

Returning Home: A Landscape of Community-Based Reentry in Massachusetts

Report Overview

Presented to:

Executive Steering Committee for
Reimagining Reentry In
Massachusetts

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Agenda

- Correctional Populations and Reform Overview
- Evidence-based Practices & Examples
- Information Gathered: Strengths, Areas of Need, Gaps and Opportunities
- Statewide reentry advisory groups

Correctional Populations and Reform Overview

Population Data

Corrections populations in MA have declined

Department of Correction

- 5,445

House of Correction

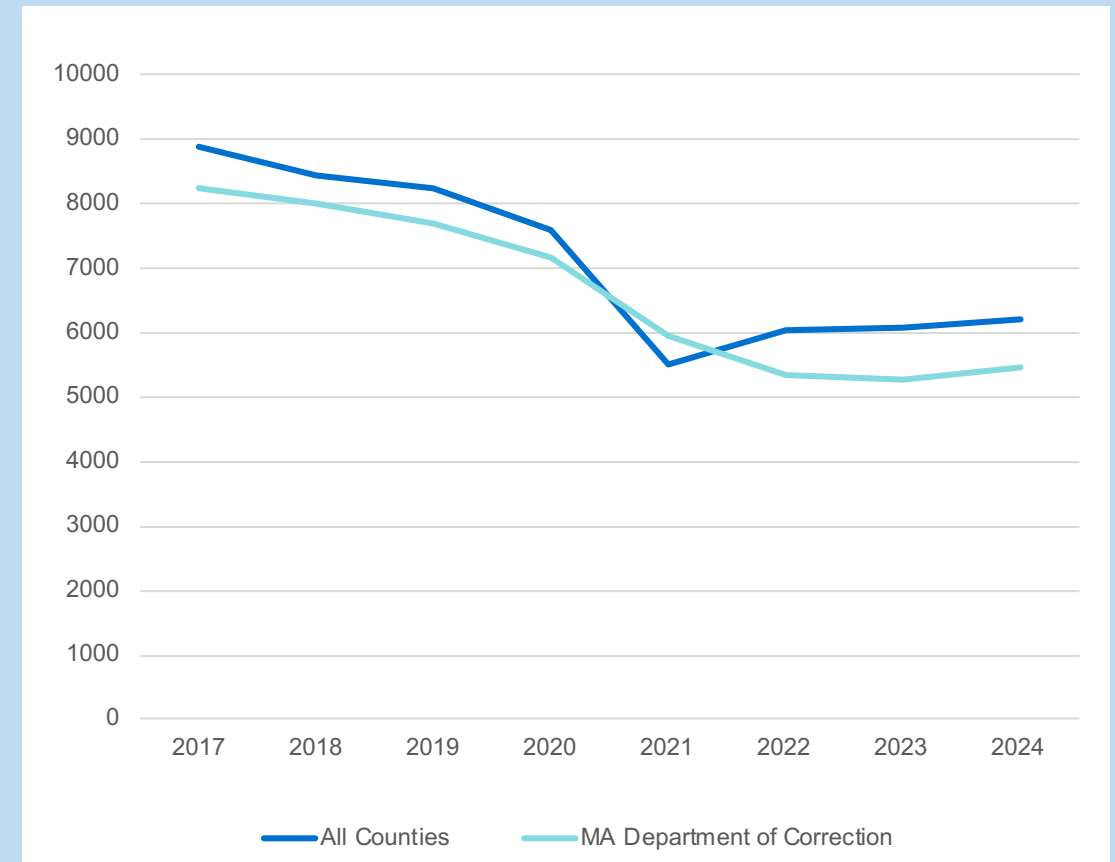
- 6,151 (60% pretrial / 40% sentenced)

