

Community-Based Residential Reentry: Essential for Recidivism Reduction

The criminal justice reform effort currently underway in Massachusetts can go a long way to enhancing the Commonwealth's public safety and justice system. Coupled with appropriate investments in effective community-based reentry services, it can reduce the State's high recidivism rates.

The Justice Reinvestment Working Group found that within three years of release, two-thirds of people leaving county houses of correction and over half of those leaving state prisons had new involvement with the criminal justice system.

Community-based residential reentry programs are proven to reduce recidivism and achieve better outcomes for returning citizens and for our communities. They provide evidence-based solutions to the many challenges faced by ex-offenders: a safe place to live, a job, case management, and behavioral or addiction treatment. Outcome studies show these community-based programs reduce recidivism by up to 25%.

Of the more than \$2.8 billion spent by Massachusetts for its public safety and justice systems, less than \$100,000 is reserved for community-based residential reentry services.

We must do better. As leaders on the front lines of criminal justice efforts in Massachusetts, we urge the legislature to support \$5 million in dedicated funding for community-based residential reentry programs that provide the tools and supports people need to be successful and prevent a return to the criminal justice system.