

FIRST THINGS FIRST

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a call to be informed of the opportunities and support systems that are available to help you transition back to your community. Get it right and make this a permanent return home.

SIMPLE “HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE” STEPS

THINK: Start by thinking about what support you have, and what you will need.

INVENTORY: Use the “Inventory of Services” checklist to determine your service needs.

PRIORITIZE: Use the “Service Prioritization” worksheet to organize your service needs.

REVIEW: Leaf through the entire guide and review the contents. Then focus on the service needs you identified in your inventory. Take time to review all of the details in each section. Very often, providers in the guide offer a range of services – one place may help you access many services.

RECORD: On your “Notes” page, be sure to write down all of the important contact, eligibility and referral types of information.

PLAN: Use the “Transition Plan” worksheet to manage your provider follow up.

FOLLOW UP: Depending on the provider, call or drop in to ask questions about how to get assistance with your service needs.

FOLLOW UP AGAIN: Nine times out of ten, you will have to contact providers multiple times before you get all of the information you need.

ORGANIZE: Keep all of your contacts, notes and other important documentation, like copies of your identification, organized and sorted in one spot.

Use this and other resources to help you focus on getting access to services.

You are not alone. You have support.

INVENTORY OF SERVICES

Take stock of what services you will need. Your permanent transition is conditioned on your making sure that your basic needs get meet. This requires planning and action.

What are your needs? Take stock now. Start planning to meet them now.

- Identification
 - Birth Certificate
 - Social Security Card
 - California DMV or California Issue I.D.
 - RAP Sheet

- Benefits
 - CAAP
 - Food Stamps
 - CalWORKS/TANF
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Veteran's Benefits

- Housing
 - Permanent Housing
 - Transitional Housing
 - Residential Treatment Facilities
 - Emergency Shelters for Individuals
 - Emergency Shelters for Families
 - Domestic Violence Shelters

- Education and Employment

- Information and Services

- Probation and Parole

- Wellness
 - Health
 - Behavioral Health
 - Life Skills
 - Counseling
 - Community

- Legal

- Families and Children
 - Child Support

- Other

SERVICE PRIORITIZATION

This worksheet will help you determine in what order you should go about following up with service providers. Some factors could impact the order of your follow up:

- Wait List? For example, there is often a waitlist for public housing. Try to get on the wait list as soon as possible.
- Processing Time? Will it take a while for an organization or department to process your paperwork before they can respond to you? Try to submit paperwork as soon as possible.

Use your time wisely. Plan ahead!

Sample

Priority 1: Identification.

Start off getting your Birth Certificate, California I.D. or driver's license and Social Security card.

The majority of public (permanent housing) or private (getting a bank account) services require you to show identification. It takes time to receive these documents.

Priority 2: Safe Housing.

If you don't have stable, safe and long-term housing, work with providers to determine the most appropriate housing option for you and start the application procedure. It will take time to process your application and you may have to go through a lottery or get on a wait list.

Priority 3: Medical Attention and Prescriptions.

If you have any mental or physical health issues that will impact your transition, make an appointment at a clinic as soon as possible following your release. You can get medical attention and prescriptions filled if you plan ahead.

How Will You Prioritize Your Time?

Priority 1: _____

Priority 2: _____

Priority 3: _____

Priority 4: _____

TRANSITION PLAN

By now, you have done your service needs inventory and thought about how to prioritize your time as you begin to follow up with the various organizations and departments.

THE REENTRY TRANSITION PLAN THAT FOLLOWS WILL HELP YOU ORGANIZE AND MANAGE ALL OF THE SERVICE DETAILS.

Some requested information is confidential and/or sensitive. If you can't keep the below information in a secure place, don't fill it out - just be sure to know all the details.

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

Legal Name (First, Middle, Last): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Birth Place: _____

Corrections I.D. Number _____ Social Security Number _____

Permanent Residence Following Release: _____

Projected Release Date: _____ Date to Appear Before Parole/P.O.: _____

Parole/P.O. Name _____ Office Address: _____

PRE RELEASE GENERAL CHECKLIST – 3 months prior to release, address these items

- I have personal identification in my possession or started the application process
- I have transportation for the day of release
- I received certificates of completion for schooling, classes or workshops
- I received release paperwork and know where I need to report after release
- As needed, I completed paperwork regarding out of county transfer
- As needed, I completed paperwork to address active bench warrants or traffic tickets
- As needed, I made an appointment at a free clinic to address health/prescription needs
- Other:

Work with your probation/parole agent or another service provider to address the above issues.

POST RELEASE: BE REAL ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL CHALLENGES AND PITFALLS

Identify Personal Challenges:

Abusive or hurtful relationships? Anxiety? Depression? Drug or Alcohol Addiction?

What else gets in your way? Be honest here. Address your challenges early on.

Commit Yourself to Positive and Healthy Coping Mechanisms:

- Get a good night's sleep
- Eat healthy and nutritiously
- Exercise
- Don't just sign up for, but attend support groups
- Write, draw, make music – Find an expressive outlet
- Create a reliable support network – Meet with a mentor or friend to resolve issues

What are your positive and healthy coping mechanisms?

*You will be either your own best friend or worst enemy. Be bold enough to confront your issues.
Be humble enough to get help.*

POST RELEASE: LIST OF PRIORITY NEEDS AND FOLLOW UP

Priority #1: _____

Name of Organization/Department to Contact: _____

Contact Name or Title: _____

Address: _____

Driving or Public Transportation Plan: _____

Office Hours: _____ Appointment Required: Yes No

Required Documentation: _____

Fees for Service: _____

FOLLOW UP

Date: _____ **Spoke To:** _____

Information or Instructions: _____

Appointment or Intake Date: _____

Priority #2: _____

Name of Organization/Department to Contact: _____

Contact Name or Title: _____

Address: _____

Driving or Public Transportation Plan: _____

Office Hours: _____ Appointment Required: Yes No

Required Documentation: _____

Fees for Service: _____

FOLLOW UP

Date: _____ **Spoke To:** _____

Information or Instructions: _____

Appointment or Intake Date: _____

Priority #3: _____

Name of Organization/Department to Contact: _____

Contact Name or Title: _____

Address: _____

Driving or Public Transportation Plan: _____

Office Hours: _____ Appointment Required: Yes No

Required Documentation: _____

Fees for Service: _____

FOLLOW UP

Date: _____ **Spoke To:** _____

Information or Instructions: _____

Appointment or Intake Date: _____