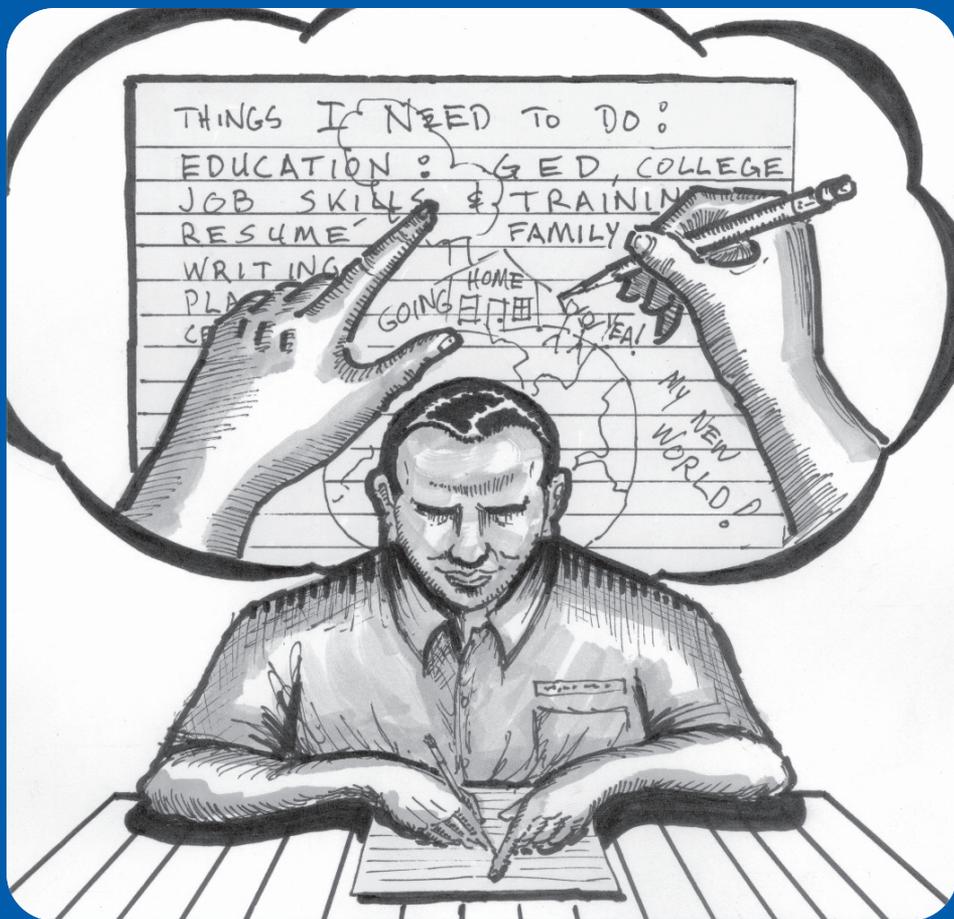


GOING HOME TO STAY

A Guide for Successful Reentry for Men and Women



United Way of
Greater Cleveland



Commissioners
Jimmy Dimora
Timothy F. Hagan
Peter Lawson Jones



TO THOSE CURRENTLY OR FORMERLY INCARCERATED

The six of us served time in prison, but have successfully remained in the community by making changes in our lives. Everyone must find their own way, but we encourage you to use this booklet, and we offer our advice to help you in your reentry to the community.

— *Dennis, Edward, Mansfield, Marques, Maryum and Rakin*

- Change what is inside your head — reinvent and improve yourself.
- Live in prison how you will live outside — focus on attitudes, behaviors and habits.
- Set realistic goals and take necessary steps to achieve them.
- Don't rush it — have patience — one day at a time.
- Persevere — develop an attitude of not giving up.
- Think before you act — one false move and you could be back.
- No one owes you anything — no chip on your shoulder.
- Find your own spirituality.
- Stay in a positive living situation.
- Apologize to your victims.
- Keep in touch with family members — rebuild relationships and bonds of trust.
- Talk to your children — apologize for not being there — stay involved.
- Carry yourself with dignity and respect — you will be more likely to be treated that way.
- **Take time out to read this book.**

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PREPARING FOR YOUR RELEASE

While you are in prison...

- Learn a trade or get a marketable skill.
- Participate in education programs. Get your GED.
- Address personal issues through treatment for addictions and mental health counseling.
- Modify (change) your child support order if needed.
- Work toward finding a positive place to live when released.
- Apply for government benefits as soon as you can.
- Keep in touch with family members.
- See if family members can send you clothing for your release (check with your institution).
- Get a Social Security card and birth certificate.
- Develop a résumé.
- Practice interviewing for a job.
- Work with your case manager to prepare for release.

FIRST STEPS AFTER RELEASE

When you are released, take it one day at a time...

- Contact a reentry program (page 3) and/or an employment program (page 19).
- Stay in a positive living situation (page 32).
- Get proper clothing (page 11), food (page 24).
- Find your way around — know the bus system (page 79).
- Get a birth certificate if you don't have one (page 50).
- Get a photo ID/driver's license (page 54).
- Get your Social Security card if you don't have it (page 60).
- Sign up for government benefits (page 82).
- Keep in touch with your parole officer (page 78).
- Take care of health and dental needs (page 27).
- Take care of mental health needs (page 70).
- Get help for alcohol or other drug abuse (page 1).
- Make arrangements for child support (page 7).
- Take care of childcare or parenting needs (page 6).
- Get more training or education (page 14).
- Clean up your record and get legal help if needed (page 61).
- Clean up your credit and spend money wisely (page 72).
- Register with selective service (page 59). Register to vote (page 81).

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT

If you need help for an alcohol or other drug related problem and don't have insurance or the ability to pay, the phone number listed below can direct you to places that may help. Whether you're in need of an assessment, sober housing, a support group like Alcoholics Anonymous, or a treatment program, there is hope.

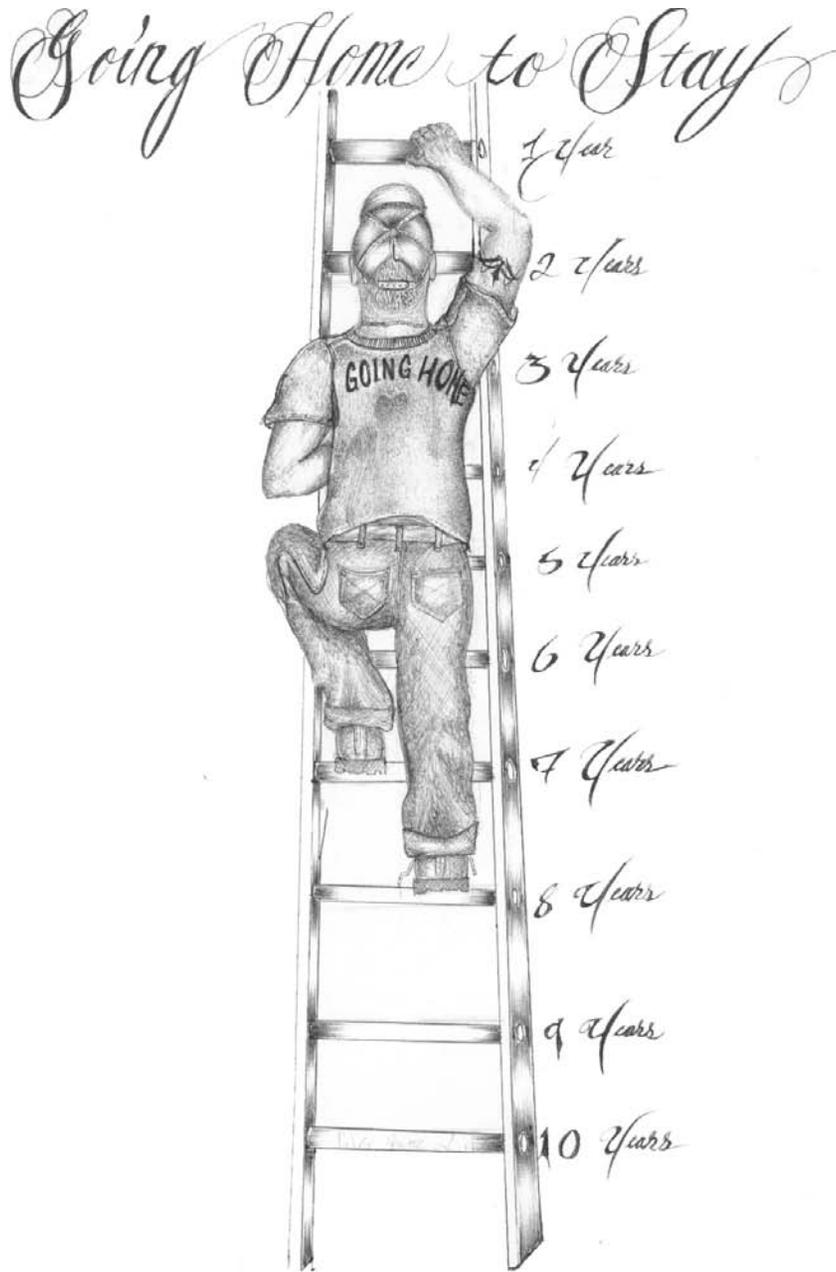
211/First Call For Help

Dial 211 or 216-436-2000

Operates 24 hours.

To help you understand your options, the following information may be helpful for you or someone you know.

- Agencies that offer treatment provide an **assessment** as a first step. An assessment involves collecting information from you to help determine if treatment is needed and if so, what type.
- **Detox** helps lessen the body's physical need for alcohol or specific other drugs. This is only needed and available in certain cases. Services are generally offered over a 3- to 7-day period.
- **Inpatient or residential treatment** programs require that you stay at the treatment center while you are involved in the program. Stays can last 30 days or longer.
- **Day treatment** programs do not require you to live at the treatment center, but they have a schedule that is similar to an inpatient or residential treatment program. You generally have to attend the program every weekday for a full day.
- **Outpatient treatment** programs do not require you to live at the treatment center and don't require as much time as day treatment. Services can range from a few hours per week to 3 hours per day, 3 days a week, for several weeks.
- **Counseling** is generally offered on a one-to-one basis, but may also be offered in a group. Counseling services usually have a specific focus and sessions are scheduled at mutually convenient times.
- **Relapse prevention programs** offer structured support (generally 1-2 hours per week) for people who have completed treatment and want additional help to maintain an alcohol- and drug-free lifestyle.



- **Support groups** offer peer-to-peer support and information to help in the ongoing recovery process. Below is a list of the most common support groups found in the Cleveland area.

Alcoholics Anonymous 216-241-7387
aacleveland.com

Al-Anon (for families, friends) 216-621-1381
al-anon.alateen.org

Cocaine Anonymous 216-523-8701
www.ca.org

Families Anonymous 440-779-4357
familiesanonymous.org

Marijuana Anonymous 800-766-6779
marijuana-anonymous.org

Nar-Anon (for families) 800-477-6291
nar-anon.org

Narcotics Anonymous 888-438-4673
na.org

Nicotine Anonymous 440-843-8197 or 415-750-0328
nicotine-anonymous.org

Northern Ohio Recovery Assn. 216-391-6672
norainc.org

Smart Recovery (an alternative to 12-step) 440-951-5357
smartrecovery.org

- **Halfway Houses** are residential facilities that provide room and board, structured alcohol or other drug addiction services, individual counseling and living skills instruction.
- **Sober Housing** is housing for people who are alcohol and drug free and want to live in a place with other sober, drug free people. No structured treatment programs, support services, or counseling services are required. It is just a place to live alcohol and drug free. Three-quarter (3/4) way houses are a type of sober housing.

CARING FOR OLDER ADULTS

If you are caring for an elderly parent or other relative, there are services available to help you. Call **211** or **216-436-2000** for referrals to services for older adults and their caregivers or to request a free copy of the Senior Services Directory: Resources for Adults 60 and Older.

CASE MANAGEMENT / SUPPORT / INFORMATION

These programs help people who have been in prison re-settle into the community. Comprehensive reentry programs generally offer a package of services that may include job search assistance, substance abuse education, housing assistance, peer support and referral to other community services.

Comprehensive Reentry Programs

Community Re-Entry 216-696-2717
1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113
Provides a comprehensive reentry program for men.

Women's Re-Entry Network 216-696-7535
1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113
Provides a comprehensive reentry program for women.

Other Reentry Support / Information

Access to Recovery

Oriana House, Inc. 216-881-7882
HUMADAOP 216-459-1222

Provides recovery support services such as housing, transportation, job training, counseling, etc. to those involved with the criminal justice system within the past five years and who are recovering from drug or alcohol addiction. Must have had a drug and alcohol assessment completed in the past 12 months and a referral from an approved agency – other eligibility may apply. Program may end Sept. 29, 2010.

Antioch Baptist Church 216-421-1516 Ext. 151
8869 Cedar Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106
Offers support groups for ex-offenders and their families.

Case Management / Support / Information

Citizen Circles 216-698-2501

Offers a group for ex-offenders and community volunteers who want to support them.

The following locations offer Citizen Circles:

Living Truth Center for Better Living 216-249-0330

1580 Belmore Ave., East Cleveland, OH 44112

Zion Chapel 216-752-2743

4234 Lee Rd., Cleveland, OH 44115

CEOGC Central Neighborhood Opportunity Center 216-357-2621

2475 E. 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44106

Murtis-Taylor 216-751-1085

13411 Kinsman Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Central Weed & Seed – Safe Haven 216-432-1818

7504 Cedar Ave., Cleveland OH 44103

Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle 216-421-0482 Ext. 282

9606 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Cleveland Eastside Ex-offender Coalition 216-426-9012

3030 Euclid Ave., Ste. 300, Cleveland, OH 44115

Provides counseling services and assistance to ex-offenders and their families.

Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities 216-736-2673

1275 Lakeside Ave., E. Cleveland, OH 44114

Offers case management for people with mental retardation or developmental disabilities. Not exclusively for ex-offenders.

Family Dream Center 216-481-1098

14911 Westrop Ave., Cleveland, OH 44110

Provides a faith-based reentry program.

Gospel House Prison Ministry 440-439-6555

14707 Alexander Rd., Walton Hills, OH 44146

Offers reentry support and information.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) 216-651-5428

Community Center of Greater Cleveland

6600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44102

Offers support for the LGBT community. Not exclusively for ex-offenders.

Case Management / Support / Information

Mental Health Services 216-623-6888

1744 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Provides referrals to mental health services, including case management. Although not exclusively for ex-offenders, this is the gateway agency to mental health services in Cuyahoga County.

Passages 216-881-6776

P.O. Box 91831, Cleveland, OH 44101

Helps to reconnect fathers with their families and offers help finding a job.

Prison Fellowship Ministries 800-251-7411

P.O. Box 544, North Olmsted, OH 44070

Offers reentry support and information.

PROES (Providing Real Opportunities 216-664-4673

for Ex-Offenders to Succeed)

Employment Connection - Downtown Office

1020 Bolivar Rd., Cleveland, OH 44115

Provides a reentry program with a focus on jobs and life skills.

The Salvation Army 216-861-8185

2507 E 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115

Provides case management at several locations (see page 12 for office locations).

United Way's 211 211 or 216-436-2000

Offers social service information and referrals. Not exclusively a service for ex-offenders.

Just Like Us Enrichment Center 216-581-1400

4500 Lee Rd., Ste. 126, Cleveland, OH 44128

Provides case management and teaches life skills for ex-offenders.

Support Before Release

Greater Cleveland Integrated Re-Entry Project (GCIRP)

Offering case-management and supportive services for those who are incarcerated, have three to six months left before release, and will live in Cuyahoga County after release. Services provided before and after release through the Center for Families and Children and Community Re-Entry. Can only serve a limited number of inmates. Contact your social worker or case manager where you are incarcerated to see if this program is available to you.

CHILD DAY CARE AND PARENTING

Child Day Care

Starting Point for Child Care and Early Education **800-880-0971**

4600 Euclid Ave., Ste. 500, Cleveland, OH 44103

Provides a referral service to help find childcare for infants, toddlers, pre-school and after-school children. Also provides booklets on what to look for when selecting and evaluating a child care program.

Cuyahoga County Employment and Family Services **216-987-7346**

1641 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Provides childcare vouchers on a sliding fee scale for low-income families.

Parenting Helplines

Bellflower Center for **216-431-8200 Tot Line**

Prevention of Child Abuse **216-229-8800 Family Helpline**

Operates the Tot Line, where early childhood specialists answer parenting questions, help with problem solving and give child development information on children younger than six years old. The Family Helpline offers 24-hour help and guidance for those who feel overwhelmed or out of control in dealing with their children as well as general parenting information, support and referral.

Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative **211 or 216-436-2000**

Provides referrals to resources that help support fathers, including parenting programs, child support and child custody resources.

211/First Call For Help **211 or 216-436-2000**

Provides referrals to parenting classes (there are many programs in Cuyahoga County), parent support groups and other parenting resources. Available 24 hours.

Help Me Grow **216-736-4300**

Provides home visits to eligible mothers and families (mainly those who are low income). Offers developmental evaluations and refers to specialized services for children with developmental delays or disabilities and provides information to families with young children.

City of Cleveland - Dept. of Public Health **216-664-4194**

MomsFirst - Helps pregnant women get care for themselves and their baby through the baby's first year of life. Must live in the City of Cleveland.

Youth Pages: A Guide for Cuyahoga County Teens - Helps youths find area agencies dedicated to helping and answering questions about health, sexual health, drug abuse, violence, student rights and more. Go to **211cleveland.org/youthpages** to download a copy.

