

ATHENS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE — FIRST YEAR

November 2009

The Athens County Reentry Task Force was established and first meeting was held.

The task force prepared and adopted a five-year plan. This allowed grant applications to be submitted.

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with DRC staff to discuss various issues related to high recidivism rate in Athens County.

January 2010

Task Force applied for a JAG grant.

February 2010

Athens Co Job & Family Services issued a report on the \$25 application fee for a public defender.

March 2010

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with the Athens County Prosecutor's office to discuss the child support diversion program.

April 2010

Athens Co Job & Family Services dedicated a part-time staff attorney as the reentry coordinator to help Athens County ex-offenders with reentry.

Athens Co Job & Family Services made changes in administering the Food Assistance program to allow access for residents of housing facilities, such as Clem House.

In conjunction with the Ohio Dept. of Rehabilitation and Corrections and the Ohio Adult Parole Authority, a system was developed for the reentry coordinator to receive a list of inmates being released to Athens County in the coming months.

Athens Co Job & Family Services established a policy to help determine ROMPIR eligibility for Medicaid for people being released from prison.

Athens Co Job & Family Services and Hocking Correctional are active members of the Athens County Citizen's Circle, which assists people after release from prison.

Reentry Coordinator made visits to five prisons for personal interviews of inmates being released to Athens County.

Integrated Services received a grant for a SSI Specialist and will target the reentry population.

Health Recovery Services submitted a grant for juveniles in corrections and for kids with parents in jail.

TASC wrote a continuation grant for their street crimes and other grants to continue their services.

May 2010

An application for a JAG grant was submitted to OCJS to support the reentry coordinator position. HRS also submitted a grant for JAG funding.

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with Athens County Clerk of Courts to discuss court costs.

Reentry Coordinator met with Tri-County Mental Health staff to discuss issues related to our clients and the agency's ability to serve people without medical cards who are referred by the Family Health Clinic in the Plains.

Reentry Coordinator met with Athens Municipal Judge and his bailiff, to discuss various issues including: community service program for working off fines and court costs and the payment plan for paying reinstatement fees so that people can obtain limited driving privileges.

Reentry Coordinator met with the Adult Parole Authority to discuss reentry issues and ways to reduce Athens County recidivism rate.

The Athens Co Child Support Enforcement Agency established a policy to notify prison inmates of their right to request a modification of their child support order. Modification packets were provided to the Ohio Adult Parole Authority officers so they could assist those under supervision in requesting a modification.

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with Athens Common Pleas judges to discuss various issues related to reentry, recidivism, collateral sanctions, community service and video conferencing.

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff worked with prison personnel and state video personnel to establish the procedure for conducting video interviews of inmates nearing release dates. The focus has been on inmates who will not be under any type of supervision after their release. These interviews have allowed appropriate referrals and scheduling appointments for mental health, substance abuse, medical and other issues facing the inmate when released.

June 2010

The Work Station hosted an Employment Awareness Workshop focused on employment issues for ex-offenders. The Work Station, Citizen Circle and the Ohio Poverty Law Center were involved in organizing the workshop. Several local employers attended the workshop to learn about tax incentives for hiring ex-offenders and other issues related to hiring ex-offenders.

Integrated Services obtained a grant to assist homeless people complete an expedited application for SSI.

Health Recovery Services received a Byrne grant to serve ex-offenders without medical cards.

Hocking Correctional held a reentry fair for inmates.

2-1-1 added "reentry" as a keyword in applicable descriptions and/or specific reentry programs.

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with Athens Co. Sheriff's Dept. to discuss placing ex-offenders in the community service program. The agency donated a van to the program.

Several members of the task force participated in a round-table meeting at the Adult Parole Authority with probation officers and people being supervised to develop strategies for successful completion of community control by those under supervision. Plans were made to continue these meetings on a monthly basis.

July 2010

ODRC staff and Athens Co Job & Family Services staff met with Athens Prosecuting Attorney to discuss the new approach by the Adult Parole Authority and alternatives to revocation of community control.

Integrated Services worked with the Reentry Coordinator to attempt to find housing for a hard-to-place ex-offender from the SEPTA Center.

The task force has been working as a group to learn from each other the various issues related to reentry. In turn, the group has been trying to raise public awareness of these issues. The public generally has little information about the collateral sanctions facing ex-offenders. The task force has already raised public awareness on issues such as public defender fees and other costs to those in the criminal justice system.

Several members of the task force attended the quarterly meeting of the Athens County Housing Coalition to discuss issues related to public housing policies affecting people with criminal records.

A grant proposal was submitted to the federal office of Child Support Enforcement to work with ex-offenders in the child support system.

The local area Adult Parole Authority revamped their Athens County unit to restructure their approach with ex-offenders.

Athens County Job & Family Services director met with the Columbus Dispatch to give them background information on the reentry issues our task force has been discussing, especially on fines and fees.

Athens County Job & Family Services staff is in communication with the Prosecutor's office and Workers' Comp to try to create a community service program to work off fines and to consider service learning classes in lieu of work.

August 2010

Athens Co Job & Family Services staff and ODRC staff discussed with Athens Prosecuting Attorney finding ways to address drug offenses and diversion models for treatment. Also, APA was given the ok to try a pilot for their progressive sanctions violations grid to address the high risk violators with needed resources.

Athens County officials began to explore additional ways to use video conferencing for judicial release hearings and other ways to save travel time and related costs to bring offenders back for court. Also, Athens County is looking at doing a pilot project for family video conferencing for family contact/visits with inmates.

Athens Metropolitan Housing's HUD policy was open for comment and included looking at specific reentry issues of their policy.

October 2010

The Athens County Task Force has drafted a number of principles and recommendations for the group to adopt.

November 2010

Athens County awarded a JAG grant to formally establish the Athens County Reentry Coordinator.

HRS awarded a JAG grant for Athens County outpatient treatment.

Athens County Prosecutor's office awarded JAG grants for an intake/restitution advocate and intervention in lieu of conviction project.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Athens awarded a JAG renewal grant for their Mentor Appalachia program.