa
Executive Department

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE OF IOWA

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER FIFTEEN

WHEREAS, more than 5,800 offenders are released to Iowa communities each year, affecting public safety, public health, economic and community well-being and family relationships; and

WHEREAS, based on historical trends, if no changes are made to existing practices, one can predict that fifteen percent of these individuals will be returned to Iowa's prisons as sentenced inmates for new offenses within one year of their release from prison, and one-third of them will be returned within three years of release; and

WHEREAS, offender re-entry initiatives involve collaborative partnerships amongst corrections, other state agencies and the community, to provide training and support for offenders as they resume their lives as law-abiding citizens; and

WHEREAS, over 8,000 offenders in Iowa's prisons today, with the exception of 630 inmates who are serving life sentences without the opportunity for parole, will eventually return to their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that many factors complicate offenders attempts to re-enter their respective communities including, but not limited to, securing stable and affordable housing and employment; and

WHEREAS, a majority of offenders have a history of substance abuse, yet only a small fraction of such offenders receive substance abuse treatment during and after incarceration; and

WHEREAS, educational and training programs that teach fundamental skills directly applicable to employment readiness contribute to the successful transition of offenders into society and to the reduction of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that the State of Iowa continue with its efforts to foster the successful transition of offenders into their respective communities and to reduce the rates at which they return to prison; and

WHEREAS, the formal establishment of an advisory council whose members are comprised of representatives of state departments and agencies and whose efforts are aimed to increase the number of successful offender transitions is necessary and appropriate to facilitate the development and implementation of policies to improve reentry services.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Chester J. Culver, Governor of the State of Iowa, by the power vested in me by the laws and the constitution of the State of Iowa do hereby order the creation of the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council.

- I. Purpose. The Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council shall establish an integrated system for coordinating the planning and provision of offender transitional and re-entry services amongst and between state, local and nonprofit agencies in order to prepare inmates for their successful transitions into their respective communities upon their release from incarceration and to improve opportunities for the treatment, employment and housing of Iowa's

offender population while such persons are on probation, parole or post-release supervision status.

II. Organization. The Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council shall be composed of twenty members and shall be co-chaired by the Directors of the Iowa Department of Corrections and Iowa Workforce Development. Members shall have an interest in knowledge about and an investment concerning the coordinating of services for released offenders. The voting membership of the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council shall include one designee from each of the following:

- Iowa Board of Parole
- Iowa County Attorneys Association
- Iowa Department of Corrections
- Iowa Department of Education
- Iowa Department of Finance Authority
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Iowa Department of Public Safety
- Iowa Department of Veteran Affairs
- Iowa Department of Workforce Development
- Iowa House of Representatives
- Iowa Senate
- Iowa Judges Association
- Iowa Police Executive Forum
- Iowa State Public Defender
- Iowa Department of Correctional Services
- Court Administration
- Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning, Iowa Department of Human Rights
- Office of the Governor & Lt. Governor

In addition, representatives from the following select communities shall be appointed by the Governor:

- Community advocacy groups
- Faith-based organizations

The Iowa Department of Corrections shall provide staff support to the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council, as needed, to enable its members to fulfill their responsibilities. The body shall hold quarterly meetings at a central location.

III. Activities. The Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council's activities shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

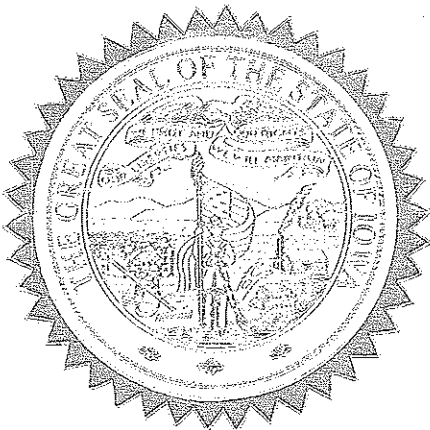
1. Identify unreasonable barriers in each member's department or agency that may hinder the successful transition of offenders returning to their respective communities, and develop and implement policies, procedures and programs to overcome such barriers;
2. Identify methods to improve collaboration and coordination of offender transition services, including cross-training, information-sharing systems, policies, procedures and programs that measure offender re-entry management with well-defined, performance-based outcomes;
3. Identify legal, policy, structural, organizational and practical barriers to offenders' successful re-entry;
4. Provide recommendations regarding such reforms that will eliminate or reduce unreasonable barriers to offenders' successful re-entry, including, but not limited to, reforms that may offer employers greater flexibility and confidence in hiring ex-offenders;

5. Provide on-going coordination at the executive level of state government of offender re-entry initiatives across Iowa;
6. Ensure that federal, state and local resources are used most efficiently, to reduce duplicative offender re-entry efforts;
7. Maximize the effectiveness of existing resources;
8. Identify best practices that will aid offender re-integration and promote such practices at the State and local levels; and
9. Establish and monitor the measurements of success for offender re-entry initiatives.

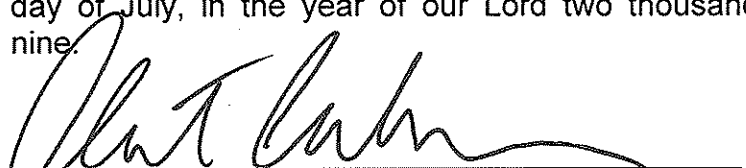
All executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council in the performance of its duties and responsibilities under this Order. The members may request, and executive departments and agencies shall provide upon such request, information and assistance as members may require in the performance of their duties and responsibilities under this Order.

IV. Report. The Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council shall prepare a comprehensive report on the status of the State's re-entry efforts, practices and policies, for review by the Governor, within one year following the date that the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council first convenes. The report shall contain the recommendations of the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council regarding its accomplishments, the effectiveness of agency coordination and communications, and its recommendations with respect to the performance measures. The report shall identify any unreasonable administrative or legal barriers that might be impeding the more effective operation of the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council, and make recommendations for executive or legislative measures to improve offender transition and re-integration services. The comprehensive report shall also assess the following items:

1. Identify how the Governor and other executive departments and agencies may assist the Ex-Offender Re-entry Coordinating Council in overcoming any unreasonable barriers to the successful transition and reintegration of offenders returning to communities that it has identified; and
2. Identify how State laws and sentencing guidelines may be improved in order to contribute to the successful transition and reintegration of offenders in society and reduce recidivism.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of Iowa to be affixed. Done at Des Moines this 15th day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine.


CHESTER J. CULVER
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:


MICHAEL A. MAURO
SECRETARY OF STATE