

Mapping Your Future:

A GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL REENTRY

2021 Edition



A PUBLICATION OF THE
EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



Welcome Home!

We're glad you picked up *Mapping Your Future: A Guide for Successful Reentry*. Whether you spent many years in prison or just a few, it can help you transition successfully to life on the outside. You are reentering society in a very strange and scary time. The coronavirus pandemic has changed life as we know it. We imagine that it must feel very overwhelming to be leaving prison or jail at this time.

This guide provides information you need to know now to keep yourself and others in your community safe. This guide also contains information about employment, housing, education, healthcare, and more. If you are the family member, friend, or service provider for someone who is coming home, this book can help you, too. We hope that you will find resources in this book that will assist you.

There are six main sections in *Mapping Your Future*:

- **Release during COVID-19** provides a brief overview of what you need to know about reentry during COVID-19
- **Before You Leave** features more general advice about preparing for release.
- **Once You're Out** provides information about how to set up your life once you're out.
- **Healing and Moving Forward** is about adjusting to life after prison.
- **Our Reentry Directory** contains contact information for useful resources.
- **Our Forms** section includes helpful forms, many of which you can tear out and use.

Let's be honest: adjusting to life on the outside isn't easy, and the pandemic has made this adjustment even more challenging. Reentry is so difficult in large part because incarceration is so hard. Loved ones are separated from one another and it is expensive to stay connected. Prison life breeds new habits and ways of

interacting that may not be useful, and may even be harmful, on the outside. In addition, society places many obstacles in the paths of people with criminal records. These include legal barriers and social stigmas. The conditions of parole may feel unfair. At times it can feel like there are too many challenges placed in your path! How can anyone expect you to succeed?

We believe it's important to acknowledge all of this. There is much that needs to change in our state and in our country to make our communities more welcoming to formerly incarcerated individuals and to better ensure their success. *Mapping Your Future* will help you meet the challenges. Perhaps it will even inspire you to want to work for change. We wouldn't have written it if we didn't believe in YOU and your ability to make a positive difference in the world. Don't stop believing in yourself.

Throughout this book, you'll find words of encouragement and inspiration from people who traveled the same journey that you're about to embark on. Many of them are alumni of the Education Justice Project, a college-in-prison program that has operated at Danville Correctional Center since 2008. It was their idea to write *Mapping Your Future*. They, and so many others, have successfully navigated reentry and you can, too.

We recommend that you read the entire guide if you are able, or skip around to the parts that are most relevant. Knowledge is power! Make plans. Seek help from others. And don't give up. If you are reading this guide in prison, we hope you'll take it home with you. If you need a copy of your own, you can request one by writing to the address on the next page.

Please keep in touch. We'd love to know how you're doing and how we can update *Mapping Your Future*. Your feedback can help those coming after you. Again, welcome home. We're glad you're back.

In solidarity,

The Education Justice Project

About Mapping Your Future

Mapping Your Future was produced by members of the Education Justice Project (EJP). EJP is a unit of the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Since 2008, EJP has offered academic programs to individuals incarcerated at Danville Correctional Center in Central IL.

Mapping Your Future is a natural outgrowth of the work we do at the prison, and of our concern for the well being of our students and others like them who must try to make it on the outside upon release. The guide is produced by EJP's Reentry Guide Initiative, which consists of a group of committed EJP members.

Facing deportation to another country after release? Please request *Returning Home: A Guide to the Challenges and Opportunities after Deportation*, also produced by the Education Justice Project.



Disclaimer: We have listed a number of different programs, services, and businesses throughout this guide as resources for formerly incarcerated people and their families. We don't endorse any of these organizations. We also don't guarantee that these resources will be helpful (although we certainly hope they are). Since the situation is changing all the time, it's impossible to ensure that every piece of information in this guide is current, but we've done our best to include up-to-date, key information from trusted sources.



REQUEST OUR GUIDES!

Both *Mapping Your Future* and *Returning Home* are free for those who need them. They are available in English and Spanish and can be ordered the following ways:

- Request them online through educationjustice.net. You can download a pdf of our guides for free.
- Request one through the reentry resource room at your facility.
- Request by phone at 217-300-5150, or by email at reentry@illinois.edu
- Send a request by mail:
EJP
1001 S. Wright St.
Champaign, IL 61820

DONATIONS

Please help us to distribute Mapping Your Future to every person who requests a copy. Most people leaving prison have very limited funds. If you are in a position to make a donation, please send a check to the address above, or donate online at educationjustice.net/donate/. We receive no funds from the Illinois Department of Corrections or the State of Illinois. Each copy of Mapping Your Future costs around \$11 to produce and send. Thank you!

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Myths

What sort of information will you find in this guide? For one thing, it challenges some common myths about reentry and provides you with the information you need to move forward. Here are a few examples:

MYTH: You can't get a stimulus check if you've been in prison.