Child Support Tips:

- The parent paying child support is called the NON CUSTODIAL PARENT or OBLIGOR.
- The parent receiving child support is called the CUSTODIAL PARENT or OBLIGEE.
- A Support Order tells you how much child support must be paid each month. If you have to pay child support, you are still responsible for that amount the whole time you are in prison. In fact, the total amount you owe keeps increasing unless payments are being made on your case.
- Notify the Support Enforcement Agency anytime your address, phone number or employment changes.
- If you are the one that is owed child support, contact the Support Enforcement Agency to see what you can do to start collecting again once you are released.
- Do not make payments directly to the custodial parent. That will not count. You will still owe that money.
- Pay the amount you owe each month. If you are having trouble paying this amount, contact the Support Enforcement Agency right away. You might be able to get your payment changed through a Support Order Modification if you qualify.
- If you are more than three months behind in child support, your driver's license can be suspended prior to your incarceration or after your release.
- The agencies listed on page 10 may help with issues regarding child support.
- You could go back to prison for not paying child support.

FATHERS MATTER

Social Services Designed for the Unique Needs of Fathers

What kind of help do you need?

- Childbirth education for new dads
 - Education and support
 - Employment and housing
 - Father / child activities
- Legal issues, child support, custody / visitation



Commissioners
Jimmy Dimora
Timothy F. Hagan
Peter Lawson Jones

www.fatherhoodinitiative.cuyahogacounty.us

We have options for you.

The Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative: 211 or 216.436.2000

Support Order Modification

In some cases, you may qualify to get your Support Order modified (changed) while you are in prison or right after you get out, so that the amount you have to pay each month is less. This process takes several months.

Modification does not help with what you already owe. Your new payment amount would not start until the first day of the month after the modification is approved.

Because the State of Ohio does not consider being in prison a reason not to pay child support, you must qualify for modification under one of the following reasons:

- 36 months have passed since the establishment of the Support Order or the last review process
- Loss of employment for 30 consecutive days or more
- Verified disability
- Incarceration beyond the child's 18th birthday
- 30% change in gross income
- Children are 18 or older and no longer in high school
- To determine the availability of health insurance

Don't worry too much about whether you qualify under these guidelines. Just contact the Support Enforcement Agency and explain your situation, such as a lack of a job, and they will let you know if you qualify.

Cuyahoga Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) 216-443-5317
Re-entry/Incarceration Team

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

Will serve inmates and ex-offenders up to six months after release.

Cuyahoga Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) 216-443-5100

1640 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

Contact them if it has been six or more months since release. There are also sites in all Neighborhood Family Service Centers (welfare offices).

Just For Dads - Information for Fathers
Healthy Fathering Collaborative
www.neofathering.net

Getting your driver's license back after not paying child support

If you are more than three months behind in your child support payments, your driver's license can be suspended. At most, you have to pay \$500 or 10% of your total balance for every case you are ordered to pay support. By contacting the Re-entry/Incarceration Specialist, a negotiated amount may be available.

To get your license back you must:

- **Contact your Re-entry/Incarceration Specialist or Support Officer** (phone numbers listed on previous page) to find out how much you owe. Let them know you want to get your license back. Once you are told how much you need to pay, it will be noted in your file.
- **Pay what you owe.** Payments can be made as follows:

Cash payments must be made at the Treasurer's Office. Make sure you get a receipt. Take your receipt to CSEA to get a Reinstatement Form the same day.

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office 216-443-7400

1219 Ontario St. Rm. 135, Cleveland, OH 44113

Money orders or cashier's checks may be brought in person to CSEA to get a Reinstatement Form the same day. Personal checks are also accepted at CSEA, but you will have to wait up to 10 days for your check to clear before a Reinstatement Form will be given to you.

Money orders, cashier's checks or personal checks may also be mailed. You must use the address below. Be sure to include your case number or Social Security number with the payment. You will have to wait up to 10 days for your payment to clear before a Reinstatement Form will be given to you.

Ohio Child Support Payment Central (OCSPC) 888-965-2676

PO Box 182372, Columbus, OH 43218-2372

- **Take your Reinstatement Form to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles Reinstatement Center.** You will need to pay another reinstatement fee there. See page 54 for more information.
- If at any time you have questions or just want to check to see if your payment has cleared, contact your Re-entry/Incarceration Specialist or Support Officer for assistance.

Child Support / Child Custody Resources

The following agencies may help with child support and/or child custody issues. Some may charge a fee or have other restrictions. Call or write them to see if you can be helped. **For legal assistance, see the legal section on page 61.**

Center for Fatherhood and Family Dynamics 216-769-9754

3631 Perkins Ave. Ste. 4HE, Cleveland, OH 44114

Provides a support group for fathers as well as information and support for parents with child custody issues.

Child Support Resolutions 216-373-7401

3881 W 18th St., Cleveland, OH 44109

Provides help with child support issues including modifications, wage attachments and driver's license reinstatement.

Children's Rights Council of Cleveland 216-227-9111

1387 Marlowe Ave. Ste. 7, Lakewood, OH 44107

Offers information for people who have questions related to child support and custody. Provides a space where non-custodial parents may visit with their children.

Cuyahoga Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) 216-443-5100

1640 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

Establishes, modifies and enforces support orders and helps with paternity establishment. There are also sites in all Neighborhood Family Service Centers (welfare offices).

Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court - 216-443-4947

Div. of Domestic Relations - Alternative Dispute Resolution Dept.

1 Lakeside Ave. Rm. 51A, Cleveland, OH 44113

Helps people who are divorced or divorcing settle custody issues. Provides phone help only unless case is presently active in the court.

Cuyahoga County Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) 216-431-4500

3955 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

Provides information and assistance for people whose children are in the custody of the county, and those who have past or present cases involving abuse or neglect. Arranges supervised visitation in cases where the child has been placed in the custody of the county.

Cuyahoga County Dept. of Justice Affairs 216-443-3149

Custody Mediation Services

1276 W. 3rd St., Ste. 100, Cleveland, OH 44113

Provides information and mediation on custody issues for people who were never married, those who are currently married (not legally separated) and grandparents and legal guardians who want custody.

Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative - 216-261-2300

Parenting in Separate Households

310 W. Lakeside Ave., Rm. 500, Cleveland, OH 44113

Provides information and classes for unmarried parents with custody or visitation issues.

Domestic Violence Center 216-651-8484 Ext. 355

3146 Scranton Rd., Cleveland, OH 44109

Safe and Sound - Offers a space where children can visit with non-custodial parents.

Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services 800-686-1556

Child Support Consumer Hotline

For child support information, questions and complaints.

CLOTHING

If you do not have clothing sent to you by your family or friends, you will have to wear your prison clothing when you are released. Some prisons will allow people to send you clothing to wear upon release. Ask your institution if they will accept and keep a packet of clothing for you to wear when you are going home and what your family or friends will have to do to get the clothing to you.

If you do not have family or friends to help with clothing and you need clothing right after you are released, try the following:

- If you are staying at a homeless shelter or seeking help from an agency that helps ex-offenders, ask them if they can provide you with some clothing. Sometimes they can help if clothing is available.
- The following organizations may be able to provide you with clothing shortly after your release. It is best to call before going, because they may only be open one or two days a week and some may require an appointment.
- If you need more clothing later on, call **211/First Call For Help** by dialing **211** or **216-436-2000**. This is a 24-hour information service that can help direct you to places that provide free clothing in Cuyahoga County.

Cleveland UMADAOP 216-361-2040 Ext. 21

Mate Masie Re-Entry Store

Provides personal hygiene kits and clothing. Must have referral from a partner agency (phone for information).

- Salvation Army** **216-861-8185**
Phone or go to the office closest to you . They may provide vouchers for you to get clothing from a Salvation Army Thrift Store. Bring your Release Papers or Prison ID if you have these.
- Salvation Army - Hough** **216-432-0500**
6000 Hough Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103
- Salvation Army - Miles Park** **216-341-1640**
4139 E 93rd St., Cleveland, OH 44105
- Salvation Army - Ohio City** **216-631-1515**
4402 Clark Ave., Cleveland, OH 44109
- Salvation Army - Superior** **216-229-6065**
9000 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106
- Salvation Army - Temple** **216-692-1388**
17625 Grovewood Ave., Cleveland, OH 44119
- Salvation Army - West Park** **216-252-3593**
12645 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44111
- St. Herman's Monastery/House of Hospitality** **216-961-3806**
4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44113
Men Only - must call first
- West Side Catholic Center** **216-631-4741**
3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113



DROP-IN CENTERS

Drop-in Centers are places where people who are homeless can spend time during the day. Some offer snacks and beverages; some offer showers. Please check the listing below for more information.

DROP-IN CENTERS (Homeless)					
	Showers	Meals	Phone	Men	Women
Bishop Cosgrove Center <i>1736 Superior Ave., Cleveland OH 44114</i> M-F: 8am-3pm. Closed 2nd Monday of the month. Showers: M-F: 10am - noon only.	✓	✓*	Pay	✓	✓
Catholic Worker Community Storefront <i>4241 Lorain Ave., Cleveland OH 44113</i> W-F: 7pm-9pm; Sat & Sun: 9:30am-11:30am	✓	Snack		✓	✓
Community Women's Shelter <i>2219 Payne Ave., Cleveland OH 44114</i> 7 days: 9am-6:30pm			Pay		✓
Mental Health Services - The Spot <i>1701 Payne Ave., Cleveland OH 44114</i> Winter: 7 days, 24 hrs. Summer: 7 days, 2:00pm-7:30pm For those with mental and physical disabilities		Snack & Dinner	✓	✓	✓
St. Herman's House of Hospitality <i>4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland OH 44113</i> Showers: M-F: 2pm-3pm. Arrive by 2:15pm	✓	✓*		✓	
St. Malachi Center <i>2416 Superior Viaduct, Cleveland OH 44113</i> Showers: M-F: 7:30am-10am	✓	✓*		✓	✓
St. Paul's Community Church <i>4427 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland OH 44113</i> T-F: 9am-1pm		Coffee	✓	✓	✓
West Side Catholic Center <i>3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland OH 44113</i> M-F: 9am-3pm; Sat: 9am-noon Showers: M & F: 1pm-3pm. Sign up before 1pm	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓

*See the food section on page 26 for details.

EDUCATION

If you are in an employment program or are working with an agency that helps ex-offenders, ask them if they may be able to help you find or pay for your education. You may also try the options listed on the following pages.

GED

Improving your reading and math skills may increase your chances of getting a job.

If you did not finish high school, your first step is to work toward a GED. A GED is a certificate for people who did not finish high school and do not have a high school diploma. In order to get a GED, you will need to pass a GED test. There are programs that will help you improve your skills so that you can earn your GED.

The Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) Program offers help for adults who want to improve their basic reading and math skills or prepare for the GED test. Some places offer English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), social studies, science, employment skills, and citizenship preparation. These classes are free of charge, but there will be a fee for the GED test (approximately \$40).

Cleveland Metropolitan School District **216-631-2885**
Office of Adult and Continuing Education
 4600 Detroit Ave. Ste. 169, Cleveland, OH 44102
 net.cmsdnet.net/adulted
 Classes are held at locations throughout Cleveland.

Cleveland Reads **216-436-2222**
 1331 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 clevelandreads.org
 Provides referrals to GED and literacy programs.

Project: LEARN **216-621-9483**
 2728 Euclid Ave., Ste. 400, Cleveland, OH 44115
 projectlearn.org
 Provides classes and tutoring. Offers an ABLE program.

Ohio Dept. of Education **877-644-6338**
 State GED Office
 ode.state.oh.us (click on GED)
 Offers information on where to go for GED testing and copies of GED test scores.

School and Career Counseling

It is a good idea to speak with a professional who can help you make decisions about your education. There are places you can go that will help you choose and apply to a college or other school.

Cleveland Scholarship Programs **216-241-5587**
 200 Public Sq., BP Tower, Ste. 3820, Cleveland, OH 44114
 cspohio.org

Offers a resource center with information about colleges, careers and financial aid. Provides career counseling and help with choosing a college, as well as completing college and financial aid applications.

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) **216-987-6305**
Educational Opportunity Center
 50 Public Sq., Ste. 200., Terminal Tower Bldg., Cleveland, OH 44113
 www.tri-c.edu

Free career and financial aid counseling for adults interested in enrolling in GED classes, job skills training and college programs.

Trade and Technical Schools

These schools teach the skills needed to work in areas such as carpentry, welding, truck driving, electrical work, cosmetology, computers and day care. You may or may not need a high school diploma or GED.

Look under "Schools" in the Yellow Pages to find technical and trade schools.

Your local library may be able to provide you with information. The Cuyahoga County Public Library Web site offers a **Cleveland Area Education Directory**, which lists trade schools, specialized training, colleges, adult basic education and GED classes located in Northeast Ohio. Go to **cuyahogalibrary.org**. If you need assistance, ask the librarian to help you.

Colleges / Universities

Colleges and universities offer courses for people who want to earn a degree beyond a high school diploma or GED. There are many colleges and universities, and they each have different requirements you must meet before you can be accepted as a student. Two local schools are listed below. Classes are offered at several locations.

Cleveland State University (CSU) **216-687-2000**
 2121 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 csuohio.edu

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) **216-987-4000**
 700 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 www.tri-c.edu

Paying for School / Financial Aid

There are services that can help you pay for your education. Call the Financial Aid Office at the school you would like to attend and ask about the different types of aid that may be available. If you are in an employment program, ask them for assistance with finding money to help pay for your education.

There is money offered through the federal government, state government and schools that may be available to you to help you pay for your education. If you are looking for help to pay for school, you should complete and submit a FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Under a new federal law, students who were convicted of drug crimes prior to their enrollment and application for federal financial aid, will no longer be subject to a delay or a denial of aid due to their conviction. As of July 1, 2006, the federal financial aid ban will only apply to students who are convicted of a drug offense while they are in school and receiving federal financial assistance.

For more information about student financial aid:

Cleveland Scholarship Programs

200 Public Sq., Ste. 3820, Cleveland, OH 44114

cspohio.org

Offers a resource center with information about colleges, careers and financial aid. Counselors are available to offer career counseling and help with choosing a college, as well as completing college and financial aid applications.

Federal Student Aid Information Center

studentaid.ed.gov

For information and to fill out and send in a FAFSA online:

fafsa.ed.gov

216-241-5587

800-433-3243

EMPLOYMENT

1. Gather all documents that an employer would need to hire you.

Here are items you may need:

- Driver's License or State ID
- Social Security Card
- Original or Certified Copy of your Birth Certificate
- High School Diploma, College Diploma or GED
- Vocational Certificates
- Inmate educational record/transcript
- Résumé
- A list of three references (names and phone numbers of people who can comment about your work ability)

2. Clean up your criminal record and credit report. Make sure wrong information gets fixed and see if you can have a past conviction or arrest expunged/sealed. See page 61 for information.

3. Understand your rights.

- An employer cannot generally use your arrest record to deny you a job.
- An employer may review your record of convictions and can consider the relationship between the conviction and the job in deciding whether to employ you. The employer has a lot of freedom when making this decision.
- An employer may conduct a background check on you. If the employer conducts the background check himself, he does not need your permission to do it. However, if the employer asks a third party to do it (like a security company), they need to let you know and get your written permission. And, if they use anything in that report to deny you a job, you have to be provided with a copy of the report and a period of time to dispute the entries.
- There are laws in Ohio that prohibit people with certain convictions from working in some jobs. The types of jobs with legal prohibitions are generally in the areas of childcare, education, law enforcement, nursing and home health care – areas where there are “vulnerable” populations like children and older adults.



**Are you looking
for a good job? We can help.**

Towards Employment

1255 Euclid Avenue
Suite 120
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
towardsemployment.org

NETworks 4 Success is a 4-week training program that teaches you the skills you need to find and keep a job. New workshops start each month and run from 9am - 4pm Monday through Friday.

Call Towards Employment at **216.696.5750** to register for an information session.

- If you want a career where a professional license is required or helpful (such as a social worker), make sure you check with the agency that grants the license before you decide to go into that career. See if they will give a license to someone with your type of conviction. Many agencies do not have an outright ban on all ex-offenders.
- There are no specific laws that protect ex-offenders from job discrimination simply because they are ex-offenders. But, there are laws that protect people from discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability and color. Sometimes, it gets hard to tell what caused the discrimination. If you think you were passed over for a job, or discriminated against in other ways that have to do with employment, you can file a Charge of Discrimination with the agency listed below. You can file a charge by telephone, in person or over the Internet. They will contact you after they receive it.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission **800-669-4000**
 1240 E. 9th St., Ste. 3001, Cleveland, OH 44199
 eeoc.gov

If you have questions about fair labor practices such as how much you are being paid, working overtime or being fired, contact:

U.S. Department of Labor **866-487-9243**
Wage and Hour Division - Cleveland District **or 216-357-5400**
 1240 E 9th St., Rm. 817, Cleveland, OH 44199-2054
 dol.gov

For legal assistance in matters of employment, see page 67.

4. Learn about Fidelity Bonding.

If you were convicted of a crime such as theft, forgery, embezzlement or other “dishonest” act, there is a FREE federal fidelity bonding program that may help you get a job. The fidelity bond is a short-term insurance policy for the employer. It reimburses the employer should you steal anything. You can let employers who are thinking about hiring you know about this program. There are a few things you should know:

- You have to have a job offer for permanent work of at least 30 hours per week to qualify.
- Coverage is up to \$5,000 for six months.
- The employer should phone for information.

