

Reentry Service Partnerships Important in Terrorism Prevention

Reentry service personnel—professionals who help released offenders transition from incarceration to the community or who work with those on probation—can play a critical role in the successful reintegration of terrorism offenders and in reducing recidivism.^a Reentry service personnel can also play a critical role in the reintegration of violent extremists who are not charged with terrorism offenses but are convicted of a general crime. Reentry service personnel are often well-positioned to observe, report, and mitigate behaviors that may be indicative of an individual's radicalization^b or mobilization^c to violence. It is important to emphasize that many of these behaviors may be constitutionally-protected activities. Legislation enacted in recent years is likely to increase the size of the population transitioning to noncustodial settings and shorten the length of sentences or allow early release. Partnering with reentry service professionals can augment the efforts of public safety personnel, including parole^d and probation^e officers and local first responders, to ensure that offenders have the needed support to prevent their recidivating.

SCOPE: This toolbox provides suggested best practices for first responders and other public safety personnel in working with reentry service organizations.

Reentry service personnel comprise a broad category of postrelease service providers, in addition to probation and parole. Community-based organizations, government, and NGOs can provide reentry services such as community service management, counseling, homeless shelters, residential reentry centers (community corrections centers, halfway houses, or work-release programs), and rehabilitation programs (such as alcohol or drug treatment centers).

- As violent extremists are nearing release from US federal, state, or local detention, public safety personnel can work to establish or strengthen relationships with the reentry services organizations that will be involved in an individual's reintegration.
- Since 2019, thousands of nonviolent federal inmates have been released to home confinement under provisions of the COVID-19 Relief Law to reduce the spread of the virus. As of late 2019, more than 6.3 million people were under US federal, state, or local correctional supervision, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. From 2009 to 2019, the parole population grew by 6.6 percent—from about 820,000 to nearly 900,000.

^aRecidivism refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person has completed a sentence for a crime or undergone related rehabilitation.

^bRadicalization occurs when an individual moves from adherence to a nonviolent belief system to one that advocates, facilitates, or uses unlawful violence to effect societal or political change.

^cMobilization is the process by which radicalized individuals prepare for or engage in violence or provide material support for violence to advance their cause.

^dParole refers to conditional release from prison to serve the remaining portion of a sentence in the community.

^eProbation refers to supervised placement in the community in lieu of incarceration.

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- Sentences that provide more time in supervised release and less time in custodial settings will probably become more common in the coming years because of the First Step^f Act's Time Credit Program, which allows inmates who complete rehabilitative programming to earn credits to shorten their sentences and move more quickly to supervised community settings.

CONSIDERATIONS

JOINT PARTNERSHIPS: Reentry service organizations and public safety personnel work with released offenders from different vantage points. By partnering with reentry service organizations that are trained to recognize indicators of violent extremism^g and identify signs of recidivism risk, public safety personnel can enhance these services' efforts to observe, monitor, and report on released violent extremists; produce critical information to improve investigations and mitigate violent attacks; and improve outcomes for released offenders reintegrating into their communities. Establishing and maintaining effective partnerships requires:

- **Identifying Key Players:** Identify pertinent reentry services operating in your community, make contact, and build relationships to address common goals.
- **Sharing Information:** Regularly exchange information that each partner gleans from their separate interactions with clients to ensure that violent extremists do not pose a danger to the community and are not at risk of violating the terms of their probation or parole. Sharing information can also help partners better assess an offender's postrelease needs and develop specialized treatment and case management plans.
- **Training:** Conduct regular joint training on the risk factors associated with radicalization to violence, indicators of mobilization to violence, and general terrorism prevention. These efforts can improve reentry service personnel's awareness of concerning behaviors and trigger early intervention.
- **Coordinating:** Engage in federal, state, and local CT liaison initiatives, such as the National Joint Terrorism Task Force's Correctional Intelligence Program, that enhance coordination and

THE EUROPEAN EXAMPLE

As they are in the United States, recidivism rates among terrorist offenders in Europe are lower than rates among the general criminal population, but European officials remain concerned about the potential threat these offenders pose. Since 2018, radicalized^h prisoners and released extremists have conducted attacks in Belgium, France, and the UK—the countries with the largest extremist prison populations in Europe. Many European countries are establishing tailored rehabilitation programs to help recently released individuals reintegrate into their communities.