False. You can receive a stimulus check from the federal government, even if you have been in prison and have not filed taxes for the last two years. See page 20 for more information.

MYTH: It's not necessary to wear a mask because they aren't that effective at preventing COVID-19 from spreading.

False. Masks do help. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies). Be sure to wear it correctly (over your mouth and nose), and avoid adjusting it.

MYTH: It's practically impossible to find employment after being incarcerated.

False. You can definitely be employed after being in jail or prison, though finding employment will be challenging during the pandemic. Employers in Illinois can choose to not hire you, but cannot ask to see your criminal record until you have been deemed qualified for the job. They also need your permission to do so.

For more information about searching for jobs and what to do when you have a criminal record, turn to the "Employment" topic in both the "Before you Leave" and "After Release" sections. The Directory also has employment resources, with lists of places you can go for help.

MYTH: You will be responsible for purchasing all medication you take upon release.

False. While it is true that you will be responsible for your medication, prisons offer a limited supply of medication upon release, ranging from 30-90 days. You can prepare for your release by getting medications ready and requesting physical, dental, or eye exams.

See the "Collect Health Records" section on page 39 to find out more.

MYTH: You can't get financial aid for college if you have been incarcerated.

False. Most financial aid is available to students on parole or probation.

For more information about the different kinds of training and higher education programs available and how to apply for financial aid, see the "Education" section on page 66.

MYTH: You can't get a bank account if you have been incarcerated.

False. You can open a bank account regardless of your legal history. You still have to meet the guidelines for opening certain bank accounts, such as minimum deposit requirements.

For more information about what to do with your money and the different kinds of banking options available, see the "Finances, Credit, and Taxes" section on page 103.

MYTH: If you have been incarcerated you are entitled to Social Security compensation for your time in prison.

False. You do not qualify for Social Security benefits during the time you are incarcerated. However, if you were previously collecting Social Security you can resume benefits after providing proof of your release. More information about Social Security benefits can be found in the “Resources to Meet Basic Needs” section on page 49.

MYTH: You can’t receive VA benefits after being incarcerated.

False. If you are a veteran, you can have your benefits resumed 30 days before your rescheduled release date. You just need to provide evidence of this date from a parole board. For more information about accessing veteran benefits, see the “Veterans” section on page 112.

MYTH: People with criminal records can’t vote.

False. In Illinois you can vote upon release, and should. See the “Voting” section on page 115.

MYTH: Health insurance is too expensive. It is easier to pay healthcare costs out of pocket.

False. While it is true that health insurance can be expensive, there are some more affordable options, such as Medicaid or subsidized insurance through the Healthcare Marketplace. Not having insurance can lead to expensive emergency room visits, and you will have to pay a \$695 per year penalty if you are not insured. For more information about health insurance and how to stay healthy, see the “Healthcare” section on page 78.

What You Need to Know About COVID-19

In late 2019, a novel coronavirus, called Sars-CoV-2, began causing an outbreak of illness in Wuhan, China. The disease caused by the virus is called COVID-19. Since then, it has rapidly spread throughout the world becoming a global pandemic. At the time of publication, the U.S. had over 30 million cases, with over 560,000 deaths, more than any other country.

The majority of people who get the virus do not have life-threatening symptoms and will recover without medical care. However, people who are older are at greater risk for life-threatening symptoms, as are people who have conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and people who are obese. There is no cure for the infection, but health care workers now have better treatments to relieve the symptoms.

Alarming, COVID-19 related death rates are roughly twice as high for Black, Latino/Hispanic, and Native American people, compared to white people. In major cities such as Chicago, these populations make up more than 70 percent of COVID related deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control, non-whites make up nearly 40 percent of the deaths in the U.S.

It is important to acknowledge some of the reasons for this discrepancy. First, more Black and Brown people are risking their lives as essential workers. Institutional barriers prevent many of them from securing higher-pay jobs where they can work from home during a pandemic. Black and Brown people are also at greater risk because of underlying health issues that are caused by food insecurity. Minimum wage jobs prevent many families from accessing nutritious foods, which makes them more prone to diabetes, hypertension, and other illnesses. Therefore, institutional racism, a system designed to ensure that Black and Brown people remain disadvantaged, has greatly contributed to these tragic deaths.

You may have heard that there are now new variants of the virus that spread more easily and quickly, which may lead to even more cases of COVID-19. Viruses constantly change over time through mutation. For example, flu viruses change often, which is why doctors encourage you to get a new flu vaccine every year. There are three new COVID-19 variants that have now been detected in the US. These variants were first identified in the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Brazil. It is more important than ever to do what you can to stay safe from the virus and these new variants.

The virus is very contagious and you can spread it even if you don't know you have it.