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction **614-728-1534**
 770 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43222
 www.drc.ohio.gov

5. Learn about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).

WOTC is a tax credit for the employer. It is meant to encourage employers to hire ex-felons and other people who might have a hard time finding a job. The employer could get as much as a \$2,400 tax break per worker. You can let employers who are thinking about hiring you know about this program.

The employer just needs to complete two forms within a certain time period after the start-to-work date. Forms and directions are available from the agency listed below.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services **614-644-0966**
WOTC Section
Bureau of Support Services
 P.O. Box 1618, Columbus, OH 43216-1618
 jfs.ohio.gov/wotc

6. Work with an agency that has experience with ex-offenders:

Cleveland Division of Workforce Development **216-664-4673**
Employment Connection - Downtown Office
PROES (Providing Real Opportunities for Ex-Offenders to Succeed)
 1020 Bolivar Rd., Cleveland, OH 44115

Community Re-Entry **216-696-2717**
 1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113
 Targets men.

Gospel House Prison Ministry **440-439-6555**
 14707 Alexander Rd., Walton Hills, OH 44146

Northeast Ohio Reentry Coalition **216-920-0140**
 2295 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103
 Offers résumé help and guidance, but not job placement.

Passages **216-881-6776**
 3631 Perkins Ave. Ste. 4E, Cleveland, OH 44114
 Men only. Must have a child under the age of 18 living in Cuyahoga County (does not have to live with you) and meet income guidelines.

Towards Employment **216-696-5750**
 1255 Euclid Ave. Ste. 300, Cleveland, OH 44115

Women’s Re-Entry Network **216-696-7535**
 1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

7. If you are older, there are special programs that help low-income, older workers (generally 55 and older) get entry-level jobs or training. These do not focus on helping ex-offenders, but they may serve them.

AARP **216-881-1155**
Senior Community Service Employment Program

Mature Services Senior Employment Center **216-731-4664**
Also has a job club for those 40 and older.

8. Try other programs that can help you get a job.

Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation **216-592-2900**
Cleveland Metro Office (other offices available)
Must have a disability.

Catholic Charities Employment and Training **216-426-9870**

**Council for Economic Opportunities
in Greater Cleveland - Job Readiness** **216-651-5188**

Employment Connection
Brookpark **216-898-1366**
Downtown **216-664-4673**
Several other locations throughout Cuyahoga County.
employmentconnection.us

Hard Hatted Women **216-861-6500**
Helps women enter skilled labor trades.

International Services Center **216-781-4560**
Serves refugee community.

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) **216-696-2716**
Targets people with disabilities.

Spanish American Committee **216-961-2100**

United Labor Agency **216-391-0900**

US Dept. of Veterans Affairs **216-522-3535**
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division
Rehabilitation and employment services for eligible veterans with a documented service related disability.

Vocational Guidance Services **216-431-7800**
Targets people with disabilities (many of whom are formerly incarcerated).
May need referral from outside agency.

West Side Ecumenical Ministry El Barrio Site **216-651-2037**

9. Consider temporary employment agencies.

These agencies place you in jobs at different companies for short periods of time. You are employed by the temporary agency, not the company. You may work at a company for one day, one week, or for many months. Temporary jobs can, but don't usually, result in permanent employment. You are generally paid weekly.

It is a good idea to sign up with more than one temporary agency because each may have different job openings and pay rates. Make sure you understand exactly how much you will be paid, and what benefits are offered. Many temporary agencies do not offer health care or paid vacations. Always get information about your pay and benefits in writing and keep a copy.

Nonprofit Temporary Employment Programs
Vocational Guidance Services **216-881-6006**
2239 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103

For-profit Temporary Employment Agencies
For temporary agencies, you can look in the Yellow Pages under Employment Agencies - Temporary, or contact the Cleveland Better Business Bureau for listings.

Cleveland Better Business Bureau **216-241-7678**
cleveland.bbb.org

10. Consider day labor temporary agencies.

These companies pay by the day. Day labor is not a substitute for permanent employment. Use it only for a short time and only if you cannot find another job. Make sure you understand exactly how much you will be paid, that you get it in writing, and that you keep a copy.

AmeriTemps **216-621-4477**
2007 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

Lake Land Employment Group **216-875-0000**
1285 W 9th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

Minute Men Staffing **216-426-9675**
3740 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

11. Start your own business/entrepreneurial resources.

Starting your own business requires a business plan and money. Talk with one of the agencies listed below before you start up. They can provide free advice and guidance on self-employment.

Business Advisers of Cleveland **216-426-2053**

4600 Prospect Ave. Ste. 401, Cleveland, OH 44103
busadvcl.org

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) **216-522-4194**

1350 Euclid Ave. Ste. 216, Cleveland, OH 44115
scorecleveland.org

U.S. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) **216-987-2969**

at Corporate College East
4400 Richmond Rd., Ste. 107, Warrensville Hts., OH 44128
clevelandsbdc.com
By appointment only

U.S. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) **216-707-0777**

at the Alex Community Development Corp.
12200 Fairhill Rd., 4th Flr., Cleveland, OH 44120
alexcdc.com

WECO Fund **216-458-0250**

3209 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
wecofund.com

12. Use libraries as resources.

Libraries usually have computers and access to the Internet available for free. They also have a good selection of books about careers and jobs. There are books that are written specifically for ex-offenders. Some of them may also have workshops on résumé writing and interviewing skills.

Cleveland Public Library - Main Branch **216-623-2800**

325 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
cpl.org
There are 28 additional branch libraries throughout Cleveland.

Cuyahoga Community College **216-987-3029**

Key Career Place - Unified Technologies Center
2415 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
www.tri-c.edu/community/keycareerplace

Offers a special employment library and resource center as well as short-term training. There are three more sites in Cuyahoga County.

Cuyahoga County Public Library* **216-398-1800**

cuyahogalibrary.org
There are 28 branch libraries throughout Cuyahoga County.

Cuyahoga County Public Library **216-475-2225**

Maple Heights Branch Career Center
5225 Library Lane, Maple Hts., OH 44137
cuyahogalibrary.org

Offers a special employment library and resource center with workshops and counseling.

* Cleveland Heights-University Heights, East Cleveland, Euclid, Lakewood, Rocky River, Shaker Heights and Westlake each have their own library system that is not part of the Cuyahoga County Public Library System. Contact these communities separately for information. City Hall numbers are listed on page 87.

Providing Real Opportunities for Ex-offenders to Succeed



4 Week Intensive Life Management– Job Readiness Program

FOOD**Food Assistance (Food Stamps)**

The food assistance program is for those with very little income and assets. Instead of food coupons, Ohio issues the Ohio Direction Card. It works like a debit card. Each month, money is transferred to the card electronically for you to buy food.

- People who have committed a felony may still apply for food assistance.
- Single men and women may apply for food assistance. It is not necessary to have children in the household.
- For a single person with no children, you can make around \$1,100 per month or \$13,500 per year and still qualify.
- If you think you might be eligible, you should apply.
- The maximum a one-person household may get is \$200 a month.
- People without children in the household may have a work requirement or a three-month time limit (as of 2009, the three-month limit is suspended due to a temporary waiver from the federal government – it is not known when this suspension will end).
- If you are planning to apply for unemployment, you need to apply for unemployment BEFORE you apply for food stamps.

Cuyahoga County Employment and Family Services 216-987-7000
Main Office (there are several offices throughout the county)
 1641 Payne Ave., Room 520, Cleveland, OH 44114

You can walk in to any office to pick up an application or call to request that one be mailed to you.

School Breakfast and Lunch Program

This program provides free or low cost breakfast and lunch for school children from lower income families. Kids in this program receive the same food as those who pay full-price, so your child will not feel bad or singled out. Contact your school's pupil services office to apply. A list of City Hall numbers is located on page 87.

Home-Delivered Meals

These programs deliver meals to the elderly and/or disabled who can't shop, prepare food for themselves, or travel to a location where they can get food. Unfortunately, many of the free or low cost programs have waiting lists.

Call **211 or 216-436-2000** for the phone number of the program that serves your area.

WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program

WIC provides food coupons, information on healthy eating and referrals to health care. The food coupons can be used at the grocery store to buy milk, formula, baby cereal, cereal, cheese, eggs, and lots of other products. You can continue getting help until your child's 5th birthday.

You may qualify if...

- You are lower income (185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines) AND
- You are pregnant OR
- You are breastfeeding a baby up to one year of age OR
- You gave birth, had a miscarriage or an abortion no more than six months ago.

MetroHealth Medical Center

216-961-2233

WIC Program Office

3571 Ridge Rd., Cleveland, OH 44102

Phone for the number of the nearest clinic. Appointments are scheduled ONLY at local clinics. You can't walk in at the address listed above. Make sure you ask what documents you will need to bring with you to the appointment.

Food Pantries

Food pantries are places that will give you a free bag of groceries once a month or in emergency situations. Call **211 or 216-436-2000** for the phone number of the pantry that serves your area.

- The bag is usually packed according to family size and has enough food for about three meals a day for three to five days.
- You can expect to get canned and boxed food such as cereal, pasta, tuna and soup. On occasion, you may be able to get fresh fruit, vegetables or meat.
- Some pantries will also give you personal hygiene products such as soap, toilet paper and toothpaste. Places that provide clothing or showers may also have these items. See pages 11 and 13 for more information.
- Most pantries request you to show proof of income, a photo ID and proof of where you live (like a utility bill). However, most will serve you ONCE without these items. If you have trouble getting a photo ID and need to go back to a pantry, call the Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland at 216-619-8155 x16 for help.

Hot Meals / Soup Kitchens

These are places such as churches where you can go to get a free meal.

- You must go on the day and time that the meal is served.
- You generally don't need a photo ID or any paperwork.
- There are over 100 locations in Cuyahoga County. Listed below are a few central city locations that provide a meal. **Note that times may change without notice.**

Call **211** or **216-436-2000** for the address of other locations near you.

Bishop William M. Cosgrove Center

1736 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Closed the 2nd Monday of each month.

Breakfast - M-F: 8:00am-9:00am • Lunch - M-F: Noon-1:30pm

Salvation Army - Hough Corps

6000 Hough Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103

Lunch - M-F: 11:45am-12:30pm

St. Augustine

2486 W 14th, Cleveland, OH 44113

No meals the first week of every month.

Breakfast - 7 days a week: 7:30am-8:00am • Lunch - 7 days a week: 11:30am-Noon

St. Herman's House of Hospitality

4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44113

Breakfast - 7 days a week: 5:45am

Lunch - 7 days a week: 11:15am

Dinner - 7 days a week: 5:15pm

St. Malachi's Church

2459 Washington Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113

Breakfast/Lunch - M-Sat: 8:30am-3:00pm, Sunday: 8:30am-1:00pm

Dinner - Monday at 6:00pm

Trinity Cathedral

2230 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

Lunch: Sunday Noon

West Side Catholic Center

3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113

Breakfast - M-F: 9:00am-9:30am, Sat: 9:00a.m.-9:45 a.m. • Lunch - M-F: Noon-12:45pm

HEALTH CARE / DENTAL CARE

It is very important that you have medical care. One way of getting care is to get health insurance. Most people get health insurance through their employer because it is very expensive to get on their own. People who are low income, are disabled, or are 65 or older, may be able to get government health insurance to pay for their health care. If you don't have health insurance, try the following options.

Medicaid

Medicaid is health insurance paid for by the government. You may qualify for this insurance if you have a low income and are age 65 or older, blind, disabled, or are part of a family with one or more children under the age of 18. Certain health care providers have agreed to accept Medicaid Insurance. When you seek care, you should always ask the provider if they accept Medicaid.

Medicaid covers some prescription drugs, doctor visits, hospital care, laboratory and X-rays, medical equipment and supplies, some dental care, mental health (including some prescription medication), vision, alcohol and drug rehabilitation and other services. Some services will have small fees that you will have to pay. For seniors and disabled, Medicaid may pay for long-term care.

- You may apply for Medicaid on the day you are released from prison.
- If you were eligible for Medicaid at the time you entered prison, and you were incarcerated for no longer than 12 months, you will be issued a temporary Medicaid card (good for 60 days). You must reapply for Medicaid during those 60 days.
- If you are 65 or older and low-income, or if you have qualified before for Social Security Disability or SSI, you will probably qualify immediately for Medicaid.
- This program may help pay medical bills dating back three months from your application date.

You can apply at your local **Neighborhood Family Service Center (welfare office)**. Call **216-987-7000** for locations. If you are a family with children, you can call **216-987-7346** and complete the application by phone and mail, but it may take a little longer than applying in person.

Medicare

Medicare is a health insurance program for people age 65 and older, or disabled people younger than 65, who have worked under the Social Security system or are dependents of someone who has.

Medicare provides hospitalization coverage (Part A), supplemental insurance for things like doctor's visits (Part B), and offers prescription drug coverage (Part D). Medicare Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans) is through private companies that provide Part A and Part B benefits to anyone eligible to enroll; many plans cover prescriptions as well.

- When you go to prison, you do not lose your Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) benefit, so you don't need to re-enroll.
- You will only lose your Part B (Supplemental Insurance) if you stopped paying for it while you were in prison.
- If you stopped paying for Medicare Part B, you have to re-enroll during the next general enrollment period (January through March) for coverage to start the following year. You may be subject to a higher premium when you re-enroll.
- Medicare offers a prescription drug coverage option called Part D.
- Medicare offers a subsidy to help pay costs associated with its Part D program. If you qualify based on your income (150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or below) and assets, it may pay part of your premium, deductibles, and/or co-payments for services provided under Part D. The amount of help varies depending on income, family size and the person's resources.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services **800-MEDICARE**
medicare.gov
 Offers information to those who are already on Medicare.

Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) **800-686-1578**
ohioinsurance.gov
 For information about health insurance options. Volunteers can provide one-on-one assistance.

Social Security Administration **800-772-1213**
www.socialsecurity.gov
 To apply/enroll for Medicare.

MedRefer **Call 2-1-1 or 216-436-2000**

Helps people apply for drug company programs which provide prescription medications free of charge or at a reduced cost. Must not have any type of insurance that covers the medication (most programs are not open to those who are eligible for Medicaid or Medicare). You must have a doctor who can prescribe the medications (if you do not have a doctor, consult one of the community health clinics listed on pp. 29-30). This service is only for prescription drugs and cannot help with durable medical supplies (such as oxygen, bed lifts, wheelchairs, etc.). In most cases, there is nothing available for pain medications/narcotics. It can take four to six weeks to get the medication. Check with your doctor if you need immediate medications. You will need to supply a permanent phone number and address when you call.

Community Clinics / Health Clinics

These are health care clinics that provide primary medical care for people who are uninsured or underinsured (although some clinics may also accept Medicaid, Medicare, or other insurance). Services may be provided free of charge or, more commonly, for a fee that varies according to your income. If you need prescriptions, many clinics either partner with a drug store/pharmacy so that you can get your medicine for free or a reduced fee, or have an on-site pharmacy. You must be a patient at those clinics to get help with prescriptions. They will not fill prescriptions written by other doctors. Most clinics require an appointment and you may need certain documents, so it is best to call ahead. Also, drug companies often have "patient assistance" programs that give medicine for free or reduced cost. Staff at the health clinic may be able to help you access those programs.

Care Alliance Health Center **216-781-6724**
1530 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Focus is on those who are homeless or live in public housing. Operates other clinics at public housing estates and shelters.

Fairview Hospital **216-941-8888**
Westown Physician Center Primary Medicine
10654 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44111

Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland **216-721-4010**
12201 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

MetroHealth Medical Center **216-778-7800**
2500 MetroHealth Drive, Cleveland, OH 44109

This is the county-owned general medical and surgical hospital that has several outpatient clinics throughout Cleveland.

MetroHealth Broadway Health Center
Reentry Clinic **216-861-5292**
6835 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105

Helps formerly incarcerated individuals who need health care (including those with chronic conditions and mental health disorders). New patients see a doctor then choose a convenient MetroHealth clinic and a primary doctor for ongoing care. Provides referrals for legal help and helps the client find and apply for free or reduced cost prescriptions.

Neighborhood Family Practice
3569 Ridge Rd., Cleveland, OH 44102 **216-281-0872**
2358 Professor Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113 **216-334-2800**

North Coast Health Ministry **216-228-7878**
16110 Detroit Ave., Lakewood, OH 44107
 Serves people who live in certain zip codes on the west side.

- Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services (NEON)** **216-231-7700**
 8300 Hough Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103
 Operates several outpatient clinics throughout Cleveland.
- Parma Health Ministry** **440-843-8087**
 7000 Ridge Rd., Parma, OH 44129
 Serves uninsured, employed residents of Parma, Parma Heights, North Royalton or Seven Hills with income at or below 150% of the federal Poverty Guidelines.
- Saint Luke’s Health Care Center** **216-721-6900**
 11201 Shaker Blvd., Ste. 102, Cleveland, OH 44104
- Southwest General Health Care Center
 Neighborhood Care Center** **440-816-6444**
 17951 Jefferson Park Dr., Middleburg Hts., OH 44130
 Serves employed, uninsured, low-income (at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines) residents of Berea, Brook Park, Middleburg Hts., Olmsted Falls and Strongsville. Must not be receiving government assistance.
- St. Vincent Charity Hospital** **216-861-6200**
 2351 E 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115
 This is a general medical and surgical hospital that has several outpatient clinics throughout Cleveland.
- U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs** **216-939-0699**
Outpatient Clinic at McCafferty Health Center
 4242 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113
 Serves veterans who are honorably discharged or general discharge under other than dishonorable conditions. For most health services: if discharge was after Sept. 7, 1980, then must have served at least two years of active duty. There may also be income restrictions. Those who already have benefits through the VA and who are incarcerated for a period longer than 61 days may need to re-apply for benefits upon release.
- Veterans Affairs Medical Center - Brecksville** **440-526-3030**
 10000 Brecksville Rd., Brecksville, OH 44141
- Veterans Affairs Medical Center - Wade Park** **216-791-3800**
 10701 East Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44106
- University Hospitals Richmond Heights Medical Center
 Internal Medicine Clinic** **440-585-6479**
 27100 Chardon Rd., Richmond Hts., OH 44143

Specialty Community Clinics

AIDS/HIV Clinics

Provides medical care and prescriptions for people with HIV/AIDS who can’t afford to see a doctor. Call **211** or **216-436-2000** for information.