- Belgium and France have taken steps to improve in-prison monitoring to prevent extremists from recruiting and radicalizing other inmates, thereby developing new relationships and networks they can use upon offender release.
- New policies in the UK require individuals convicted of crimes that have a nexus to extremism to undergo rehabilitation during the course of their incarceration, rather than immediately before release.

^fFor more information on the First Step Act, see "An overview of the First Step Act," Federal Bureau of Prisons, www.bop.gov.

^gViolent extremism refers to advocating, engaging in, or preparing to engage in potentially unlawful use or threat of force or violence in furtherance of ideologically motivated terrorist activities (including providing support to terrorism) in furtherance of political or social objectives. Violent extremism is a complex and global phenomenon, which is not limited to a particular ideology. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics does not constitute violent extremism and is constitutionally protected.

^h"Extremism," "radicalized," and "extremist" appear in quotes to indicate differences in the United States' use of these terms versus Europe. For example, the United States differentiates between "violent extremism" and "extremism;" Europe does not.



information sharing—including notifications of the pending releases of terrorist offenders—among corrections, probation, and parole personnel; local jurisdictions; community members; and other reentry services involved in an individual's transition to the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT: Offenders often return to impoverished, disenfranchised communities that have persistently high crime rates and few social supports. Federal, state, and local authorities and community members—including faith-based organizations and offenders' colleagues, families, and friends—can help those nearing release rebuild ties to the community and facilitate their access to needed services. These interactions among community stakeholders build trust and ensure that information is being shared and that programs are operating as intended.

- Multiagency partnerships of correctional, faith-based, and nongovernmental organizations that deliver reentry services—including, when appropriate, victim, family, or grief counseling—ensure that released offenders have access to the full range of services they may need to achieve personal and economic stability, support and sustain their successful return to the community, and minimize their susceptibility to violent extremism and recidivism.

EXAMPLE OF POTENTIAL REENTRY SERVICES PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS

The British citizen who took four people hostage in January 2022 at a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, stayed in local homeless shelters during the two weeks leading up to the attack. In a similar scenario involving a released offender, local partnerships might enable reentry service personnel—for example, those operating homeless shelters—who are trained in terrorism prevention to recognize individuals who may be mobilizing to violence and to share their concerns with partnering agencies before the individual commits a terrorism offense.

RESOURCES

DHS

- **Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI)** is a collaborative effort by DHS, FBI, and state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners to help prevent terrorism and other related criminal activity by gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing suspicious activity reporting. <https://nsi.ncirc.gov/>
- **New Approaches to Countering Terror: Countering Violent Extremism** is a free 3.5-hour interactive online course offered by the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a DHS-sponsored program through the University of Maryland. The training explores the dynamics that have shaped countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts, differentiates between counterterrorism and CVE, and explains the spectrum of CVE programming: prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation/reintegration. <https://www.start.umd.edu/new-approaches-to-countering-terror-countering-violent-extremism>

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- **National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC)** is a clearinghouse of information and guidance on reentry programs and assistance that also develops resources and tools to help communities implement strategies to reduce recidivism and facilitates information exchanges on reentry resources, funding, and events. NRRC is funded and administered by the US Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/>
- **Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs):** The Bureau of Prisons contracts with RRCs, or halfway houses, to provide assistance to inmates who are nearing release. RRCs provide a safe, structured, supervised environment, as well as employment counseling, job placement, financial management



assistance, and other programs and services. RRCs help inmates gradually rebuild ties to the community and facilitate oversight of their postrelease activities during their readjustment phase.