COVID-19 spreads primarily through the air through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking, through close personal contact (including touching and shaking hands) or through transmitting the virus directly to your nose, mouth or eyes (for example, if you touch your face with contaminated hands). Most people who catch the virus don't start showing symptoms for five days, and some people take as long as 14 days to start showing symptoms. About half the people who have the virus do not have any symptoms at all. *People who have the virus are still contagious even if they don't have symptoms!*

Fortunately, there are three vaccines that have been approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration for emergency use. It appears that these vaccines are effective against the new variants, although more research needs to be done. It will take time before the vaccine can be distributed to everyone. The goal is for enough people to receive the vaccine so that we can achieve herd immunity. Herd immunity occurs when enough people have become immune to the virus to make its spread unlikely, allowing the entire community to be protected.

Getting a Vaccine

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the use of three vaccines to protect against COVID-19. **Though it is not mandatory to get a vaccine, we recommend that you get it when it is available to you.** It will help keep you and others safe from this dangerous virus.

You may be fearful or reluctant to get the vaccine. This fear and mistrust is understandable.

Perhaps you have had negative experiences with vaccines in the past. Perhaps you have had traumatic experiences with medical professionals, or have experienced discrimination when you have sought treatment.

We must recognize the roots of this mistrust. Dating back to slavery, medical professionals have experimented on Black women and children in attempts to uphold slavery. These experiments are not the only instances of abuse. Scientists took advantage of economic hardship by promising minimal financial incentives and affordable healthcare to convince Black men to participate in the 40-year-long Tuskegee Syphilis experiments. Not only did they inject Black men, but they deliberately denied treatment after developing penicillin, which has negatively impacted Black families today. Aside from these two historical traumas, the U.S. government also routinely sterilized tens of thousands of Black and Native American women without their knowledge or consent in the 1900s. Even though this has all happened in the past, medical inequalities continue to harm Black and Brown people. Today, Black and Brown people are still dying in hospitals because of the idea that they have a higher pain tolerance.

These and other chilling events have left a scar for Black and Brown generations to come. Black and Brown people continue to die in hospitals at higher rates than white people, Black women are more likely to die during childbirth than white women, and Black children are

more likely to die after surgery. All of this has led to an understandable skepticism when it comes to receiving the vaccine.

In a recent New York Times article, [60 Black Health Experts](#) acknowledged this troubled history while still encouraging people to get the vaccine. They write:

For many Black Americans, trust in the government [and health institutions] does not come easily. Far too often, our health has been ignored and even abused in the name of science...

We understand the science. We understand our community. Many of us have already received the shots. The rest of us will get them when our turn comes.

We encourage you to claim your place in line to get vaccinated. Do this for yourself. Do this for our community. We are asking you to trust our advice because we are a part of you. And together we can save lives.

We hope the information provided below will reduce your fears and help you make an informed decision about getting a vaccine.

How do the vaccines work?

The three vaccines currently authorized by the FDA were created by Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. The **Johnson & Johnson vaccine** only requires one dose. The **Pfizer and Moderna vaccines** require **two doses** of the vaccine, several weeks apart. For the Moderna vaccine, the interval is 4 weeks between the first and second dose. For the Pfizer vaccine, the interval is 3 weeks between the first and second dose.

Vaccines work by helping your body develop immunity to a virus. This means that your body will have the ability to resist infection. A vaccine introduces a less harmful part

of that virus (or something that behaves or looks like it) into the person's body. The body's immune system then develops antibodies to fight that virus and keep the person from getting sick from it. Then, in the future, if the person encounters that virus again, their immune system recognizes it and remembers how to fight it. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are mRNA vaccines that introduce a molecule that codes for a protein that your body then develops antibodies against. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine uses double stranded DNA.

Are the vaccines safe and effective?

All three vaccines have been tested on thousands of people and have been shown to be safe and effective at preventing symptomatic COVID infection. The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for people 16 years and older, and the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are authorized for people over 18 years of age. All the vaccines have been shown to be effective across age groups and racial and ethnic groups. The vaccines have been tested by many scientists, including Black and Brown scientists, in many different countries. You may have heard that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine's efficacy rate (how effective it is) is lower than the efficacy rate of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, but that doesn't mean the Johnson & Johnson vaccine

What side effects should I expect?

Although many people experience side effects after getting the vaccine, they are relatively mild and include pain and swelling in the arm, fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. These symptoms typically last only a day or two. If you have these side effects, this is a sign that the vaccine is doing what it's supposed to do; your body is responding normally.

It is **very rare** to have a serious allergic reaction to these vaccines, but is more likely if you have had severe allergic reactions to vaccines or injectable medications in the past. If you have had severe allergic reactions in the past, **talk to a health care provider** before getting the vaccine. For the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, you should be monitored for 15-30 minutes after you get the vaccine to make sure you don't have a severe allergic reaction.

Don't hesitate to talk to your doctor or another health care provider if you have concerns about getting the vaccine or if you are worried about side effects you are experiencing. Refer to CDC.gov for accurate and essential information about the virus and vaccines. https://www.bop.gov/resources/pdfs/2021_covid19_vaccine.pdf

Should I get the vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?