**HCAP (Hospital Care Assurance Program)
 Free Care at Ohio Hospitals**

Every hospital in Ohio is required by law to provide basic, medically necessary, hospital-level services (both inpatient and outpatient) free of charge to people whose incomes are at or below the federal poverty level and who are not currently receiving Medicaid (may be on Medicaid spend-down, if you have not reached your spend-down amount for the month of treatment). This program is independent of immigration status, and requires no proof of status.

The hospital is required to notify patients of this program and must help people apply. Ask about this program. HCAP applies only to care by hospital employees in hospital facilities, not to independent corporations or private practices not under the hospital. However, a patient should request an “award letter” stating his or her qualification for HCAP, and show this to non-covered providers, who may choose to reduce their fees. Those with low incomes who do not qualify for HCAP should ask about individual hospitals’ charity care programs.

City of Cleveland Dept. of Public Health **216-664-2324**
 Provides child immunizations, pneumonia/flu shots, pregnancy testing, Hepatitis C testing and treatment, TB testing, HIV and STD testing and treatment, AIDS and STD counseling. Three locations in Cleveland.

Planned Parenthood of Northeast Ohio **216-961-8804**
 ppneo.org
 Provides confidential family planning and reproductive health care services, birth control, STD testing and treatment and HIV testing to men and women. Offers comprehensive gynecological health care. Services are low-cost or free. Several clinics located in Cuyahoga County.

Dental Care

These programs provide free or reduced cost dental care. Please call for an appointment and to see if you qualify. There are restrictions on what services are provided and who can be helped.

- Care Alliance** **216-781-6724**
Case Western Reserve School of Dentistry **216-368-3200**
Cuyahoga Community College **216-987-4413**
Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland **216-721-4010**
MetroHealth Dept. of Dentistry **216-778-4725**
Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services **216-231-7700**

Dental Referrals

Cuyahoga County District Board of Health **216-201-2063**
Dental Options Program

Links uninsured people in need of dental care with dentists who have agreed to treat approved patients for reduced fees. This is not for preventive or emergency dentistry.

Greater Cleveland Dental Society **440-717-1891**
 Provides referrals to dentists. You will be expected to pay the full fee for service.

HOUSING

At least eight months before you are released, you should start thinking about where you will live. Work with your case manager to create a plan. Case managers on the outside at the reentry programs (see page 3 for a list) may also help you find housing. Think about the following options.

Permanent Housing

1. LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS

Living with family or friends may be your best option. If you are planning on living with family or friends, make sure you tell your case manager about any criminal history of the people you will be living with. You may not be able to live with certain people. It is better to tell the case manager up front so you can get approval. Otherwise, you may be violating the conditions of your parole/post-release control.

2. RENTAL HOUSING

To find an apartment or house to rent, try the following:

- Look in the classifieds section of the local paper, The Plain Dealer, or try the free or local papers around town. The Plain Dealer apartment listing is also available on the web at realestate.cleveland.com/for-rent.
- Use the HousingCleveland.org Web site to find affordable rentals. You may also dial **211** or **216-436-2000** for information.
- Walk or drive around the neighborhood you want to live in. For Rent signs are often posted on lawns and in windows.

Subsidized rental housing

Some rental housing is called subsidized because it is funded in some way by the government or by other sources. Because of this, you pay rent based on your income or a fixed rent that is generally less than other units on the market.

housingcleveland.org
housing you can access. rent you can afford.

Your search for affordable rental housing starts here.

A FREE service for finding affordable rental housing in Cuyahoga County

Find information about:

- Apartments, duplexes, single homes and more!
- Properties that meet your individual needs and budget
- Properties available in a specific neighborhood
- Details of each property
- Neighborhood resources, maps, photos
- Housing support programs, rental resources
- How to avoid problems when renting
- How much rent you can afford

Busque vivienda en Español

Looking for an affordable place to rent?
Check out housingcleveland.org or dial **2-1-1** or **(216) 436-2000**.
It's FREE!

Some subsidized housing units can be found on the HousingCleveland.org Web site. You may also dial **211** or **216-436-2000** for information or try the resources listed in the following sections.

- **Public housing:** This is government-owned housing. There are two public housing agencies in Cuyahoga County — Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) and Parma Public Housing Agency. Parma Public Housing Agency is not accepting applications at this time but estimates they may begin accepting by the end of 2010 or early 2011. All public housing may have long waiting lists — two years is not uncommon. However, this varies. Some persons (such as older adults) may be given priority for certain units and get in faster.

There are income and other eligibility requirements that vary by public housing authority. There are also some specific restrictions affecting ex-offenders, but many ex-offenders may still qualify for public housing. You are generally expected to pay 30 percent of your income for rent.

Here are some rules of all public housing authorities:

- Federal law prohibits admitting households that include a member who has ever been convicted of methamphetamine production on the premises of federally-funded housing.
- Federal law prohibits admitting households that include a member who is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state's sex offender law.
- Ultimately, the housing authority may deny admission to any applicant whose habits and practices may reasonably be expected to have a negative effect on other tenants or on the facility.

CMHA-specific rules:

You cannot be placed on the waiting list if you:

- are over the income requirement or
- are under 18 and not emancipated or
- owe money to CMHA.

All others are permitted to apply and can be placed on the waiting list.

Full eligibility is not determined until you reach the top of the waiting list. This means that you may apply before you actually qualify for acceptance. Since you may be on the waiting list for several years, if you think that you may qualify for acceptance by the time your name reaches the top of the list, you should apply.

Those who have been convicted of the following crimes may apply, but will be barred from admission unless it has been at least one year since the completion of their sentence (your sentence includes legal supervision after being released).

- Felony drug-related criminal activity that involves the manufacture, sale or distribution, or the possession with the intent to manufacture, sell or distribute, a controlled substance.
- Homicide, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, gross sexual imposition, child pornography, corruption of minor, child endangerment, child enticement, arson, kidnapping or abduction.

There are other reasons that someone may be denied admission, including current alcohol or drug abuse, fraud in connection with certain housing programs, etc. In addition, any of the Federal bans mentioned on the prior page will result in automatic denial of admission.

To be eligible, you must also have satisfactory references from previous landlord(s), have no outstanding rent balances at CMHA or any other subsidized housing, be able to obtain utilities in your name, agree to comply with the CMHA lease agreement, have a Social Security number or documentation supporting its non-existence, and be in good standing with any other subsidized housing program in which you have participated in the past.

If you provide untrue information about your situation on purpose, you will lose your CMHA housing or will not be allowed to stay on the waiting list for CMHA housing.

CMHA application process

Applications are accepted Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the following location. People age 50 or older or disabled can request that a pre-application be sent to them by mail.

Carl B. Stokes Social Services Mall, First Floor **216-361-3700**
6001 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104
 cmha.net

You will need to bring the following with you:

- Photo ID for each person age 18 or older.
- Social Security numbers for all household members (or documentation supporting its non-existence).
- Official proof of birth date (birth certificate, driver's license, state ID, clinic card, etc.).
- The names, addresses and phone numbers of all landlords for the past five years.
- The addresses and dates of residence if you lived in public housing before or had a Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher.
- If divorced, a copy of the divorce decree.
- If pregnant or disabled, a doctor's statement.
- Verification of income and assets (Social Security, bank accounts, paycheck stubs, child support orders, etc.)

CMHA appeals process

If you were denied a place on the waiting list, or were determined ineligible and you think that it was wrong, you may appeal.

- You can request a review within 14 calendar days of your written notice of ineligibility/denial.
- The review must happen within 30 calendar days of receipt of your request.
- You can present oral or written objections and you may be represented by an attorney or any other person that you choose (but you must obtain your own attorney).
- You will be notified of the decision within five working days of the review.

Assistance with the appeals process

Try contacting the following free legal program:

Legal Aid Society of Cleveland **216-687-1900**
 www.lasclev.org

Helps those with incomes at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Currently, this is approximately \$13,000 a year for a family of one and \$27,000 a year for a family of four. However, they will consider people with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

If you don't qualify for free help, you can try contacting the following agencies to get a referral to an attorney:

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association **216-696-3532**
 clemetrobar.org

- **Housing Choice vouchers:** Housing Choice vouchers were formerly known as Section 8 vouchers. If you qualify for a voucher, you have to find a private landlord that is willing to lease to you and accept the voucher. You will generally only pay 30% of your income toward rent.

The two public housing agencies in Cuyahoga County each operate voucher programs. Neither has an open application process. **Initial applications are generally accepted once every three to four years.** These events will be publicized about 20-30 days ahead of time and people must apply as directed. Each agency holds a lottery and creates waiting lists from the forms submitted. There is no lottery scheduled in the immediate future.

People who are very low income and have special needs may not have to wait for the lottery to get a voucher. There are a certain number of Housing Choice vouchers set aside for people with special needs. These vouchers can be accessed through the Gateway Voucher Program or the Mainstream Voucher Program. People who may qualify for these vouchers are youths who are aging out of the foster care system, people with AIDS, people with physical or mental disabilities, people with mental retardation or developmental disabilities, and people who are homeless. Even though you do not have to go through a lottery, there is a waiting list for these vouchers.

You apply for these vouchers at various participating agencies rather than through the public housing agencies. Please call **211/First Call For Help** at **211** or **216-436-2000** for more information and a referral to these agencies.

- **Other Subsidized Housing for specific populations:** The list below represents some of the nonprofit and government agencies that offer subsidized housing for people who have special needs.

AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland **216-621-0766**
 3210 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 People diagnosed with HIV or AIDS.

Bridgeway **216-281-2660**
 8301 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44102
 People with a diagnosis of mental illness.

Cleveland Tenants Organization **216-432-0616**
Bridging the Gap Program
 3631 Perkins Ave., Ste. 3A-4, Cleveland, OH 44114

Refers families and single people living in emergency shelters or transitional housing to permanent, subsidized housing and helps guide them through the application process. Will need referral from an outside agency.

Cuyahoga County Board of **216-241-8230**
Developmental Disabilities
 1275 Lakeside Ave., E. Cleveland, OH 44114

Provides group homes and referrals to semi-independent housing for people with mental retardation or developmental disabilities who qualify.

Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health **216-241-3400**
Service Board of Cuyahoga County
 1400 W 25th St., 3rd Flr., Cleveland, OH 44113

Provides group homes, adult care facilities and referrals to other housing options for people with mental illness.

EDEN
 7812 Madison Ave., Cleveland, OH 44102

People with mental illness, developmental disabilities, physical disability and those who are homeless and mentally ill, chemically dependent or have AIDS. Dial **211** or **216-436-2000** for more details.

Jewish Family Service Assn. of Cleveland **216-292-3999**
Drost Family Center
 24075 Commerce Park Rd., Beachwood, OH 44122

Adults with mental illness or other disabilities.

Manna House Recovery and Resource Center **216-432-2598**
 8019 Cedar Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103

Men with a source of income. Focus is on sober living.

Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio **216-231-7221**
 11607 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Offers referrals and operates rental housing units for people with physical disabilities.

Mental Health Services **216-623-6555**
 1744 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Men and women who are homeless and mentally ill.

Recovery Resources **216-431-4131**
 3950 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Homeless, single people who have completed a drug treatment program and are moving from transitional housing.

Spectrum of Supportive Services 2900 Detroit Ave. 3rd Flr., Cleveland, OH 44113 For adults with mental illness.	216-939-2065
US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 1350 Euclid Ave. Ste. 500, Cleveland, OH 44115 hud.gov/apps/section8/ Funds privately owned apartments for older adults, people who are physically disabled and families. Waiting lists may be very long. Call, write, or use the Web site to get a list of these properties. You can then apply directly with the apartment manager.	216-522-4058

Temporary Housing

1. EX-OFFENDER HALFWAY HOUSES

An ex-offender halfway house offers a place to stay, meals and supportive services for people who are referred by their case manager, probation officer, parole officer, or by the courts. Some places may not accept violent offenders, those convicted of arson or sex offenders.

Placement is a sanction, condition, or treatment alternative and it is paid for by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. However, you may be charged a small monthly fee. Staff will closely monitor your coming and going. Completing the program is mandatory. The typical length of stay is three to six months, but that will vary.

Some halfway houses offer a program called **Transitional Control (TC)**, where inmates can complete up to the last 180 days of their sentence in a halfway house. Residents are subject to many restrictions just like in prison (they can't obtain a driver's license, etc.), but will be given the chance to find a job and develop additional skills. Eligibility is determined by the Parole Board well before release. Ask your case manager for more information.

Halfway houses must meet standards set by the American Correctional Association (ACA) and licensing requirements of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

The following is a list of ex-offender halfway houses in Cuyahoga County:

Cuyahoga Re-entry Agency (formerly Alternatives Agency) 1804 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103	216-361-7359
ARCA 4600 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103 Women only.	216-432-3310

Community Assessment and Treatment Services 8415 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105	216-441-0200
Fresh Start 2415 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44104 (Main Site) Men with substance abuse issues	216-431-2554
Oriana House 1829 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103	330-535-8116
The Salvation Army Harbor Light Ex-Offender Program 1710 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115	216-781-3773

2. SUBSTANCE ABUSE HALFWAY HOUSES

Halfway houses for substance abuse are places that provide room and board, structured alcohol or other drug addiction treatment services, individual counseling and living skills instruction for people with alcohol and other drug addictions. It is seen as a form of treatment, rather than housing, but it is one option if you have a substance abuse issue. Some halfway houses will only accept people who have been through their other treatment programs, or those who have a referral. There may also be other eligibility restrictions.

If you committed certain types of crimes, you may not qualify, or there may be a waiting period. You may or may not be able to be released directly to a halfway house from prison.

Community Assessment and Treatment Services 8415 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105	216-441-0200
Cuyahoga Re-entry Agency (formerly Alternatives Agency) 1804 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103	216-361-7359
Fresh Start 2415 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44104 Men with substance abuse issues only.	216-431-2554
Hitchcock Center for Women 1227 Ansel Rd., Cleveland, OH 44108	216-421-0662
Orca House 1905 E 89th St., Cleveland, OH 44106	216-231-3772
Stella Maris 1320 Washington Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113	216-781-0550
YMCA – Y-Haven 6001 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104	216-431-2018

3. TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

These facilities provide a temporary place to live and supportive services for people who are trying to live on their own, but who do not currently have the money to do so. Transitional housing programs are generally for people who are homeless. People coming from prison are not considered homeless right away. See page 43 for a definition of homeless. Generally, people pay 30 percent of their income for rent and utilities or a low fee (lower than most rental units). Length of stay varies greatly but could be up to two years. Security deposits could be required. **A referral from a social service agency or caseworker may be required.** You may not be able to be released directly to transitional housing from prison. Call the individual agency for details.

People with mental illness are generally accepted if they are stable and able to take their own medication. There may be some restrictions on the ages of children allowed and restrictions on alcohol and drugs. If you committed certain types of crimes, you may not qualify, or there may be a long waiting period. **This is not considered emergency housing.** See the “Shelters” section on page 43 if you need immediate housing.

AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland **216-621-0766**
 3210 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 Men and women diagnosed with HIV or AIDS.

City Mission **216-431-3510**
 5310 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103
 Men, women and families with no safe and affordable place to live.

Continue Life **216-383-1984**
 17917 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44112
 Pregnant and/or parenting women (children under the age of 3) who are homeless.

If you're looking for **furniture** such as beds, tables and couches, you may find some used furniture you can buy for a low cost at a thrift store. There are very few places that will offer furniture for free or a very low cost. Phone **211** or **216-436-2000** to find out if there are any furniture programs that may serve you and for a list of thrift stores.

Ed Keating Center **216-472-1276**
 2121 W. 117th St., Cleveland, OH 44111
 Men who have no safe and affordable place to live. Focus is on sober living. Two locations in Cleveland.

Emmanuel Promise of Hope Ministries **216-391-5766**
 PO Box 603019, Cleveland, OH 44103
 Employed men who have no safe and affordable place to live. Focus on sober living.

Hitchcock Center for Women **216-421-0662**
 1227 Ansel Rd., Cleveland, OH 44108
 Pregnant or parenting women who have completed a drug treatment program. Focus is on sober living.

Joseph's Home **216-685-1551**
 2412 Community College Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115
 Homeless men (usually coming from a hospital or shelter) who have an acute medical condition or are recovering from an illness or injury.

Manna House Recovery and Resource Center **216-253-8850**
 8019 Cedar Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103
 Men who are recovering substance abusers or ex-offenders. Sober living environment.

Mental Health Services **216-623-6555**
 1744 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
 Men and women who are homeless and mentally ill.

New Life Community **216-751-7301**
 P.O. Box 201187, Cleveland, OH 44120
 Homeless, jobless families with children. Goal is full-time employment.

Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare **216-658-2095**
 1502 E. 118th St., Cleveland, OH 44106
 For adults with mental illness.

Oriana House - Cleveland Transition Center **216-881-7882**
 1829 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44109
 Cuyahoga County residents who were incarcerated and released from prison within the past six months.