Probation

- ~50,000 active cases

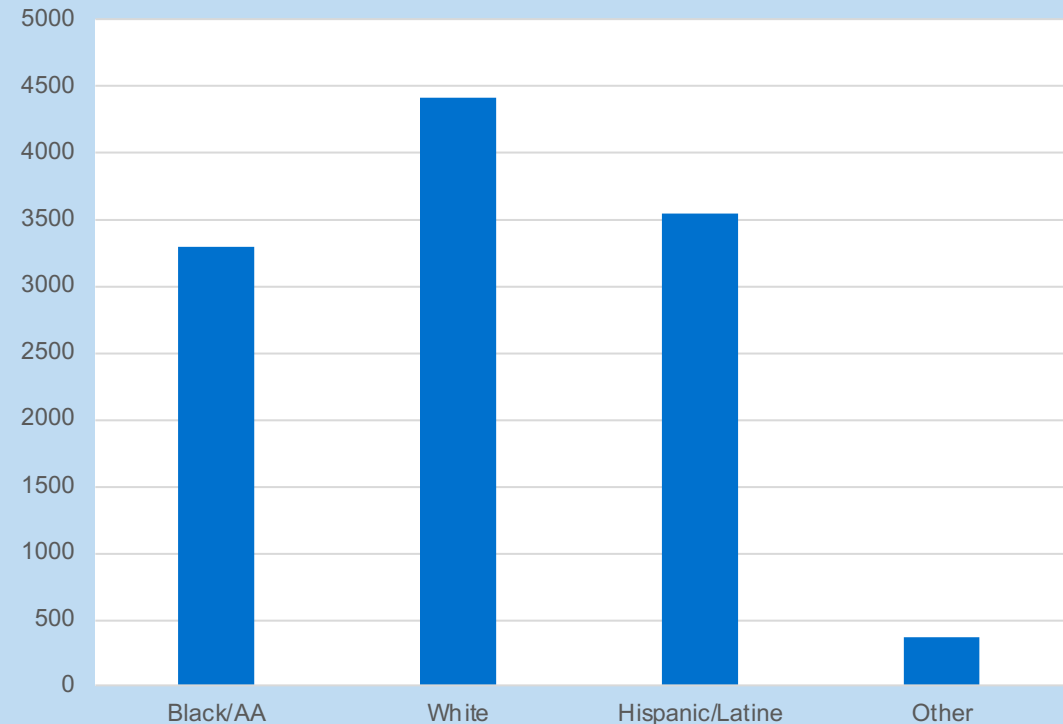
Parole

- ~1,300 active cases

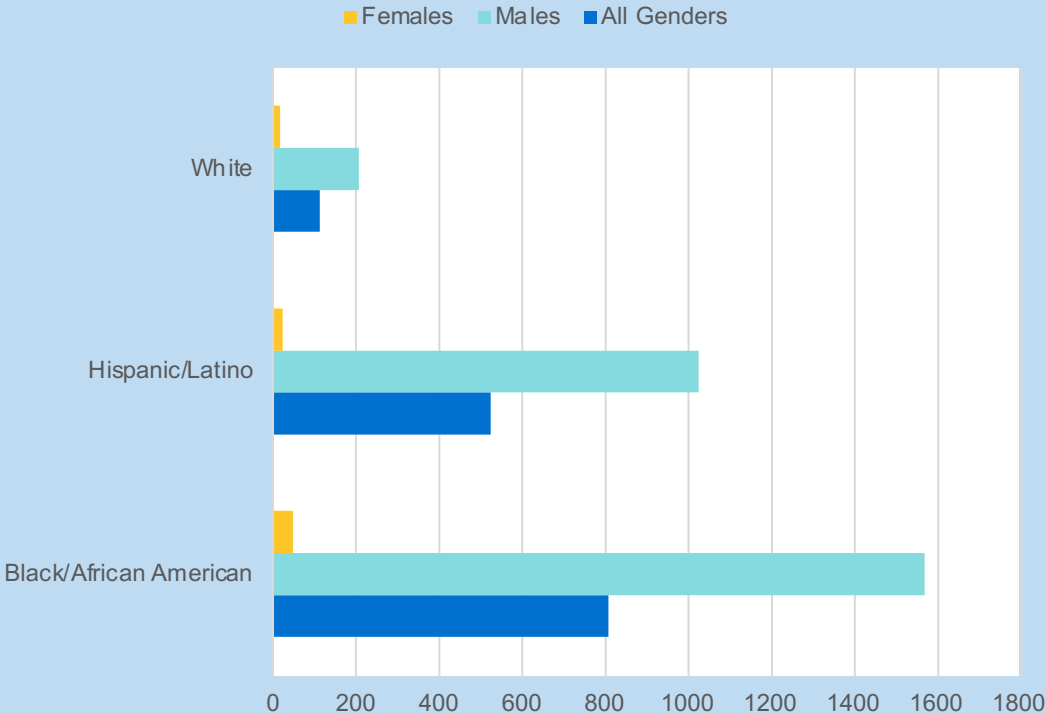


Racial disparities continue to be prevalent.

Massachusetts Correction Populations by Race/Ethnicity on 1/1/24



Massachusetts 2023 Incarceration Rate per 100k population by Race and Gender



Recidivism Rates

Massachusetts

- Reconviction (three years) – 31.4%
- Reincarceration – 30.2%
- Rearraignment – 60.7%

Nationally

- 49% three year reincarceration rate using data from 24 states

**Massachusetts
recidivism rates are
lower than national
estimates**

Criminal Justice Reforms



- January 2016 – data-driven effort to identify reforms
 - Identified five challenges
 - Two reform bills
 - Jails and prisons providing MOUD and facilitating continuation in community (2018)
 - Improvements in connection to behavioral health (2019)
 - Elimination of probation fees (2023)
 - Elimination of phone call costs within DOC (2023)
 - Expansion of programming, access to tablets within DOC (2023)
- And many others...