Yes. While getting COVID-19 gives some natural immunity (protection) against the virus, it's not clear how long this protection lasts. Because you could get reinfected, experts strongly recommend that you get a vaccine. If you've had COVID-19, wait until 90 days after your diagnosis to get the vaccine.

When will I get a vaccine?

Currently, vaccines are being distributed in different phases with priority going to healthcare workers, essential workers, people who are older, and other people at higher risk for contracting the virus. Black public health professionals are leading the efforts to ensure that vaccine distribution is safe and fair.

In Illinois, people in prison are currently eligible to get vaccines in phase 1b. This means that many of you who are reading this guide may have already received the vaccine or be able to get one very soon! However, distribution of the vaccine will depend on many factors, including how many doses are available.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE VACCINES



- The vaccines **DO NOT** use the live virus that causes COVID-19
- The vaccines **CANNOT** give you COVID-19
- The vaccines **WILL NOT** change or alter your DNA (genetic material)

isn't good. All clinical trials of the three vaccines led to 100 percent reduced death rate of COVID-19 compared to placebo groups (the groups that received no vaccine) and also reduced life threatening symptoms. All three vaccines can help our communities get COVID-19 under control. Experts recommend that you get the first vaccine that you have access to.

If you are already on the outside, your place in line to receive the vaccine depends on factors such as your age, employment, health risks, and more. You can contact your local public health office or primary health care provider to find out if you are eligible. As the vaccine supply increases, vaccines will be more generously distributed.

How can I get a vaccine?

Right now, vaccinations in most places are by appointment only. Contact your local health department or your primary care doctor to find out how to make an appointment. You can also visit this website to find a vaccine distribution site near you: <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/vaccination-location>. In some locations, Walgreens, Jewel-Osco, and Walmart are also scheduling COVID-19 vaccine appointments for eligible residents.

Vaccines are available at no cost, though vaccine providers are able to charge a fee for administering the shot. This fee can be reimbursed by the patient's insurance company. For those without insurance, the fee will be paid by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

What happens after I get the vaccine?

First of all, if you got the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, make sure you have made an appointment to get your **second dose** (if you are able to make an appointment). These vaccines are much less effective if you only receive one dose. Also, don't mix vaccines. If you got the Moderna vaccine for your first dose, get the Moderna vaccine for your second dose, too.

After you receive the vaccine, you should **continue to wear a mask and social distance**. Although the vaccine protects you from suffering from COVID-19, you can still spread it and get others sick.

Staying Safe While in Prison

As you prepare to be released, it's very important to act in a safe manner that reduces the risk that you may contract or spread COVID-19. There have been severe COVID-19 outbreaks in jails and prisons nationwide. Many IDOC facilities have seen serious outbreaks in the last year. For instance, in Danville Correctional Center, nearly 50% of inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 by January 2021, and 3 have died.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following precautions to avoid getting and spreading the virus:

Keep your distance from others. Six feet is the recommended distance. We know this may be practically impossible when you are incarcerated. People live in close proximity, sharing showers, toilets, dining spaces, even sleeping spaces. Do the best you can. No visits are allowed at correctional facilities at this time. It is also likely that your facility has been in lockdown during some or all of the pandemic.

Wash your hands frequently. Use soap and water, and wash for at least 20 seconds. Unfortunately, some prisons in Illinois have been short on soap and cleaning supplies. While organizations are working to make sure that prisons in Illinois have enough cleaning supplies, soap and hand sanitizer, we realize that conditions may be far from ideal.

Clean surfaces. Some facilities are providing cleaning supplies to people so that they can disinfect their cells daily. Do your part to clean other high touch areas as well (such as door handles and tables), if you can.

Wear a mask. If you have been given a mask and are allowed to wear it, wear it properly over your nose and mouth, and avoid adjusting it frequently. When you do adjust it, wash your hands before and after.

Do not touch your face. Anything you touch may have been infected. Wash your hands before touching your face.

Maintain your health. Even if you are leaving soon, don't switch up your routine too much. If you work out regularly and can continue, do it! If you are not in a regular workout routine, consider doing simple stretches and other low-impact exercises. The CDC recommends 75 to 150 minutes per week of aerobic activity to

maintain or develop an optimal immune system. We understand that healthy food is not accessible for many, but we recommend practicing mindfulness and eating a healthy diet as much as possible to keep your immune system strong.

Preparing for Release

If you are able to finalize your housing situation in advance, call the people you will be living with and make a plan. If you have not been able to secure housing, see our Housing Directory on page 142 or our Housing chapter on page 74 for some suggestions about where to look.

When you are released, we strongly recommend that you self-quarantine for two weeks to reduce the possibility of passing the virus on to those you will be living with. We recognize how challenging this may be in some housing situations. Do the best you can.