Scarborough House **216-781-5538***2430 W 10th St., Cleveland, OH 44113*

Women who are employed or seeking employment who have completed a drug treatment program and/or have been sober for a month. Focus is on sober living.

YMCA – Y-Haven II and III **216-431-2018***6001 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104*

Men who are homeless and need a sober living program.

The Salvation Army **216-861-8185***1710 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115*

Homeless men (including those with disabilities), men with a source of income, older men with disabilities, women who are coming from an emergency shelter and who are pregnant and/or parenting. Also offers transitional sober housing for men.

Transitional Housing **216-781-2250***1545 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113*

Women or women with very young children who are homeless. Must have a goal of employment and permanent housing.

University Settlement **216-441-2907, Ext. 233***4800 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44127*

Families who are coming from a homeless shelter. Head of household must be able to work. Pregnant women accepted if they have other children.

Volunteers of America **216-621-0120***2710 Walton Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113*

Men who are homeless. Special program for homeless veterans at another site.

4. SHELTERS

Shelters provide a temporary place to stay (usually a few days to a few weeks) for people who have no housing. These are places of last resort. They are also known as “emergency shelters” because you have fairly quick access to them (there is no complex application process). There are shelters for specific populations such as those who are mentally ill, have disabilities, are older adults or are victims of domestic violence.

The shelter system is made up of specialized shelters and overflow shelters. You want to try to gain access to a specialized shelter first. You do this by calling **United Way’s 211 service** at **216-436-2000** or by dialing **211**. They know which shelters have beds available and can refer you to the right place to meet your needs.

If all the beds are full in the specialized shelters, you can go to an overflow shelter, listed below.

2100 Lakeside Shelter **216-566-0047***2100 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114*

This is the overflow shelter for men. Doors open at 4 p.m. M-F, and 1 p.m. Sat., Sun. and holidays. Curfew is 10 p.m., dinner is at 6:30 p.m.

Community Women’s Shelter **216-479-0020***2219 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114*

This is the overflow shelter for women. Women with children should check with all family shelters before coming to this shelter. You may walk in at any time.

Emergency Shelter for Men with Special Needs **216-623-2134***1701 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114*

Serves men who are older, disabled or mentally ill. Doors open 7 p.m. - Midnight.

Foreclosure Assistance

If you own your home and are behind in your payments or think you may not be able to make your payments, you may be in danger of **foreclosure** (losing your home). Phone **211** or **216-436-2000** for referrals to agencies that may be able to help you.

Housing Rights

Contact the agency below or try one of the legal services agencies listed on page 67.

Cleveland Tenants Organization **216-432-0609**

Informs renters of their rights and responsibilities under Ohio Landlord-Tenant Law. Provides assistance to renters who live in units that are under foreclosure.

Housing Research and Advocacy Center **216-361-9240**

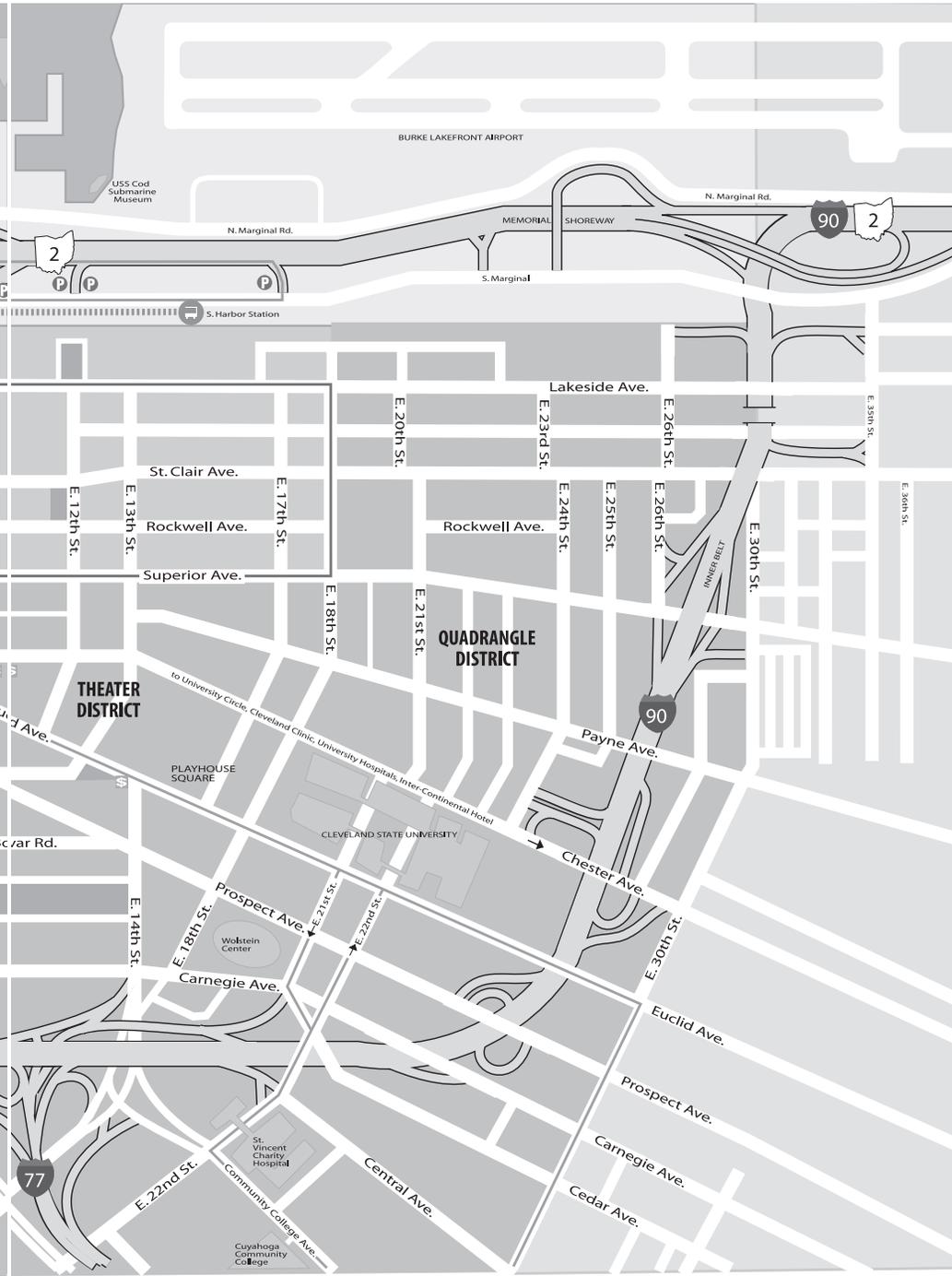
Helps people file discrimination complaints related to familial status, race, gender, handicap, color, military status, religion or national origin.

Who is Considered Homeless?

A person who lives in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks and abandoned buildings. Also included are people who live in emergency shelters or transitional housing (when they originally come from the streets or an emergency shelter).

Map of Downtown Cleveland and Surrounding Area

Map of Downtown Cleveland and Surrounding Area



IDENTIFICATION / PAPERWORK

Record of Arrest and Prosecution (RAP Sheet)

Your criminal record may consist of your arrests, convictions and/or other dispositions (such as a dismissal of your case). Here are a few important things to remember:

- You may need to contact several different agencies to get complete information and to make sure all records are correct.
- Know what you want. Do you need only your arrest records, or do you want to see your dispositions (outcome of your case such as a dismissal)? Do you want to see felonies, misdemeanors, or both?
- If you just want to view a detailed record of your felony cases in Cuyahoga County, try the **Clerk of Courts online database**. It is FREE at cpdocket.cp.cuyahogacounty.us.
- If you want to make sure all records are correct, some people recommend starting your search with the city in which you were arrested and working your way up through the county.

Arrest Records

To get a copy of your arrest records, it is best to start with the criminal records unit of the police department in which you were arrested. In Ohio, your arrest record is public information and anyone who has your identifying information can request it. However, employers are generally not allowed to use your arrest record (unless it leads to a conviction) to deny you a job.

Arrest records do not show whether the case was dismissed or you were convicted. You have to go to the County Clerk of Courts, the State Bureau of Criminal Identification & Investigation, or a private security company for that information (see page 48).

For your arrest record with the City of Cleveland Police or the Cuyahoga County Sheriff, use the information listed on the following page. For all other police departments, contact the city hall listed on page 87 for the correct number.

CITY OF CLEVELAND ARREST RECORDS

The City of Cleveland Div. of Police has information on all felony and misdemeanor arrests made by their department. You can request this in person or by mail. It is faster to get it in person. It can take one to two months by mail. You will need to complete a request form. Be prepared to have the following:

- First and last name of the person who was arrested, including maiden name or any other names used
- Birth date and Social Security Number of the person
- Age, race and sex of the person
- Your phone number
- Fee (five cents per page. Usually it is only one page). Cash or money order only.
- For requests by mail, include a self-addressed stamped envelope. If sending coins, tape them to the paper with your request.

Cleveland Div. of Police **216-623-5271 or 216-623-5272**
Criminal Records - 3rd Floor Justice Center
 1300 Ontario St., Cleveland, OH 44113

CUYAHOGA COUNTY ARREST RECORDS

The Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department has information on felony arrests (and a few misdemeanors they have processed) that have occurred within Cuyahoga County.

If you were arrested on felonies in multiple cities within Cuyahoga County and/or by the Sheriff's Department, this is where you could get your entire felony record for Cuyahoga County.

The record will show the date of the arrest, the charges, and the Cuyahoga County case number.

You can request this by mail or in person. It will only take a few days to process mail requests. Be prepared to have the following:

- First and last name of the person who was arrested, including maiden name or other names used
- Birth date and Social Security Number of the person
- Your phone number
- Self-addressed stamped envelope (for mail requests)
- \$6.00 fee per record. Cash or money order only.

Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office **216-443-6105**
Records Division
 1215 W 3rd St., Cleveland, OH 44113

Cuyahoga County Criminal Court Records

If you need to view your arrests, charges, convictions and other details about your felony cases in Cuyahoga County, the Clerk of Courts has this information.

You can view your information on their Web site, visit in person to review the paper files, or use their computers for free. You just need a first and last name to retrieve a file. A date of birth and Social Security Number are also helpful.

A certified copy of your record is \$1.00 per page, and a standard copy is 10 cents per page. Cash or money order only.

Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts **216-443-3612**
Criminal Division - Certified Copy Unit
 1200 Ontario St. 2nd Floor, Cleveland, OH 44113
 coc.cuyahogacounty.us

Out-of-County Information

If you have committed felonies in other counties in the State of Ohio, contact the police department, sheriff’s department and county clerk of court in that community for information.

You can also get a “background check” on yourself. The Attorney General’s Office for the State of Ohio provides Ohio Civilian Background Checks. You can view all felonies reported to them throughout Ohio. Information on these checks is available in the following section.

There are also private companies that offer background checks. In some cases, these are less expensive than the Ohio Civilian Background Checks. Be sure to check with the **Better Business Bureau** at **216-241-7678** or **cleveland.bbb.org** to get information on these companies before giving them money.

Ohio Civilian Background Checks / State Criminal Repository Records

For a record of your Ohio felonies that have been reported to the State Attorney General’s Office, you can request a civilian background check from the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information. To do this, you must go to an agency that has an electronic fingerprint machine. Fees vary by location, but are usually around \$45.

To find a location near you, go to ohioattorneygeneral.gov. Click on “Services” and then “Background check.” You should call for more information before you go.

Be prepared with the following:

- Driver’s License, State ID OR Birth Certificate and Social Security Card
- Payment (often must be cash or money order)
- Your phone number
- Your mailing address

Ohio Bureau of **877-224-0043**
Criminal Identification and Investigation
 PO Box 365, London, OH 43140
 ohioattorneygeneral.gov

What to do if you’re stopped by the police

- **Think carefully** about your words, movement, body language and emotions.
- **Don’t get into an argument** with the police.
- Remember, **anything you say** or do can be used against you.
- **Keep your hands** where the police can see them.
- **Don’t run. Don’t touch** any police officer.
- **Don’t resist** even if you believe you are innocent.
- **Don’t complain** on the scene or tell the police they’re wrong or that you’re going to file a complaint.
- **Do not make any statements** regarding the incident.
- **You should not lie** to a police officer.
- **Ask for a lawyer** immediately upon your arrest.
- Remember **officers’ badge & patrol car** numbers.
- **Write down everything** you remember ASAP.
- Try to find **witnesses** and their names and phone numbers.
- If you are injured, **take photographs of the injuries** as soon as possible, but make sure you **seek medical attention** first.
- If you feel your rights have been violated, **file a written complaint** with the police department’s internal affairs division or civilian complaint board, or call the ACLU hotline, **1-877-6-PROFILE**.

Keep this information handy!
If you have a police encounter,
you can protect yourself.

Produced by the ACLU of Ohio Foundation
 4506 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103
 216.472.2200
 www.acluohio.org

Birth Certificates

A certified (official) birth certificate is a very important document that you should have. It is often required when applying for a State ID, driver’s license, marriage license, passport, school enrollment, or to access other benefits. A certified birth certificate will generally have a raised, embossed, impressed or multicolored seal. Non-certified copies are not acceptable for legal purposes.

Write or visit the vital statistics office in the state, city or county where you were born. Often these offices will be part of the health department, but not always. The library can help you locate information for the city, county or state you need.

Fees vary, but in Ohio, you can expect to pay around \$16-20. If you are homeless or have very little income, a social service agency may be able to assist. If you are working with an agency, ask them for help. If not, try contacting this agency.

West Side Catholic Center **216-631-4741**
 3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113

County and local offices usually process requests quicker than the state offices. The fastest way to obtain a birth certificate is in person (same-day). If you request it by mail, it may take 3-8 weeks from the time the request is received. Some offices may allow requests by phone with a credit card.

Services on the Internet such as **vitalcheck.com** can expedite delivery (7-10 business days) and can help you get out-of-state birth certificates, but you must pay by credit card and the cost is higher.

Be prepared with the following information to get your birth certificate:

- Your full name and your gender (sex)
- Your father’s full name (if available)
- Your mother’s maiden name
- Your month, day and year of birth
- Place of birth (city/county/state; name of hospital, if known)
- Telephone number
- Address where it will be sent (if mailed)
- Notarized sworn statement (California only)
- Photocopy of picture I.D. if necessary (not required in Ohio)

IF YOU WERE BORN IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY...

Except for the suburbs noted below, contact:

Cleveland Dept. of Public Health **216-664-2317**
Bureau of Vital Statistics **Recorded Information Line: 216-664-2315**
 601 Lakeside Ave. Rm. 122, Cleveland, OH 44114
 clevelandhealth.org
 Open M-F: 8:00am-4:00pm; Cost: \$20

DOES NOT serve people born in Bedford, East Cleveland, Euclid, Garfield Heights, Lakewood, Parma, Rocky River, Shaker Heights and University Heights. For these suburbs, call the city hall number listed on page 87 and ask them for the office that helps with birth certificates.

IF YOU WERE BORN IN OHIO (CUYAHOGA INCLUDED)...

Ohio Department of Health **614-466-2531**
Vital Statistics
 PO Box 15098, Columbus, OH 43215-0098
 www.odh.ohio.gov
 Phone M-F: 7:45am-4:30pm; Cost: \$16.50

IF YOU WERE BORN ELSEWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES...

US Department of Health and Human Services **800-232-4636**
National Center for Health Statistics
 3311 Toledo Rd., Hyattsville, MD 20782
 cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm
 For information on contacting the vital statistics office in the area where you were born. Cost varies by state.

IF YOU ARE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN BORN ABROAD...

US Department of State Passport Services **202-955-0307**
Vital Records Section
 1111 19th Street NW Suite 510, Washington, DC 20522-1705
 travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_825.html

Credit Reports

A credit report is a detailed history of how you pay your bills (whether they are on-time or late) and how you manage your loans and credit. In addition, public information such as bankruptcies and delinquent child support payments are included.

You should review your credit report periodically to make sure everything is accurate. It is not unusual for mistakes to occur, and you want to take care of those so they don't affect your ability to get a job, rent an apartment, buy a home or get a credit card. Landlords, employers (with your permission) and others with legitimate business purposes can get a copy of your report.

The report may include a "credit score," which is a number that is used to predict how credit-worthy you are. The higher the score, the better. You may benefit from talking with a credit-counseling agency if you think you need help managing your credit. Here are helpful things to know:

- There are three companies (TransUnion, Equifax and Experian) that maintain credit reports and each company may have different information.
- You can get a FREE copy of your credit report once every 12 months (ONLY through the Annual Credit Report Request Service – see p. 53). You can request all three reports at once so you can compare them, or you can space them out so you can keep track of changes — as long as you don't request the same report more than once in a 12-month period. However, your free copy does not include your credit score.
- You can also get a free copy of a report that was used to take an "adverse action against you" such as denying you employment, credit or insurance, as long as you request it within 60 days of receiving notice of the action. The notice will give you the name of who to contact to get the free copy.
- If you are unemployed and intend to apply for employment in the next 60 days OR you are on welfare, you can also get a free copy of your credit report.
- If you find something that is wrong on your credit report, contact BOTH the company that produced the credit report and the company that provided the original information (such as a credit card company) to dispute the information.
- Generally, if you dispute something, the credit reporting company must begin to investigate it and make a note in your file or delete the error within 30 days of receiving your original request. They don't have to FIX the error within 30 days, just note that they are working on it.
- If you think you would benefit from credit or budget counseling, or you need help understanding your options, contact one of the nonprofit agencies listed on page 75.