Evidence-based Practices

Process for Collecting Data

Identified and outreached to Reentry Providers, Stakeholders, and Partners. Sheriffs and District Attorneys contacted through Professional Associations.

Developed criteria for survey and interviews.

Conducted interviews with more than 30 individuals and organizations.

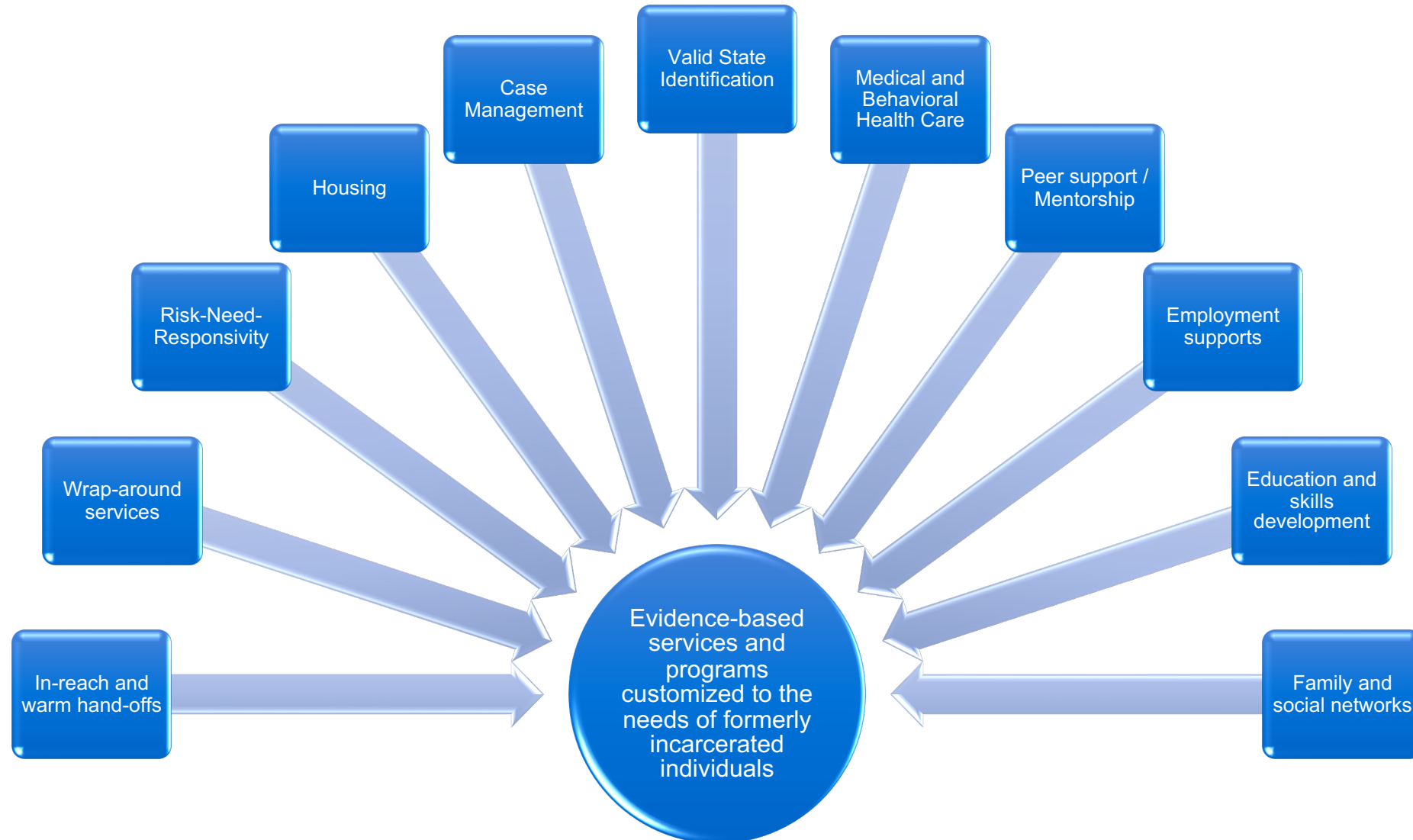
Survey completed by more than 40 organizations.

Conducted multi-state landscape and literature review.

Areas covered:

- Programming
- Support Services
- Populations Needs
- Strengths
- Gaps
- Opportunities

What does the research tell us?