If you are staying with family, let them know that you would like to quarantine. As difficult as it will be to separate yourself from them, it is the best way to protect them. Let your loved ones know that you will not hug or touch them when you are released and will not have physical contact with them until after your quarantine is complete. We realize that this will be difficult. Your loved ones will want to embrace you and spend time in your company after you are released. But it is very important that you and they observe the quarantine period.

Request that they set up a room with clothing, food, and other necessities for you so that you won't have to leave and they won't have to enter. Ask them to purchase disinfecting supplies to clean common areas such as the bathroom, as well as high-touch areas like counters and doorknobs.

Think about what items you can take with you:

- **A mask:** It is imperative that you wear a mask in public. IDOC may provide a mask to you before you leave. If you are being picked up, you can ask the person who is picking you up to wear a mask and have one for you as well.

- **Soap and an absorbent cloth:** If you can, it's a good idea to take a bar of soap and a clean, absorbent cloth with you so that you can wash and thoroughly dry your hands at every opportunity on your journey home, especially if you will be relying on public transportation. Note: Washing without soap may actually be more dangerous since you'll have to touch doorknobs and faucets to get to the sink. Soap is what breaks down and removes the virus.
- **Important documents:** If at all possible, take steps to obtain your birth certificate and social security card before you leave. Because of the pandemic, it is much harder to get them on the outside. These documents are very important for setting up your life after prison. For more information about gathering documents, see page 26.
- **Medications:** Prisons offer people a limited medication supply upon release, ranging from a 30- to 90-day supply. Generally, you will pick up your medications the day before you are released as part of your processing out. If you can, request these medications ahead of time, just to be safe.
- **Medical records:** If you are able to do so, collect your medical records before you are released. Ask the healthcare unit at your facility (if possible) what the procedure is for the release of your health records.

On the day of your release, remember: Social distance, social distance, social distance! While the urge to say goodbye to your friends in your facility through hugs or handshakes will be strong, you must avoid this to ensure everyone's safety. Separate yourself from others with as much distance between you and them as possible. Don't forget your soap.

If you'll be traveling on public transportation, sit as far away from others as possible. When boarding the bus or train, do not crowd together, but maintain as much distance as possible.

If you'll be traveling in a car, sit in the back seat, as far away from the driver as possible. Remind them to use a mask. It may be very difficult, but remember not to hug or shake this person's hand.

Most people are not aware of the importance of completing the process of getting identification before they leave. I can't stress that enough. It's much harder on the outside.

—Joe Joe

First Two Weeks: Quarantine

Because many prisons and jails are seeing outbreaks of COVID-19 cases, it is important to assume that you have been exposed to the virus. For this reason, we recommend that you quarantine for 14 days after leaving prison or jail, long enough to see if you will become sick. If you contracted the virus in prison in the last 3 months and have recovered, you do not need to quarantine. Being quarantined means that you will need to stay away from family, friends and others. Find ways to express your love from a safe distance.

It's OK to spend time outdoors as long as you stay far away from other people and wear a mask. We recommend avoiding indoor spaces, where the virus spreads more easily. We realize that it is discouraging to know that you must continue to restrict your movements at home, as they were restricted in prison, but keep in mind this will keep you and others safe for the time being. It may be scary to think about the isolation you will feel during quarantine, but understand that a large portion of the world's population is living like this right now. You are not alone.

During your two-week quarantine, you should, if at all possible:

- Sleep in a separate room, away from others in the home. If this isn't possible, sleep as far as possible from others, wear your mask at all times, and maintain your distance.
- Clean and disinfect the bathroom every time you use it.

- Do not pass any items from your room to others in the house. Don't let them borrow or use anything of yours. Only the essentials, such as dishes and garbage, should leave your room.
- Don't accept unnecessary things into your room. This is why it's so important to ask those you will be living with to set up your room before you get there. They can stock it with clothing, snacks, games, books or magazines—whatever they have access to that will make it a more comfortable place for you.

Keep safe. There's always hope. We are living in strange times and we'll get through this.

—Dennis M.

We realize that conditions at many halfway houses or host sites are far from ideal. Do the best you can to follow quarantine guidelines and don't be afraid to ask for help. You may also be concerned about meeting your basic needs while you are in quarantine and afterwards as you navigate the reentry process. Don't hesitate to reach out to others for support.

Self-care during quarantine

Stay connected with those you love through the internet, if you have access. There are great apps such as Houseparty that allow you to play games online with others. If you don't have internet access, a good old fashioned phone call can help you stay connected.

A man is only as successful as the people that he surrounds himself with. I need my support team, my wise council, my family! We all do.

—Austin C.

Do things you enjoy. Many people find that getting dressed and showered every day helps them feel better, even if they can't go anywhere. Do things you like to do such as reading, watching movies or playing online games. If watching the news makes you feel overwhelmed, take a break and do something else.