To get a FREE copy of your credit report once every 12 months, contact the following. DO NOT call any other advertised service; they are usually trying to get money out of you, even if they say it is free.

Annual Credit Report Request Service **877-322-8228**

PO Box 105283, Atlanta, GA 30348-5283

annualcreditreport.com

If you need a report more often than that, or you want a report with your credit score, contact the following. There is a fee for these services unless you qualify for a free report based on the points mentioned on the prior page.

TransUnion **800-888-4213**

transunion.com

Equifax **800-685-1111**

equifax.com

Experian **888-397-3742**

experian.com

DD-214 (Military Discharge Papers)

DD-214s are official discharge papers. This is proof that you were discharged from military service.

If you do not have a certified copy of your DD-214, it is important that you get and keep a copy. You may need a DD-214 to access many services available to veterans.

To get a copy of your DD-214:

Contact the National Archives and Records Administration and ask for form SF-180. You will need to complete the form and send it back by mail or fax. A written request may be sent without the form, but you should phone first to receive more information. You may also initiate your request through the Web site **archives.gov**. Usually, copies of DD-214s are free.

National Archives and Records Administration **866-272-6272**

National Personnel Records Center

FAX: 314-801-9195

Military Personnel Records

9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

After you receive your DD-214, it is a good idea to have it recorded at the Cuyahoga County Recorder's Office. They will keep a copy on file in their office for you.

If you had your DD-214 recorded with the Cuyahoga County Recorder's Office, you may go there to obtain a certified replacement copy:

Cuyahoga County Recorder **216-443-5898**

1219 Ontario St., 2nd Flr., Cleveland, OH 44113

recorder.cuyahogacounty.us

Driver's License / State ID

DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSIONS

If you want to make sure that you have a valid Ohio driver's license or you want to know what suspensions or blocks you have on your license, call the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV). They can give you information by phone, you can visit in-person, or you can request that they mail you a summary letter which lists all suspensions and/or blocks and the fines that you owe to remove these.

If you need to have your license reinstated (get your license back) and you are eligible, you can do this by mail (takes 7-10 business days) or in-person. In-person is faster, but call first to make sure you bring the correct documents. If your license was suspended because you did not pay child support, you must pay what the Child Support Enforcement Agency requires before you can get your license reinstated. See page 8 for detailed information.

There is also usually a fee to reinstate your license and that will vary depending on the number and type of offenses. There is no agency in Cuyahoga County that generally pays the reinstatement fee. The Reinstatement Center in Cuyahoga County is listed below.

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles **440-845-2007**
Cleveland Regional Service Center
 12000 Snow Rd. Ste. N, Parma, OH 44130
 Open Monday through Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm

Mail correspondence to:

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles **614-752-7500**
 P.O. Box 16520, Columbus, Ohio 43216-6520 **800-589-8247**
 bmv.ohio.gov (Toll Free – can transfer you to the Call Center)

DRIVER'S LICENSE RENEWALS/DUPLICATES/NEW LICENSES

If you need a duplicate copy of your license (because your license was confiscated or lost), a new license, or you need to renew your driver's license, contact the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles. If your license has been expired for more than six months, you will need to get the temporary packet and re-test.

If you have a Release Identification Card (see page 56), you can use this as the only form of ID needed to get a driver's license. If you do not have that, you must have two documents: one that verifies your name and birth date (like a certified birth certificate or a driver's license that has not been expired for more than six months) and another that proves your Social Security Number (such as a Social Security Card). Several forms of documents are acceptable. Visit the Web site or call for a list of acceptable documents.

Current fees range from \$24.50 for a duplicate copy to \$25 for a temporary packet.

You can walk in to any license agency for service. There are many locations in Cuyahoga County. The downtown location is listed below.

OHIO BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES **216-431-1445**
DOWNTOWN - CLEVELAND EAST
 2765 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44104
 Open 8:00am-5:00pm every weekday, except Monday until 6:30pm.
 Saturday hours are 8:00am - 2:00pm.

For other locations, or more information, call:

Driver License Information Center: **614-752-7600**
License Plate Registration: **800-589-8247**
 bmv.ohio.gov

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE/CAR INSURANCE

In Ohio, it is illegal to drive any motor vehicle without insurance or other financial responsibility (FR) proof. It is also illegal for any motor vehicle owner to allow anyone else to drive the owner's vehicle without FR proof.

If you are asked to show proof of insurance or financial responsibility and cannot, you will lose your driver's license for at least 90 days for the first offense (work privileges are available after 30 days in some cases), and you may face other penalties.

For more information, contact the following:

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles **614-752-7700**
Safety Responsibility Division
 P.O. Box 16583, Columbus, Ohio 43216-6583
 bmv.ohio.gov

Ohio Dept. of Insurance **800-686-1526**
 2100 Stella Court, Columbus, Ohio 43215
 ohioinsurance.gov

This agency offers a "Shoppers Guide to Automobile Insurance" that may be helpful.

STATE ID

If you do not have a valid driver’s license, you can apply for a State ID Card. There are two forms of a State ID — temporary and permanent. If you have a suspended driver’s license and you plan on driving again, ask for a temporary ID. If you get a permanent ID, you’ll have to re-take the exam if you want to drive again. An application for a permanent State ID will cancel out your driver’s license. Make sure you know the status of your driver’s license before you apply for a State ID.

If you have a Release Identification Card (see below), you can use this as the only form of ID needed to obtain a State ID. If you do not have that, you must have two documents to obtain a State ID: one that verifies your name and birth date (like a certified birth certificate) and another that proves your Social Security Number (such as a Social Security Card). Several forms of documents are acceptable. Visit the Web site or call for a list of acceptable documents.

The current fee for a State ID is \$8.50. You can walk in to any license agency for service. There are many locations in Cuyahoga County. The downtown location is listed below.

**Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles -
Downtown - Cleveland East** **216-431-1445**
2765 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44104
Open 8:00am - 5:00pm every weekday, except Monday until 6:30pm.
Saturday hours are 8:00am - 2:00pm.

For other locations, or more information, call:

Driver License Information Center **614-752-7600**
Toll Free Number (you will be transferred to the right office): **800-589-8247**
bmv.ohio.gov

Prison Records

RELEASE IDENTIFICATION CARD

A free, non-replaceable photo ID will be given to you on the day of your release if you have a Social Security number that can be verified by the Social Security Administration. The card will include your birth date and Social Security number.

You can show this card to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles as documentation to get a State ID, temporary permit or driver’s license. However, you still have to pay the cost of getting the license, permit or State ID.

RELEASE PAPERS

If you do not have to be supervised when you are released — called “straight release,” then you will receive a document called Expiration of Sentence. It is also known as an Expiration of Stated Term. It proves that you are no longer under the supervision of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Keep this document.

If you have to be supervised, then you will receive a Parole Certificate or a Post Release Control Certificate informing you of who your parole officer is and where you should report. For more information on Parole / Post Release Control, see page 78.

CERTIFICATION OF INCARCERATION

If you lose your release papers or you just need to verify your release from prison and/or the dates of your incarceration, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction can provide that paperwork. This service is free. Requests generally take 10-14 days to process.

Requests may be made by phone or mail. Requests must contain the following:

- First and last name
- Inmate number OR both Social Security number and birth date
- Explanation of what you need
- Return address
- Your signature

Requests may be faxed or mailed to:

ODRC Bureau of Records Management **Phone: 614-752-1076**
770 Broad St., Columbus, OH 43222 **Fax: 614-752-1086**
www.drc.ohio.gov

INMATE EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

When you complete educational programs while in prison, such as career-technical classes or your GED, a record is kept of what you complete. That record is called a transcript. You can request a transcript free of charge.

All requests must be in writing and must contain the following:

- First and last name
- Inmate number or Social Security number and birth date
- Name of the institution where you received the training
- Year you received the training (if remembered)
- Explanation of what you need
- Return address
- Your signature

Requests may be faxed or mailed to:

Ohio Central School System **Phone: 614-877-2306 Ext. 360**
PO Box 207, Orient, OH 43146 **Fax: 614-877-0704**

A word about your GED:

Although completion of your GED is noted on your inmate educational transcript, some employers or schools may want a copy of your GED transcript from the Ohio Dept. of Education. That transcript is free if you note on the top of the form that you were incarcerated when you received your GED and you note which institution. To receive a free copy, you must order by mail rather than on the Web site.

Call and request that they mail a form or print the request from the Web site. You cannot fax requests. Once you submit your request by mail, it takes three to five weeks to process.

**Ohio Department of Education
GED Office**

877-644-6338

25 South Front St. Columbus, OH 43215-4183
ode.state.oh.us

INMATE MEDICAL / MENTAL HEALTH RECORDS

When you are provided with health or mental health care while in prison, these services are noted on paper. That is your medical record.

Only a licensed doctor or a lawyer can request your medical record, and only with your permission. You cannot request your own medical record. The Social Security Administration and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs may also request a copy of your record because they have licensed doctors on staff.

A copy of the record is free and it will come in the form of a CD. You are only allowed ONE request per patient/client in a 12-month period. Requests generally take 10-14 days to process.

All requests must be in writing on official letterhead and must include the following:

- A Medical Release form signed by the patient/client
- First and last name of the patient/client
- Inmate number or both Social Security number and birth date
- Explanation of what you need
- Return address

Requests may be faxed or mailed to:

**Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
Bureau of Records Management**

**Phone: 614-752-1080
Fax: 614-752-1086**

700 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43222
www.drc.ohio.gov

RECOVERY SERVICES - RECORDS

If you participated in an alcohol and/or other drug recovery program while in prison, and you need a record of this, you may contact the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. The procedure to request your records is the same as requesting a Certification of Incarceration (see page 57).

Selective Service Registration

The Selective Service System is the agency of the United States Government that exists to register men who could be asked to help the Military in a time of war or other national crisis. Almost all male U.S. citizens, and male aliens living in the U.S., who are age 18 through 25, are required to register. Eligible people are automatically registered when issued a driver's license or State ID. Registration forms are also available at post offices or online. Registration is free.

When someone reaches age 26, they can no longer register. If they were born on or after January 1, 1960 and did not register before they turned 26, they may be ineligible for certain Federal benefits, including U.S. citizenship, job training programs and student financial aid. However, they can still get a driver's license or State ID in the State of Ohio.

It is important to know that someone who fails to register cannot be denied any benefit if he can "show by a preponderance of evidence" that his failure to register was not knowing and willful. The final decision regarding eligibility for programs is made by the agency granting the benefit, not the Selective Service. Some agencies may have an appeals process.

Agencies may ask you to provide an official response from the Selective Service regarding the fact that you did not register before age 26. In that case, it is possible to request a "status information" letter. You will have to describe what stopped you from registering and provide documents showing periods that you were incarcerated, hospitalized, etc., between your 18th and 26th birthdays.

For more information on Selective Service issues contact:

The Selective Service System

888-655-1825

Attn: SIL

P.O. Box 94638, Palatine, IL 60094-4638

www.sss.gov

Social Security Number / Card

A Social Security number is important because you need it to get a job, open a bank account, get credit, collect certain benefits and receive some other government services.

If you have never applied for a Social Security number before and you are age 12 or older, you must apply in person at a branch office. If you have a Social Security number, and you just need a replacement card, you can do this by mail or in person.

This service is free, but you will need certain ORIGINAL documents (or copies “certified by the custodian of record”). The documents you will need depend on your status and what you are requesting. Call or visit the Web site before you apply so that you know exactly what documents you need. A copy of the application is available on the Social Security Web site.

It may take anywhere from 10 days to several months to process your application depending on your status. A U.S. citizen from Ohio can usually expect the process to take 4-5 weeks.

For information and the number of a branch near you contact:

US Social Security Administration

www.socialsecurity.gov

800-772-1213

TTY: 800-325-0778

LEGAL ASSISTANCE**Expungement of Adult Criminal Records**

Expungement is the sealing of a criminal record (convictions, acquittals, dismissals, etc.). If your record is expunged, you don’t have to tell people that you have been convicted, arrested, or charged when you apply for most jobs or housing. However, your expunged convictions can still be seen by certain employers and law enforcement agencies. The expungement process can take 6-8 months. It is up to a judge whether to grant your request.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPUNGEMENT OF CONVICTIONS

- Expungement of convictions is only for first-time offenders with no charges pending and no arrest warrants. If two or more convictions are connected with the same act, they may count as one conviction.
- People who have committed certain crimes are not eligible for expungement. Those crimes include, but are not limited to, sexual crimes, first or second degree felonies, crimes committed while armed, felonies involving a minor, convictions with a mandatory prison term, motor vehicle crimes (including DUIs), and crimes of violence except for a simple misdemeanor assault.
- For felony convictions, you must wait at least three years from the time you are off probation, parole or straight release and after all court costs and any fines, restitution or community service have been paid or completed. However, if all you have left to pay are court costs (you’ve paid your restitution and fines), you might qualify for expungement.
- For misdemeanor convictions, you must wait at least one year from the time you were convicted and after all court costs and any fines, restitution or community service have been paid or completed. However, if all you have left to pay are court costs (you’ve paid your restitution and fines), you might qualify for expungement.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SEALING RECORDS OTHER THAN CONVICTIONS

- You do not have to be a first-time offender to get a dismissal, finding of not guilty (acquittal) or nolle sealed from your record. There is no waiting period. You can apply right away. However, if you have more than one conviction, the court may not seal the record.
- If you were indicted and the Grand Jury returned a no bill, you must wait two years to file. You do not have to be a first-time offender to file.
- If you successfully completed a Diversion Completion or Treatment in Lieu of Incarceration program, there is no waiting period. You can apply right away.
- If you were arrested and released (no court was involved), you do not need to file for expungement or record sealing with the court. You can write a letter to the chief of police or head of the law enforcement agency that arrested you and request that he or she remove or seal your arrest record. You do not have to be a first-time offender to request this. However, whether your request is approved is up to the discretion of the chief.

GETTING HELP WITH EXPUNGEMENT

You file your motion for expungement in the court where you were charged. For example, if you were charged with a felony in Cuyahoga County, your expungement paperwork would be filed with the Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts.

It is recommended that you file for expungement with the help of an attorney. If you cannot afford one, you may be able to get help from the following organizations.

Remember to ask them about filing a "Poverty Affidavit" form. This form requests that the court waive the filing fee, which is usually \$50-\$100.

Make sure you keep a copy of all paperwork that you complete.

Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts **216-443-7985 Ext. 2235**

Criminal Division

1200 Ontario St. 2nd Floor, Cleveland, OH 44113

Does not provide legal assistance or provide forms. However, the Expungement Clerk will answer questions about filing procedures and paperwork for expungement of felony convictions from cases processed through Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court.

Cuyahoga County Public Defender**216-443-7223**

310 Lakeside Ave. Ste. 400, Cleveland, OH 44113

Helps people complete the paperwork to expunge convictions from cases processed through Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court. In most cases, you file the paperwork "pro se" (on your own - without an attorney). However, if you successfully completed a diversion or selective intervention program, they may actually be able to represent you. For help, walk in to the public defender's office or call and they will mail you a packet. Once forms are completed, you will be directed about how and where to file.

Legal Aid Society of Cleveland**216-687-1900**

1223 W 6th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

www.lasclev.org

Helps with expungement of misdemeanor convictions for those with incomes at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Currently, this is approximately \$13,000 a year for a family of one and \$27,000 a year for a family of four. However, they will consider people with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Will not help expunge a felony conviction.

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association**216-696-3532**

clemetrobar.org

If you don't qualify for free help, you can contact the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association to get a referral to an attorney.

Keysource Legal Document Service Corp.**216-469-5160**

keysource.org

Reviews legal documents. Helps individuals obtain and complete documents/forms. Fixed fee for first appointment and then sliding scale.

The following Web sites may help you better understand the expungement process.

Ohio Legal Services

ohiolegalservices.org

The Cleveland Law Library Association

clevelandlawlibrary.org

Click on the Frequently Asked Questions link.

Expungement and Sealing of Juvenile Records

You file for expungement or sealing in the court where your case was handled. In Cuyahoga County, this would be the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. Expungement means that your record is destroyed and it is like you never had one. Sealing means that your record is “hidden” and that most people/organizations cannot see your record, but there are some exceptions.

- If your case was dismissed, or you were found not delinquent, you would apply to have your record expunged.
- If you were found to be delinquent, unruly or a juvenile traffic offender, you would apply to have your record sealed. You have to wait at least two years from the termination of the court order or your unconditional discharge from the Ohio Department of Youth Services in order to apply. There is a fee.
- After your record has been sealed, it will automatically be expunged after a five year period or upon your 23rd birthday (whichever comes first). However, you can apply to have your record expunged at any time after it is sealed. If you are already 23 when your record is approved to be sealed, it will automatically be expunged.
- You cannot seal records for the following crimes: rape, gross sexual imposition, sexual battery, aggravated murder and murder.
- It is recommended that you seek assistance from an attorney.

For information or applications for Cuyahoga County cases contact:

**Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court
Clerk’s Office - Expungement Unit
2163 E 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115
juvenile.cuyahogacounty.us**

216-698-4716

Waiving Court Costs, Fines and Supervision Fee

During your sentencing, you have the right to ask a judge to remove the court costs, discretionary fines and the supervision fee that resulted from your criminal case. You can’t request this waiver once you have been sentenced. This process is for those who are poor and cannot afford to pay these costs. The judge has the right to say yes or no, and may request that you do community service (volunteer) to pay off these fines and costs. You cannot request a waiver of the restitution fees you had to pay your victim, or mandatory fines.