In-reach and warm handoff

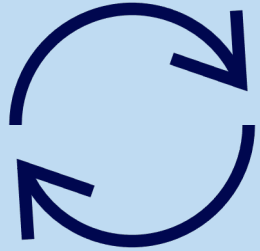


- ❖ Very important during the reentry planning period
- ❖ Connections to trusted providers
- ❖ Leading to improved engagement, follow-through, and outcomes

Examples

- DOC and HOCs facilitating in-reach by community-based organizations
- Building trust and rapport within facilities for referrals
- Reentry fairs

Wrap-around services

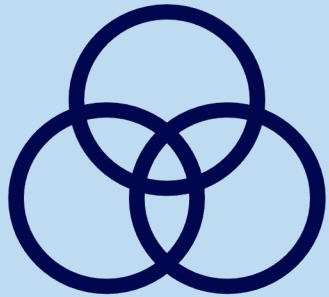


- ❖ Holistic, whole-person approach to reentry
- ❖ Tailoring supports to individual needs and circumstances
- ❖ Address barriers to enable long-term success

Examples

- All Inclusive Support Services (AISS) – Springfield – Hampden Co Sheriff's Office
- Community Compass at Open Sky – Worcester – DOC

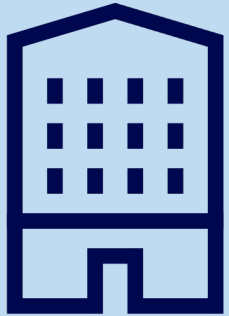
Risk – Need - Responsivity



- ❖ Assess risk of recidivism using research-based tools
- ❖ Three principles:
 - ✓ Risk – prioritize interventions for higher-risk people
 - ✓ Need – target criminogenic needs
 - ✓ Responsivity – incorporate individual differences in delivery

Examples

- Community Justice Support Centers
- Supporting Transitions And Reentry (STAR) program – Essex Co

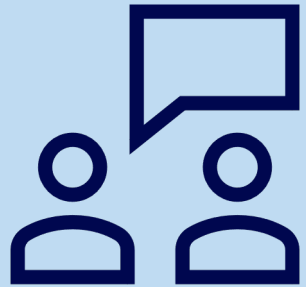


- ❖ Formerly incarcerated people are 10x more likely to experience homelessness than the general public
- ❖ Many reasons for challenges – including individual factors and structural challenges

Examples

- Justice 4 Housing
- Transitional Housing programs (Brooke, McGrath, New Bedford, Western MA)
- Sober homes
- New sponsor-based transitional re-entry housing program for adults - EOHLC
- New Beginnings

Case Management



- ❖ Development of a case plan to address barriers and establish goals
- ❖ Providing linkages and referrals to services
- ❖ S.M.A.R.T. goals

Examples

- Franklin County Sheriff's Office – Comprehensive Case Management
- City of Boston Office of Returning Citizens

Information Gathered: Strengths, Areas of Need, Gaps and Opportunities

Strengths

Community of
providers

Government and
legislative
support

Incorporating
voices and
leaders with lived
experience

Approaches that
are tailored to
the individual

Data

Communication
and collaboration
with supervision
agencies

Areas of need for people returning to the community



Housing



Behavioral Health



Employment Support,
**Especially Stable and
Advancement Driven
Career Paths**

Gaps and opportunities for improvement

Silos and
territoriality

Understaffing and
retention

Transportation

Funding equity and
availability

Lack of information
and challenges
interpreting
information

Regional
differences in
resources

Female-specific
services and
programs

Programs for
elderly individuals

Sex offender
services and
programs

Reentry Advisory Models

Reentry Advisory Models



Identified 7 states have active statewide reentry advisory groups



Created by legislation or executive order



Size and membership vary

- Some membership by appointment, others chosen by agency leads
- Membership ranges from one or two representatives per designated agency to 200+ members including non-governmental agencies
- Only one state has a specific requirement for the inclusion of individuals with lived experience

Structure & Organization

Focus areas and sub-groups

- Prison/Jail reentry
- Collaboration
- Victims/Survivors
- Policy
- Identifying best practices
- Employment

Public or private meetings

- Agendas
- Meeting minutes
- Recordings

Regular schedules

- Monthly - Quarterly

Activities & Outcomes

- With support from **Delaware's** Council, the state's Dept. of Justice Community Engagement Unit **held forums seeking feedback on the Council's reentry goals from community members and individuals with lived experiences.**
- **Washington's** Council recommended investment in community-based reentry supports. The state legislature allocated \$5 million over two years for a **competitive grant program for community-based reentry supports. Ten CBOs were awarded funding in 2023.**

Considerations for Sustainability

- Ensure clear understanding of the charge for the statewide body
 - Delaware moved to a second iteration after reaching its initial charge.
 - Ohio has clear operating guidelines that outline its dissolution after submitting a final report with recommendations for the state.
- Ensure the statewide body is held accountable
 - Washington has meeting minutes and agendas available online for public access.
 - Illinois submits an annual report that is publicly available.

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Thank You

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