Stay active. While you are in quarantine, you should not leave the house for exercise or other purposes. But that doesn't mean you can't stay active in your room. If you have the internet, put on a workout video (many are available on YouTube). Any exercise routine that you followed in your prison cell will work as well for you during quarantine. Or just turn up the music and dance!

Practice mindfulness. It is natural to feel stressed, but practicing mindfulness can keep it from getting out of hand. Below are some simple ways you can practice mindfulness. These exercises can be done for short, regular periods.

- **Breathing.** Tune into your breathing throughout your day, experiencing the slow rise and fall of your stomach. Focus on your thoughts and feelings while you do this. Don't pass judgment on your thoughts and feelings, just reflect on them.
- **Sitting.** Attempt to be very still, without waiting or seeking out anything. Just embrace whatever comes to your mind while you do this. Simply observe your thoughts as they come to you, while sitting quietly and peacefully.
- **Listening.** Listen to what is around you, marking the time between sounds in your head. Don't worry about the sounds that are being made. Note gaps of quiet among these sounds. Think about how these sounds feel to you. Let them come to you and depart from you, only to be replaced by a new sound.

For more guidance on practicing mindfulness, see page 121.

Pandemic safety basics. Follow these guidelines to stay safe and protect others whenever you go out:

- Do your best to stay at least six feet away from other people
- Wear a mask
- Wash your hands more often than you typically would, for at least 20 seconds each time.
- Spend time with people outdoors instead of indoors, if possible
- If you experience symptoms, quarantine immediately and seek testing or a medical evaluation by phone.



The following two organizations have been designated by the governor's office and IDOC as points of contact for people who will be released/furloughed during the coronavirus. You can contact them when you get to your host site:



- For those in Cook County, call Safer Foundation for assessment of immediate needs and available resources at (773) 265-0423.
- For those outside of Cook County, call Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC). TASC is a reentry organization that provides a variety of services and resources for people leaving prison during this crisis. Call (855) 827-2444 or visit tasc.org
- You can also call 211 for health and human services, 311 for city-specific services in Chicago, or text the Department of Human Services "Call 4 Calm" hotline. Text keywords, such as "unemployment," "food" or "shelter" to 552020 to be connected with resources. Text "talk" to be connected with a mental health professional.

If You Get Sick

If you or someone you are living with gets sick and you think you might have COVID-19, practice isolation, separating those who are sick from those who are not as much as possible. Most people will recover within 10 days. Others will feel sick or fatigued for a much longer period. You should isolate at least 10 days or as long as you continue to experience symptoms. Isolation will look very similar to quarantine—sleeping in a separate room, disinfecting all surfaces and maintaining distance from others.

How will you know if you have the virus?

COVID-19 can look like a lot of different illnesses. The most common symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath, as well as fatigue and muscle aches. Some with the disease start off with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Some show no symptoms while others become very sick and require a long time in the hospital on a ventilator.

If you have mild symptoms, you can treat the virus at home, as you would a flu bug: rest, drink plenty of water, take acetaminophen/Tylenol for the fever and drink a warm beverage with honey for a cough. Do not go to the clinic, urgent care or emergency room unless you have emergency warning signs. (See next page.)

If you think you might have COVID, or if you want to be tested just in case, you can get a free COVID-19 test at many community-based testing sites throughout Illinois. These sites are open to all, regardless of your symptoms. Visit <http://dph.illinois.gov/testing> for the locations and hours of COVID testing sites. You can also call 211 (311 in Chicago) for information about testing sites. These are typically walk-up sites, and you will receive your results within a few days.

In some places, COVID-19 tests may be in short supply. If this is the case, talk to a healthcare provider or call the health department and follow their recommendations about whether you should get tested and where.

EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS

Emergency warning signs that indicate that you need immediate medical help include trouble breathing, pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, and being too sleepy for someone to wake you. If you are experiencing these symptoms, go to a hospital emergency room right away or call 911. Many people with severe cases have to be hospitalized in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and need support from a ventilator.



Illinois has launched free telemedicine care for residents with COVID-19 symptoms not in need of emergency or in-person medical treatment. If you are deemed “high risk,” you will be connected to a healthcare worker for virtual visits and may be able to receive a wellness kit (thermometer, blood pressure cuff and alcohol wipes) sent to the address where you are staying. You can access this service in the following way:

- Central and Southern Illinois (Carbondale, East St. Louis, Quincy and Springfield): (833) 673- 5669
- Northern Central Illinois (Alton, Peoria, Champaign-Urbana, Monmouth, Ottawa, Bloomington, and Pontiac): (218) 545-5100
- Northern Illinois (including Chicago metropolitan area): (866) 443-2584

Life During the Pandemic

If you are leaving prison during the pandemic, you may wonder how the pandemic will affect your everyday life.