Executive Clemency

Executive Clemency is granted by the Governor of Ohio. Applications for clemency are processed through the Ohio Parole Board. Requests for clemency generally take several months to process. There are three types of Executive Clemency:

- A pardon grants forgiveness of guilt. A pardon does not erase or seal your conviction. If granted, you will get a certificate from the Governor. This certificate may be helpful in getting a job or in other areas. It also reinstates most of your civil rights and privileges. A pardon is generally requested by those who have served their time, are no longer under supervision and are now living crime-free. However, anyone may apply.
- A commutation is the reduction of a penalty to one less severe. Commutations are generally requested by inmates serving extremely long minimum or definite sentences.
- A reprieve is the temporary postponement of the execution of a sentence. This is rarely used except for inmates sentenced to death.

All requests for an application for clemency must be made in writing (email, fax or mail). Submit your name and address along with your request. It will generally take 7-10 days to process/send you an application. You may also obtain an application by going to www.drc.state.oh.us/web/ExecClemency.htm

**Ohio Parole Board
Attn: Clemency
770 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43222
Email: DRC.clemency@odrc.state.oh.us**

**888-344-1441
Fax: 614-752-0600**

Help for Non-U.S. Citizens Upon Release

If you are not a U.S. citizen, and you have been convicted of certain felonies (including but not limited to murder, manslaughter, rape, drug trafficking, certain firearms offenses, and certain crimes related to national security) there is a chance that you will be deported after you have completed serving your sentence.

No matter what your criminal offense was, it is extremely important that you hire a lawyer who can represent you well in the matter of your immigration status. You should do this before your release if possible, but definitely as soon as you can.

The following organizations may help you find a lawyer who specializes in immigration cases.

American Immigration Lawyers Association **800-954-0254**

ailalawyer.com

Fees will vary depending on what services are needed.

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association **216-696-3532**

clemetrobar.org

International Services Center **216-781-4560**

1859 Prospect Ave., Cleveland OH 44115

internationalservicescenter.org

This organization cannot represent non-citizens in criminal matters, but may be able to provide counseling and information about immigration matters, or help you with paperwork. They also may be able to help if you can't speak or write English very well.

Legal Aid Society **216-687-1900**

1223 W. 6th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

www.lasclev.org

Provides legal help for immigration matters, including family petitions, naturalization and removal proceedings for certain documented persons.

General Legal Aid

The organizations listed below provide free legal information and/or representation for low income people who need assistance with legal matters. Call to see if they can help you.

Case Western Reserve University **216-368-2766**

Milton A. Kramer Law Clinic

Provides legal counseling by third-year law students on a variety of legal matters including consumer home repair, predatory lending, misdemeanor criminal cases (in select suburban courts), benefits advocacy, Social Security Disability appeals and guardianship removal. CANNOT handle family law cases, bankruptcy or felonies.

Cleveland State University **216-687-3947**

Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

Provides legal counseling by law students (supervised by attorneys) for legal matters involving employment, discrimination and unemployment compensation. CANNOT handle Workers' Compensation cases.

Cuyahoga County Public Defender **216-443-7223**

Provides legal representation for people charged with a crime in the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County (felony offenses and some misdemeanors).

Legal Aid Society of Cleveland **216-687-1900**

Provides legal counseling and representation on a variety of legal matters including bankruptcy, consumer law, housing (including public housing), public benefits, Civil Protection Orders (CPOs), some family law, employment, education discrimination for special needs children, immigration, income tax disputes, license reinstatement, expungement (misdemeanors only), last wills and testaments, living wills and durable powers of attorney for health care (the last three are for older adults only). CANNOT handle contingency cases such as personal injury and medical malpractice or criminal cases. Helps those with incomes at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Currently, this is approximately \$13,000 a year for a family of one and \$27,000 a year for a family of four. However, they will consider people with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

**Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH)
Cleveland Homeless Legal Assistance Program**

216-432-0543

neoch.org/chlap.htm

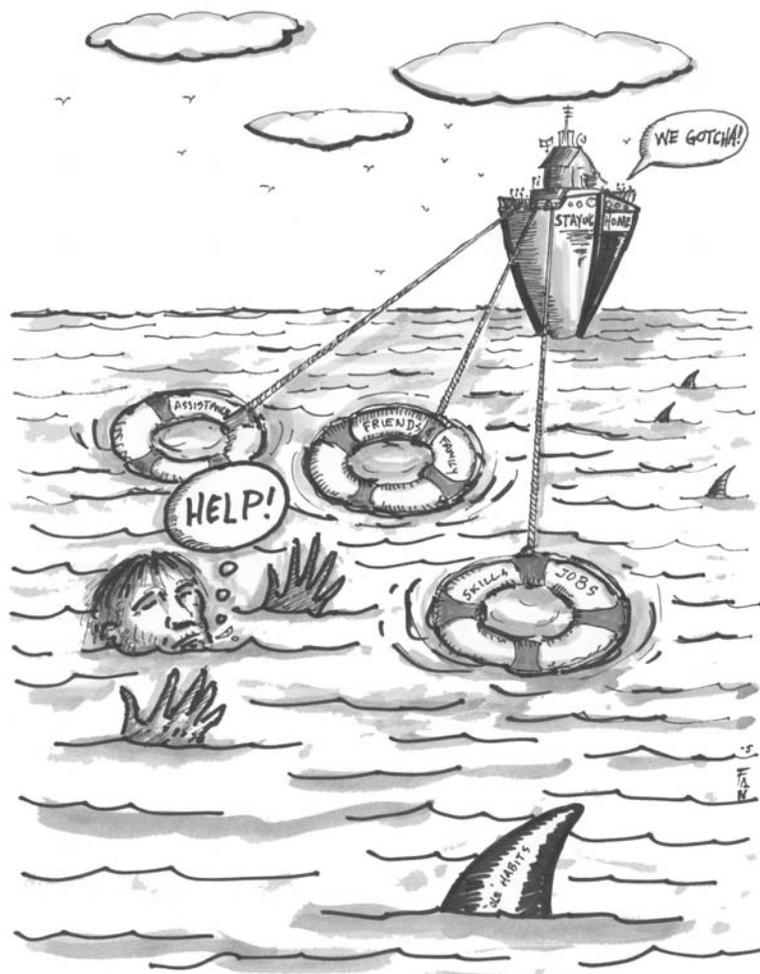
Provides legal clinics for the homeless and those threatened with homelessness. Offers help with evictions, domestic and civil issues. Criminal situations are referred to the Public Defender. Basic legal questions are handled in-house; more complex issues and direct representation are referred to volunteer attorneys. This program is a collaboration between NEOCH and the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association.

If you don't qualify for free help, you can try contacting the following agency to get a referral to an attorney.

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

216-696-3532

clemetrobar.org



MAILING ADDRESS / VOICE MAIL / PHONE

Mailing Address

The address where you have your mail sent to is called your mailing address. Most people use the address where they live as their mailing address. If you do not have a permanent address or think you may be moving a lot, you should establish one place to pick up your mail. A few options are listed below.

- Check with the shelter, halfway house, transitional housing or other residential facility where you are living to see if they will allow for your mail to be sent there.
- The following places will let you use their address as your temporary mailing address. You can have your mail sent there and they will keep it for you until you can pick it up. You must arrange for this service before you have your mail sent there.

Bishop Cosgrove Center

216-781-8262

West Side Catholic Center

216-631-4741

- A post office box (P.O. Box) is a locked box located on the wall in the post office where your mail will be delivered. A key to open the box will be given to you. Only you will have a key. You will have to go to the post office where your box is located to pick up your mail. Some items such as packages may not be sent to a post office box. There is a monthly fee for a post office box. The smallest box will cost around \$22 - \$30 for six months.
- To apply for a post office box, you will have to walk in to the post office branch where you would like your mail sent. Before going in, it is best to phone first to find out if boxes are available at that location. You will need to bring two forms of identification (one must be a photo ID). To find the address, phone number and hours for your local post office, phone **800-275-8777** or go to **www.usps.com**.

Voice Mail

If you do not have a telephone or a place where telephone messages can be left for you, you can request to receive a free voice mail box. This allows you to communicate with others regarding interviews, job offers, housing opportunities and other important business. You will be able to record a personal greeting for people who call you, and to pick up your messages on a twenty-four hour basis. Phone or email **Cleveland Community Voice Mail** for information: clevelandcvm@gmail.com or just dial 211 or 216-436-2000. Agencies can also inquire about purchasing voice mail boxes for their clients.

Phone

If you are homeless, the drop-in centers listed on page 13 may have a phone available for your use. If you are renting or own a home and are low income, make sure you ask the phone company if they have any discounts or programs for people with your income.

MENTAL HEALTH / COUNSELING

Mental health deals with how your brain functions and with your emotions and feelings. It deals with how you interact with others, how you react to change or stress, and your self-esteem.

People who need help from mental health professionals may feel depressed, angry or not able to cope with parts of their lives. Or, they may simply need to talk to someone about a life problem.

If you are diagnosed with a mental health issue while in prison, you will meet with a **Community Linkage Social Worker** before you are released. This social worker will make an appointment for you at a mental health agency in the community. If you are taking medication, the institution you are leaving will provide you with a two-week supply upon release.

If you have not been diagnosed in prison, and you are reading this after your release, the following may help:

- If you feel out of control or suicidal, seek help right away. Call **Mental Health Services–Crisis/Suicide Hotline** at **216-623-6888**. Remember to call 911 if your situation is life-threatening or a medical emergency.
- If you need someone to talk to, **Spectrum of Supportive Services** has a warmline where recovering mental health consumers will listen and provide assistance. Call **440-886-5950** between 5am and 1am.
- If you have a doctor, talk to him or her to get a referral to a mental health professional.
- If you have health insurance, call the company. Some or all of your treatment, including prescriptions, may be paid through your insurance. If you are on Medicaid or Medicare, make sure you understand what is covered. Go to a professional that accepts Medicaid or Medicare. If you do not have Medicaid or Medicare, you may want to apply. See page 27 for information.
- If you are having trouble dealing with anger, personal issues, stress, depression, trauma, sexual abuse, or a variety of other mental health issues that are getting in the way of work, relationships, or daily activities, you should seek help. There are counselors and support groups that can help you sort things out. For information about places you can call for counseling and support, phone **211 or 216-436-2000**.

Psychiatric Emergency Rooms

You may walk in to a psychiatric emergency room for help. If you have run out of your medication, they may be able to provide you with a limited supply. The central city emergency room is listed below.

St. Vincent Charity Hospital

216-363-2538

Psychiatric Emergency Room

2351 E 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115

CRISIS LINES – Available 24/7

Adult Protective Services Hotline **216-420-6700**

For reporting abuse/neglect of older or impaired adults.

Child Abuse Hotline **216-696-KIDS**

Domestic Violence Center **216-391-HELP**

**Mental Health Services and
Suicide Hotline** **216-623-6888**

Rape Crisis Center Hotline **216-619-6192**

**Remember to call 911 if your situation is life threatening
or a medical emergency.**

MONEY MANAGEMENT

If you have a history of managing your money well, you may have a better chance of getting a job, a car, a house and other things. Managing your money means paying your bills on time, sticking to a budget, building good credit and staying out of debt. A list of organizations that can help you manage your money appears at the end of this section.

Checking and Savings Accounts

Your first step when you have an income is to open up a checking account. This is a bank or credit union account that allows you to write checks and/or use a debit card so you can more easily pay your bills. It also helps protect your money from being lost or stolen.

- Open an account with a bank or credit union close to your work or home.
- Aim for a free checking account that has no minimum balance (the amount of money you have to keep in the account to get the service), low initial deposit and no monthly fees.
- Some banks have “second chance” programs for people who have been turned down for checking accounts before and are listed in ChexSystems (for writing bad checks, having lots of overdrafts, etc.) There may be a minimum amount you need to deposit and other restrictions, but this may be a very good way to get a checking account.
- Some nonprofit organizations may help you open an account or help you save. See page 75 for a list of organizations.

To open an account, just walk into the bank. You will generally have to provide:

- Your first and last name and address
- Social Security number
- Driver’s license or State ID
- If your driver’s license or State ID was issued in the last 60 days, you may need verification of address such as pay check stub, recent utility bill or other official correspondence (SSI, unemployment, etc.) with your name and current address.

Budgeting

As soon as you have income coming in, you should create a budget to help you pay your bills. A budget lists all of your expenses and how much you can spend on each item such as rent and food.

Try to go easy on your expenses until you can establish that you have enough money to pay for everything. Don’t buy new cars or expensive clothes, don’t spend a lot of money going out to eat, don’t buy extras like cable/DISH and watch your phone expenses until you know you can afford it.

Pay your bills before you spend money on things like clothes and entertainment.

- Make a list of all the bills you have to pay and the dates they are due.
- If you are paying your bills by mail, mail them at least one week before the due date.
- Don’t pay attention to “grace periods.” Just make it a habit to pay your bills at least a week before the due date.
- Make paying credit cards or bank loans (including car loans) a high priority. Nonpayment can affect your credit.
- Paying your rent or mortgage should also be a priority.
- Stay up to date on your insurance.
- Stay current on your utilities.
- Work with an agency that will help you budget. See page 75 for a list of organizations.

Debt

If you are having trouble paying your bills, there are agencies that can help you set up a budget and work with your creditors to arrange payment plans. There are even agencies that can help with a gambling problem if that is what is causing the debt. As soon as you sense you are having a problem paying your bills, contact one of the organizations listed on page 75.

Credit

When you buy things using “credit,” a company gives you a loan that you are promising to pay back a little at a time. You are borrowing someone else’s money. When you get a loan to buy a car, you are using credit. When you buy something at a department store using a credit card, you are also using credit.

It is important for you to build a good “credit history” if you ever want to get a home loan, auto loan or get good interest rates on your credit cards. A credit history is simply a record of how you use credit.

There are people who have a bad credit history because they do not pay their bills on time, and there are people who have no credit history because they never had any loans or credit cards.

If you have never had any credit, it is very important to start building your credit history. Without a credit history, it may be hard to get a car, a job, rent, or start phone service and other services. You may be turned down or you may be asked to pay a high interest rate. The interest rate is the amount you are being charged to borrow that money.

Tips on Building a Credit History:

- Before you apply for credit, make sure you have steady, verifiable income.
- Try to stay at one job and live at one address for as long as you can.
- Before you apply for any credit card, make sure that the lender reports to a credit bureau. If not, you will not be building your credit history!
- Get a card with NO ANNUAL FEE if possible.
- Watch out for high interest rates. Shop around for the best rates before you decide to apply. READ THE FINE PRINT.
- If you think you cannot get a credit card on your own, think about getting a co-signer – someone who will be responsible for paying off the card if you don’t.
- Open a bank account. This makes you look better to a lender. If you need more information about this, see page 72.
- Only apply for the credit cards whose requirements you think you meet — there are usually minimum income requirements. Getting turned down a lot looks bad.
- Don’t apply for a bunch of credit cards at once or obtain more credit cards than you truly need.
- Secured credit cards are a last resort, but are an option. These cards require you to pay a deposit to get the card – the deposit could be a few hundred dollars. If you don’t make your payments, you may lose your deposit AND still have to pay your balance. These cards often have fees and higher interest rates. Try to find the lowest fee you can. After a few months of making payments on time on the secured credit card, you may be able to get a regular credit card.

Maintaining Good Credit:

- To avoid paying a lot of interest, it is best to pay off the balance in full and on time every month.
- At the very least, you must pay the minimum payment in full and on time every month.
- Don’t pay attention to “grace periods.” Just make it a habit to pay your bill at least a week before the due date.
- If you think you need help understanding your options or you need help managing your credit, contact one of the organizations listed below. There may be a fee for some services.

Money Management Organizations

Read the following descriptions and see which organizations seem best for you. Call them to see if you qualify for help.

Cleveland Housing Network Community Training Center **216-881-8443**

2999 Payne Ave., Ste. 134, Cleveland, OH 44114

www.chnnet.com

Offers classes on budgeting, saving and improving credit.

Cleveland Saves **216-651-7283**

6516 Detroit Ave., Ste. 6, Cleveland, OH 44102

clevelandsaves.org

Helps people save and invest money to obtain a goal such as home ownership, school tuition, retirement, or debt reduction. Offers access to no-fee savings accounts.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service **800-355-2227**

www.apprisen.com

Provides individual counseling to help people develop a budget, understand their credit report and manage debt. Can contact creditors to develop payment plans. Many locations in Cuyahoga County.

Consumer Protection Association **216-881-3434**

3030 Euclid Ave. Ste.105, Cleveland, OH 44115

cpa3030.org

Provides individual counseling to help people develop a budget and manage their debt. Can contact creditors to develop payment plans. Also offers a representative payee program.

Debtors Anonymous **216-481-5669**

debtorsanonymous.org

Support groups for overspenders.

Gam-Anon **718-352-1671**
 gam-anon.org
 Support for families and friends of problem gamblers.

Gamblers Anonymous **888-424-3577**
 gamblersanonymous.org
 Support groups for problem gamblers.

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential **216-696-2716**
 1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113
 www.leapinfo.org
 Helps people with disabilities (generally those on SSI or SSD) understand their financial status.

WECO Fund **216-458-0250**
 3209 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
 wecofund.com
 Provides classes in personal finance (record keeping, dealing with poor credit, etc.)
 Offers Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) where you can receive two-to-one matching funds, up to \$1,500, for college tuition, purchasing a house, or starting a business in the City of Cleveland. Also offers an IDA offering three-to-one matching funds, up to \$2,250 for first-time homebuyers.

