

# Offender reentry integration policy

Law



## **Offender Reentry/Integration Policy**

### Offender Reentry/Integration

One of the primary goals that the criminal justice system supposedly seeks to integrate with is that of offender reentry/integration. Such a concept speaks to the ability of the prison system to seek to do more than punish the offender and to provide him/her with the tools and skills, counseling, and rehabilitation necessary to seek to enter society as a more productive and better representation than he/she came to them as. As a function of understanding this goal of criminal justice to a greater extent, this brief analysis will consider the means where by such a policy has both achieved a degree of success as well as failed within recent policy and historical contexts. As a means of hoping to integrate this determinate to a better and more effective degree, it is the hope of this author that such an analysis will engage the reader/researcher with the realities as well as overall level of importance of offender reentry/integration.

Firstly, one of the most common mistakes that previous policy has made with regards to offender reentry/integration is the belief that merely starting a program within a given prison community, region, or state is enough to ensure that a degree of reentry is assured. However, the fact of the matter is that effective reentry/integration is much more complicated than merely seeking to engage the offenders with a specific and marketable skill which they can use to find an honest means of living. The first drawback of such a way of thinking has to do with the fact that it necessarily relies on the belief that almost all criminals have been motivated to steal as a means of guaranteeing an easy life for themselves (Serowik & Yanos 7). However, as

can be seen from the multitude of different crimes that are punishable by prison time, seeking to engage all prisoners with the benefits of an honest wage is not necessarily helpful. Moreover, most of these work centric programs utterly fail in their ability to integrate a degree of counseling and mental rehabilitation with regards to the impulses and/or needs that first encouraged the individual to perpetrate crime.

A highly effective approach which has been utilized in places as diverse as Utah and Virginia is concentric upon integrating a balanced approach to offender reentry/integration that focuses not only on teaching marketable skills but providing counseling and coaching with regards to the underlying problems that first precipitated the offender seeking to perform the crime(s) which have landed them within the criminal justice system in the first place. By striking at the very route of the issue while all the time teaching skills that can help the offender stay out of the criminal justice system, these programs have proven to have a noticeable impact upon the rates of recidivism that are ultimately experienced. This is of course not to say that such programs are the embodiment of perfection; rather, they are merely a step in the right direction and denote that progress is being made with regards to understanding offender reentry/integration.

#### Work Cited

Serowik, Kristin L., and Philip Yanos. " The Relationship Between Services And Outcomes: A Prison Reentry Population." *Mental Health & Substance Use: Dual Diagnosis* 6. 1 (2013): 4-14. Academic Search Complete. Web. 23 Mar. 2013.