Restrictions and Challenges

Illinois has a number of restrictions in place that may make things more challenging for a while. While these restrictions may be annoying and difficult, they are meant to keep you safe. Restrictions are changing all the time and depend on the infection rate of the region where you live. You can find the latest updates on Illinois restrictions here: <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/>

Here are a few of the restrictions you may encounter:

- Bars and restaurants may have limited services, or only allow take-out and delivery.
- In-person gatherings may be prohibited, or limited to a certain number.
- Some doctor or counseling visits may only be available by phone or online.
- Stores may be closed or may limit how many people they can serve.
- Libraries, recreation, and cultural centers may be closed or have limited services.
- The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or other social service agencies may be closed or serve people by appointment only.

Always call before visiting service providers to find out if their services are available and what guidelines you will need to follow when visiting.

Please also note that many of these services are overwhelmed because of the pandemic. You may have longer than normal wait times to get the help you need.

Other changes you can expect to see include:

- Many in-person events and activities have moved online, from support groups to gatherings of friends, community events and more. If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone or if you do not know how to use them, see our communications chapter on page 91.
- It’s even more challenging to find a job as unemployment has risen and some businesses have closed.
- Transportation services have been reduced in many locations as more people work from home.
- Many schools and childcare facilities are not meeting in person, creating challenges for working parents, students, and teachers.

While these challenges may make it even more difficult for you to meet your basic needs, there are resources to help. Check out our Resources for Meeting your Basic Needs chapter on page 49 for advice on accessing food, housing, cell phones, and more.

Don’t just go on what’s on the website. Some places may say that they are open, but they’re not. You have to call and schedule an appointment.

—Joe Joe

Be flexible. Don't allow yourself to become fixated on plans you made in the past. Embrace the change. Take advantage of the fact that like you, people in society are just learning a new way of life.

—Roberto L.



Getting Your Stimulus Check

Because the pandemic has had such a dramatic effect on the economy, the federal government is giving out stimulus payments to most individuals. As of 02/2021, it is possible for incarcerated people and recent returnees to receive their stimulus checks, also known as “Economic Impact Payments.” There have been three payments so far: One for \$1,200, one for \$600, and one for \$1,400.

The guidelines for filing and receiving payments have changed throughout the past year, so it is a good idea to refer to the Updates page at <https://caresactprisoncase.org/updates/> which tracks those changes. At the moment, you must file taxes for 2020 and claim a recovery rebate credit in order to receive the stimulus checks that you have not received, even if you do not usually file taxes. You must file a 1040 tax form, which must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2021. You may also explore eFiling. You may be able to file for an extension, but that is not clear at this time.

If you have not received a stimulus check, you are eligible for all three of them, assuming you fit the other requirements. If you have received one stimulus payment, you are eligible for the other two. If you have already received all three, you are not eligible. The most important requirements are that you must also be a US Citizen or a Legal Permanent Resident with a valid Social Security Number and you must not be anyone's dependent.

If you've never had a Social Security Number, you will need to contact the Social Security Administration to request one. If you have one but do not know it, you may be able to contact a school that you attended. It may also be found on your court documents.

You may find the 1040 here:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040.pdf>

You may request a physical copy here:

<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/forms-and-publications-by-us-mail>

You may contact the IRS at: 800-919-9835

Detailed instructions for filing may be found here:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040gi.pdf>

If you live in Illinois or other nearby states, use this address:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Kansas City, MO 64999-0002

SECTION ONE:

Before You Leave

1

Prepare Yourself Mentally

It's never too early to prepare for leaving prison. Even if you have a very long sentence, keep your eye on life after release. If your out date is many years away, you can prepare by getting an education (Adult Basic Education, GED, and college), working in prison so that you build your skills and your resume, taking advantage of programs like anger management and parenting classes, and developing hobbies. You can occupy your time with different activities such as meditating, playing an instrument, drawing, joining a choir and reading. Consider attending religious services. If you had an addiction problem, think about attending substance abuse programs that are available. These things present opportunities to meet other people and expand your network of support. They will help you move beyond thinking of yourself as just a prisoner who has nothing to contribute to the world. In fact, we think you have a lot to offer!

Even while in prison, you can still make a difference. Education Justice Project students developed an English as a second language program to teach English to others behind bars. They run anti-violence discussion groups in the prison. Many incarcerated people donate to local charities like food pantries and Habitat for Humanity. What can you do?

If your time is short, you should be taking additional steps to prepare for the outside world. This includes preparing yourself mentally. Reentry is difficult, now during COVID-19 more than ever, so set realistic expectations. It may be challenging to find a job or reunite with loved ones. Give yourself permission to accept that things may not be ideal or easy.

We suggest that you forgive yourself if you make mistakes. It is likely that you will have some awkward social encounters, especially if you have been in prison for a long time. Get yourself in the frame of mind so

Make sure you have a good relationship with the people you're going to stay with when you leave prison.

—Shaun W.

that you can laugh them off. People in the outside world have awkward social encounters all the time! You may think that it will be obvious to everyone that you've just gotten out of prison, but that is usually not the case.