https://bop.gov/about/facilities/residential_reentry_management_centers.jsp

FAITH-BASED REENTRY RESOURCES

- **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (CFBNP)** engages with, educates, and informs faith-based and community organizations about VA tools and resources for serving veterans, their families, survivors, caregivers, and other beneficiaries within their organizations. <https://www.va.gov/CFBNP/>
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships** serves as liaisons between HUD program offices, grassroots neighborhood groups, and other community nonprofit organizations to provide the latest information about HUD regulations, requirements, and programs as well as state, local, and other government programs available to communities. <https://www.hud.gov/offices/fbci>
- **Health and Human Services (HHS) Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships** leads HHS efforts to build and support partnerships with faith-based and community organizations to better serve individuals, families, and communities in need. <https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/partnerships/index.html>
- **Prisoner Reentry Toolkit for Faith-Based and Community Organizations**—created by the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at the Department of Labor—helps organizations establish or enhance prisoner reentry programs and provides guidance on such topics as recruiting volunteers and clients, case management, job placement, mentoring, and forming successful partnerships. https://www.justice.gov/archive/fbci/progmenu_reentry.html

FBI

- **FBI National Joint Terrorism Task Force Correctional Intelligence Program** sends liaison officers to correctional facilities in their areas of responsibility to train staff to recognize potentially radicalizing influences, such as extremist literature and recruiting behaviors. For more information, contact your local Joint Terrorism Task Force.
- **Identifying and Mitigating Extremist Activities in Corrections** (2020) booklet offers guidance for correctional staff in identifying signs of potential extremist activity within their facilities as well as in preventing its occurrence and spread. <https://www.cjis.gov>
- **Terrorism Online Tips** provides options for passing information to FBI, DHS, Federal Trade Commission, Drug Enforcement Administration, Internet Crime Complaint Center, National Center for Mission & Exploited Children, and Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. <https://tips.fbi.gov/>

NCTC

- **US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators** (2021 Edition) booklet is a joint NCTC, DHS, and FBI product that identifies observable behaviors that could help determine whether individuals are preparing to engage in violent extremist activities. For inquiries or more information, contact mib@nctc.gov or visit <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/nctc-newsroom/nctc-resources/item/2272-u-s-violent-extremist-mobilization-indicators-2021>.



STATE & LOCAL ANTITERRORISM TRAINING PROGRAM (SLATT) provides free training and resources to state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement officers, analysts, and support staff who serve as the front line of defense against acts of terror. <https://www.slatt.org/>

STATE-LEVEL REENTRY PROGRAMS

- **Hope for Prisoners, Las Vegas, Nevada**, offers ex-offenders leadership workshops, vocational and computer skills training, and guidance on managing personal finances and connects them with mentors typically from the law enforcement community to help reduce their chances of reoffending. <https://hopeforprisoners.org/metro/>
- **Offender Aid and Restoration, Arlington County, Virginia**, provides transition assistance and employment counseling to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals who are committed to becoming productive, responsible community members. <https://www.oaronline.org/>
- **Successful Transition and Reentry (STAR) Program, Morris County, New Jersey**, begins working with clients during their incarceration to provide training in life skills and goal setting. Once incarcerated clients are released, STAR provides them with a robust support system that includes developing individualized transition plans and learning how to access community support resources, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, substance use treatment, and mental health care services. <https://www.morriscountynj.gov/Departments/Jail/STAR-%E2%80%93-Successful-Transition-and-Re-Entry-Program>
- **United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington** works with law enforcement and community partners to develop and implement creative solutions to overcoming reentry barriers and helping individuals return to productive lives after incarceration. Individuals still in custody receive a detailed handbook on resources related to housing, financial education, and legal assistance to help them plan for transitioning to society. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdwa/reentry-program>





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