More Info:
Northeast Ohio Coalition for Financial Success
 neocfs.org (information and financial education classes)

IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is when someone uses your personal information and takes on your identity without you knowing. If you think you are a victim of identity theft, report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). They will tell you how to work with credit bureaus and law enforcement agencies. They can also provide information on preventing identity theft.

Federal Trade Commission **877-438-4338**
 ftc.gov/idtheft

Income Taxes

The money you make, such as your inmate income or money you earn on a job, may need to be reported to the government. There are federal, state and local government taxing agencies. At the end of each year, you may be required to “file” a tax return with each agency. It is the law that employers and others mail out the documents that you will need for your tax returns by January 31st of each year. The W2 form is the most common one of these forms.

You may not be required to file certain tax returns if your income is very low or in some other situations. However, you may want to file just to see if you can get money back – a tax refund.

There are free programs to help you file if you make approximately \$56,000 per year or less (2008 tax year). These programs will do your taxes for you. They will not force you to file. Many sites offer both paper filing and free electronic filing (E-File) which allows you to receive your refund fast (by direct deposit) – in as little as 7-10 days. You need a checking or savings account for direct deposit. **211** can help you locate a free tax preparation site in your area. Dial **211** or **216-436-2000** 24/7 for help.

Watch out for places that offer you an immediate refund. These refunds are actually loans called Refund Anticipation Loans (RALs). They could keep as much as half of your refund as a fee. And, if your refund is less than they thought, you could owe them money. Remember, there are free tax preparation sites available to you.

For Federal Income Tax Questions — call or visit: **800-829-1040**
IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center **216-522-4048**
 1240 E 9th St., Rm. 493, Cleveland, OH 44199
 www.irs.gov

For State Income Tax Questions — call or visit: **800-282-1780**
The Ohio Department of Taxation
 615 W Superior Ave., 5th Floor, Cleveland, OH 44113
 tax.ohio.gov

For local income tax information, contact your city listed on page 87.



It's yours, file free & keep it
earned income tax credit

Cuyahoga EITC Coalition



For **FREE** tax filing
Dial: 2-1-1
or 216-436-2000
refundohio.org

PAROLE / POST RELEASE CONTROL

If you did not come out of prison on “straight release,” then you were probably told you had to report to a parole officer. You would have received a Parole or Post Release Control Certificate informing you of who your parole officer is and where you should report.

Within the Cleveland region, the following agency is responsible for investigation and supervision services. They are responsible for people on parole — which means release from prison before your sentence expires, and those on post release control — which means supervision after your sentence is over. Post release control can only be mandated for crimes committed after July 1, 1996.

You are responsible for reporting to your parole officer according to the conditions of your supervision. This includes letting your parole officer know of a change in employment or where you live. If you want to move out of Cuyahoga County, you will have to discuss the transfer request with your parole officer before you move. The county that you want to move to has to approve the transfer.

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction – Adult Parole Authority - Cleveland Region **216-787-3010**
 615 W Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113

TRANSPORTATION

Contact a friend, family member, or other person you know to pick you up from the institution when you are released. If you have no one to pick you up, the institution will take you to the nearest bus station.

From there, if you don’t have someone to pick you up, you will have to buy your own bus ticket to wherever you need to go. If you have no money, the institution will buy a ticket for you, but this has to be arranged BEFORE you leave the prison.

Bus Service in Cuyahoga County

The RTA — Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority — is the company that operates bus and rapid service in Cuyahoga County. It also operates small community buses called Loop buses and Trollies that travel around Downtown, and a door-to-door system called “Paratransit” for people with disabilities.

You can buy one-ride or an all-day pass on the bus, but you need exact change. You can buy other passes or farecards too, but you can’t buy these on the bus.

Passes and farecards can be purchased at many locations including local drug stores, supermarkets, convenience stores and on-site at the RTA’s Customer Service Satellite Office, located inside Tower City Center at Public Square, a short distance from the Greyhound Bus Station.

You can get bus schedules/timetables which show the bus routes and times, at the Customer Service Satellite Office, at Rapid stations or on RTA’s Web site. You can also get information by phone from RTA.

RTA Customer Service
Satellite Office 216-781-4851
 50 Public Sq., Tower City
 Rapid Transit Station
 Cleveland, OH 44113

M-F: 7:00am - 6:00pm (or 24-hours through fare-card machines).

RTA Answerline 216-621-9500
 riderta.com

Live information M-F: 6:30am - 6:30pm and Saturday: 8:00am - 4:30pm. Automated information after-hours.

RTA
Sample Bus / Rapid Fares*
 (September, 2009)

- \$2.25** – One-Ride Bus Fare
- \$2.25** – One-Ride Rapid Fare
- \$5.00** – All-Day Bus/Rapid Pass
- \$22.50** – Weekly Bus/Rapid Pass
- \$85.00** – Monthly Bus/Rapid Pass

Ask about discounts for children, seniors and people with disabilities.

*Does not apply to Park and Ride services or out-of-county rides.

Long-Distance Bus Service**Greyhound Bus Lines***1465 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115*

greyhound.com

800-231-2222**216-781-0520**

Walk in for service or phone for information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You should purchase your ticket at least one hour before your bus is scheduled to leave. The price of a bus ticket will vary depending on where you are going.

VOTING

Formerly incarcerated people are allowed to vote in the State of Ohio even if they have a felony conviction, as long as they meet all other general eligibility requirements for voting (U.S. citizen, age 18 or older on the day of the election, meet residency requirements, etc.)

People who have never voted before need to register before they can vote. Those who were incarcerated due to a felony conviction need to re-register to vote, even if they have registered before. Also, people who have not voted in recent elections and/or have moved, should check with the Board of Elections to see if they need to re-register.

Be prepared to have the last four digits of your Social Security number or your driver's license number handy when you register (this will prevent you from having to send in additional paperwork), as well as your permanent address. You will need to register at least 30 days before the election. Registration is free.

Voter registration forms are available at libraries, Bureau of Motor Vehicle offices, County Boards of Elections and other locations.

For more information about voting contact:

Cuyahoga County Board of Elections*2925 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115*

boe.cuyahogacounty.us

216-443-3200**League of Women Voters of Cleveland****Voter Information Center***850 Euclid Ave., Ste. 1010, Cleveland, OH 44114*

lwvcef.org

216-781-8376

WELFARE / PUBLIC INCOME BENEFITS**OWF – Ohio Works First (Cash Assistance)**

OWF (Ohio Works First) provides time-limited cash benefits and supportive services to low-income families with children.

- Benefits are limited to 36 months in a lifetime unless the Cuyahoga County Dept. of Employment and Family Services grants an extension. There are two kinds of extensions: hardship and good cause.
- Recipients are required to participate in a combination of activities (parenting classes, life skills training, counseling) and/or work/training activities to remain in the program.

To apply, call the following agency to get a referral to a Neighborhood Family Service Center (sometimes referred to as the welfare office) in your neighborhood. Certain ZIP codes are assigned to each center, so it is best to call to ensure you are going to the correct center.

Cuyahoga County Dept. of Employment and Family Services 216-987-7000

PRC - Prevention, Retention, Contingency

This program provides aid to families in the form of a voucher to buy items or pay for services that are emergencies and non-recurring (a situation not extending beyond four months) and which cannot be addressed using existing community resources. Eligibility can be complicated, but this program is generally for families at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and have at least one minor child.

In general, PRC can help those who fall into at least one of the four following categories, but you will want to phone the agency below for more specifics:

1. Families needing help to seek, begin, or maintain employment or those who are enrolled in an approved college program
2. Those who need rent or security deposit help and who have evidence of a court proceeding or lead poisoning in the home.
3. Those involved with the Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Senior and Adult Services (including relative caregivers), a domestic violence program or homeless program who are establishing a household.
4. Families impacted by a fire or state declared disaster.

If you have a case manager, ask him or her about this program. If you do not have a case manager, call the following agency to get a referral to a Neighborhood Family Service Center in your neighborhood. Certain ZIP codes are assigned to each center, so it is best to call to ensure you are going to the correct center. Families can pick up the application on-site or may apply over the phone.

Cuyahoga County Dept. of Employment and Family Services 216-987-7000

Federal Poverty Guidelines

Each year, the Federal government establishes guidelines for what it considers poor. These guidelines are used to determine eligibility for certain social service programs such as Head Start, Food Stamps, WIC and others. You may hear about this if you apply for benefits.

The guidelines below are for 2009. Agencies that use these guidelines to determine eligibility for their services may be using the current or former year's guidelines. The table below represents 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Some programs state that you can qualify up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. For those programs, just double the amount listed below to get the income cap. Other percentages are also possible (such as 150% or 133%).

2009 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Annual income for families at 100% of poverty

Family Size	Annual Income
1	\$10,830
2	\$14,570
3	\$18,310
4	\$22,050
5	\$25,790
6	\$29,530
7	\$32,270
8	\$37,010

For each additional person add: \$3,740

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
and Social Security Disability (SSD)**

- SSI provides payments to people with limited income and resources who are age 65 and older, blind or disabled.
- SSD pays benefits to disabled workers and their families. To be eligible, you must be disabled and must have earned a minimum number of credits from work covered under Social Security. The required number of credits varies depending on your age at the time you become disabled.
- To qualify as disabled, you must be unable to do any kind of substantial, gainful work "due to a physical or mental disability that is expected to last at least 12 months or result in death."
- You are not eligible to receive SSI benefits for any full calendar month you are in prison.

Welfare / Public Income Benefits

- Social Security has a pre-release procedure you may use to apply for SSI benefits while still in prison. It is not available at all facilities. Check with your case manager at the prison.
- It may take a while to get your benefits. It could take six months or longer.

For information and the number of a branch near you contact:

U.S. Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

www.socialsecurity.gov

Social Security Retirement Benefits

- If you are age 62 or older and have worked enough under the Social Security system, you are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits.
- Working “under the table” does not count towards your work requirement for Social Security. You might want to keep this in mind when you are looking for jobs.
- You can receive this benefit in addition to unemployment compensation (it will not affect your unemployment benefits).
- You should apply at least three months before you want benefits to begin.
- If you choose to receive benefits before age 65, you will not be eligible for Medicare (health insurance) until you turn 65 or unless you qualify based on disability or certain health conditions.

For information and the number of a branch near you contact:

U.S. Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

www.socialsecurity.gov

Unemployment Compensation

Unemployment Compensation provides financial assistance for those who have been laid off and who are currently unemployed through no fault of their own. To qualify, applicants must have worked at least 20 weeks and earned at least \$210 a week during the past 52 weeks.

- Eligible workers receive up to 26 weeks of basic benefits – but sometimes this time period is extended by the government if the unemployment rate is high, or if you were laid off as the result of foreign competition (TRA - Trade Readjustment Allowance).
- Apply for Unemployment Compensation immediately after losing your job. This may help you receive the maximum benefit amount and it may be several weeks until you receive your first check.

Welfare / Public Income Benefits

- If you are denied benefits, you have the right to appeal.
- You may work and collect unemployment at the same time. However, working may affect your compensation.

For information and an application, contact:

Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services

unemployment.ohio.gov

877-644-6562

800-251-6237

Veterans Benefits

The U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs is the government agency responsible for veterans' benefits. They can answer questions regarding eligibility for benefits, how to sign up for benefits, and reinstating benefits.

U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs - Regional Office

1240 E 9th St., Federal Bldg., Cleveland, OH 44199

va.gov

800-827-1000

REINSTATING YOUR BENEFITS

During your time in prison, your veterans' benefits may have been stopped or reduced. After you are released from prison, it may be possible for you to start receiving your veterans' benefits again.

In general, to receive benefits you must have been discharged from military service under honorable or general conditions. No veterans' benefits are provided to veterans or their dependents that are wanted for an outstanding felony.

To find out if you can start receiving veterans benefits again, you will have to notify (in writing) the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs that you have been released from prison and that you would like to have your veterans' benefits reinstated.

Make sure to include in your letter:

- Your name
- Social Security number or VA claim file number
- Address and phone number where you can be reached
- Your signature and date
- A copy of your prison release papers

Before sending the letter, you may phone for more information.

Mail to:

U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs – Regional Office

1240 E 9th St., Federal Bldg., Cleveland, OH 44199

800-827-1000

GETTING HELP WITH YOUR BENEFITS

The following places help veterans understand and obtain military benefits, and may help them with other needs if possible.

Disabled American Veterans 216-522-3507

1240 E 9th St., Rm. 1015, Cleveland, OH 44199

dav.org

Focuses on helping veterans who have a service-connected disability. Assists with filing claims for veterans' disability, compensation, rehabilitation, education, pensions, death benefits, training and other programs, and represents veterans in appeals.

Military Order of the Purple Heart 216-522-7237

1240 E 9th St. Rm. 1023 - Federal Building, Cleveland, OH 44199

purpleheart.org

Provides services such as explaining benefits, filling out forms, forwarding claims to the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs for processing, and representing veterans in appeals.

Paralyzed Veterans of America 216-731-1017

25100 Euclid Ave. Ste 117, Euclid, OH 44117

buckeyepva.org

Provides benefits advocacy and information for veterans who have spinal cord injuries or dysfunction.

Veterans Service Commission 216-698-2600

1849 Prospect Ave., Ste. 150, Cleveland, OH 44115

vsc.cuyahogacounty.us

Helps veterans and widows complete paperwork and file claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for disability, pensions and/or education. Also provides emergency financial assistance to veterans who are experiencing hardship.

Volunteers of America - Veterans Resource Center 216-541-9000

775 E 152nd St., Cleveland, OH 44110

voa.org

Helps veterans who are homeless obtain housing, employment and other benefits to which they are entitled.

CITIES, VILLAGES AND TOWNSHIPS

Bay Village	440-871-2200
Beachwood	216-464-1070
Bedford	440-232-1600
Bedford Hts.....	440-786-3200
Bentleyville	440-247-5055
Berea	440-826-5800
Bratenahl	216-681-4266
Brecksville	440-526-4351
Broadview Hts.	440-526-4357
Brooklyn.....	216-351-2133
Brooklyn Hts.	216-749-4300
Brook Park	216-433-1300
Chagrin Falls Township	440-247-8422
Chagrin Falls Village.....	440-247-5050
Cleveland	216-664-2000
Cleveland Hts.....	216-291-4444
Cuyahoga Hts.	216-641-7020
East Cleveland	216-681-5020
Euclid.....	216-289-2700
Fairview Park	440-333-2200
Garfield Hts.....	216-475-1100
Gates Mills	440-423-4405
Glenwillow.....	440-232-8788
Highland Hills	216-283-3000
Highland Hts.....	440-461-2440
Hunting Valley.....	440-247-6106
Independence.....	216-524-4131
Lakewood	216-521-7580
Linndale	216-251-6000
Lyndhurst	440-442-5777
Maple Hts.....	216-662-6000
Mayfield Hts.	440-442-2626

Mayfield Village	440-461-2210
Middleburg Hts.	440-234-8811
Moreland Hills	440-248-1188
Newburgh Hts.	216-641-4650
North Olmsted.....	440-777-8000
North Randall	216-662-0430
North Royalton.....	440-237-5686
Olmsted Falls	440-235-5550
Olmsted Township.....	440-235-3051
Oakwood	440-232-9988
Orange	440-498-4400
Parma.....	440-885-8000
Parma Hts.....	440-884-9600
Pepper Pike.....	216-831-8500
Richmond Hts.	216-486-2474
Rocky River	440-331-0600
Seven Hills.....	216-524-4421
Shaker Hts.....	216-491-1400
Solon	440-248-1155
South Euclid.....	216-381-0400
Strongsville	440-580-3100
University Hts.....	216-932-7800
Valley View	216-524-6511
Walton Hills	440-232-7800
Warrensville Hts.	216-587-6500
Westlake	440-871-3300
Woodmere.....	216-831-9511

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The listings in this guide represent only a small part of all the social services that may help. If there is something you can't find in this guide, or if there is anything you don't understand, please call us at **211** or **(216) 436-2000**. We are available 24 hours a day, every day. If you have access to the Internet, you can also visit us at 211cleveland.org.



Inclusion in this directory does not imply endorsement of services nor does exclusion imply disapproval. Every effort has been made to supply complete and accurate information; however, 211/First Call For Help and United Way of Greater Cleveland make no representation with respect to the accuracy and completeness of the contents of this directory and specifically disclaim any implied responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided, and in no event shall be held liable for any loss or damage.

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Going Home To Stay: A Guide for Successful Reentry was created for men and women coming out of prison who are returning to Cuyahoga County. This guide gives practical information about how to prepare for release, and the steps to take to begin a new life outside of prison. It provides information about services such as health care, housing, clothing, legal assistance, employment and other programs that are available to help people reenter the community successfully.

The process of reentry is about making change and having the information needed to be successful. This book offers guidance on topics that are important for us all to be successful – getting a job, building credit, registering to vote, getting an education and connecting with our families and communities.

Going Home To Stay is the result of talking and working with many successful and determined men and women who have served their time in prison. They have returned to Greater Cleveland and have made a new life for themselves. They share their ideas in this booklet.

Going Home to Stay: A Guide for Successful Reentry was developed through the Greater Cleveland Reentry Strategy, a community plan designed to improve outcomes associated with the transition from prison to the community. The George Gund and Cleveland Foundations provided funding to conduct the planning phases of the initiative. The Service Directory Workgroup of the Greater Cleveland Reentry Strategy joined with United Way of Greater Cleveland's 211 program to create the Directory. Funding for the printing of the directory was provided by the Cuyahoga County Board of County Commissioners to the Department of Justice Affairs-Office of Reentry.

The artwork was created by people who are or were incarcerated, and a number of people who were formerly incarcerated contributed their ideas to the Guide.

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