Think now about how you can find "breathing room" once you're out in the world. Life on the outside can feel very rushed. EJP alumni report that visiting Lake Michigan and looking out over the water, taking long walks, biking, and gardening have helped them to find space to breathe in the busy world outside. How can you build such activities into your life?

It will be useful to practice patience. Everything may not go as you would wish. There will be disappointments. Sometimes you will be confused by how much things have changed since you went away. Go slow. Breathe. It is natural to feel stressed sometimes, but you can keep it from getting out of hand. You might join a group that is learning to practice Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), offered through some hospitals, social services, and a few churches.

Our chapter on Mindfulness on page 121 provides detailed guidance on getting started and even has a few guided meditations.

PREPARE FOR CHALLENGES



Before leaving prison, work on practicing patience, both with others and with yourself.

1. What skills do you use to manage stress?

2. When things go wrong, or when you're disappointed, what can you do to keep yourself on track and focused?

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS



1. What have you done in the past to successfully adjust to major life changes?

2. What skills, habits, or traits helped you stay motivated, build positive relationships, and maintain self-respect?

BUILD YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

People often isolate themselves during tough times, but it can help to keep in touch with positive friends and family members. You may want to think about a social support system before you leave. Who are the people you’re counting on to be there for you?

Contact family members and friends, and be honest about what you need from them, whether it’s housing, financial support, advice, and/or emotional support. Find out exactly what they expect from you.

Use this “Getting Ready to Get Out” checklist to help you plan the logistics around your transition. Ideally, you’ll want to start doing this around 18 months before your release. You can use this checklist to identify what areas would be useful for you to start addressing now, to ensure a smooth release.

Issues you may face upon release	Got this covered	Need to address	Page(s) in this guide where you can find help in this area
Substance Use			pg. 86
Making Ends Meet			pg. 49
Family Issues			pg. 40, 112
Housing			pg. 74
Medical			pg. 78
Transportation			pg. 88
Child Care			pg. 49
Telephone			pg. 91
Pending Legal Issues			pg. 97
Child Support Status			pg. 100

Best thing that can reduce anxiety is to have a plan. You don’t have to be rigid with that plan, because you’re going to get out and realize that the world isn’t what you expected it to be.



—Joe Joe

Gather Your Documents

As your release date approaches, your top priority is to obtain copies of your birth certificate and social security card. Both are crucial to setting up your life after prison. For one thing, you will need the birth certificate and social security card to get your ID upon release.

If you have a pending clemency or are planning to file a clemency petition, you should also work to gather these documents so that you can be ready if and when your petition is granted. During the pandemic, people have been released with little warning or time to prepare. This has made it very difficult for them to get an ID.

In Illinois, legislation has recently been passed that will make it easier to gather these documents and secure an ID before you leave, though the bill has not yet been signed into law. In the meantime, we advise you to be proactive in gathering your documents.

This section will help you get a head start on securing both documents. It will be much more difficult to secure these documents on the outside, especially during the pandemic. We recommend you begin this process at least one year before you are released. Remember, you have the legal right to these documents. Nobody can refuse to issue them to you just because you are incarcerated.

In many IDOC facilities, the field services department (part of clinical services) is responsible for helping people gather documents before release. They may help you put together a release package that will contain the essential documents you need. Keep in mind that they don't usually come to you and volunteer to help; you will need to be proactive and ask for help.

Work with clinical services as much as possible. As early as possible. Find out what programs, classes, or resources are available to prepare for release. Sometimes that stuff is hidden. Make inquiries into what necessary steps you must take to secure documents that would assist you with housing, identification, mental health services, as well as food and clothes shelters in your area.

—Kilroy

Birth Certificate

You will need a certified copy of your birth certificate. A certified copy is one that is imprinted with a state seal and includes a notarization (signature and date) by the county registrar. Because of recent changes at IDOC, you can now request a birth certificate at any time during your incarceration. You do not have to wait until a year before you are released.

There are two ways to secure your birth certificate while you are in prison.

1. By mail. See page 210 for Cook County and Illinois Birth Certificate Request forms (for anyone born in Illinois). You can tear these forms out and complete them. If you do not have access to these forms, ask clinical services, your prison library or counselor for a form. You will mail the completed form to the address on the form. The form asks you to include a check or money order of \$15 for a birth certificate. You will also need to include two forms of documentation that show your name and current address that have been created within the last 6 months. Examples include legal HIV test results, transcripts from prison education programs, or other forms that include your name and current address.
2. By phone. If you have a prepaid phone account, you can call the county clerk's office in the district where you were born to request a copy of your birth certificate in the mail. It may be possible for your parents or legal guardian to get your birth certificate for you. Ask them to call the relevant county clerk's office directly. If you were born in Illinois, locate the nearest county clerk's office in the directory on page 205. If you were born in a large city like Chicago, there may be more than one county clerk's office. Contact the one closest to where you will live upon release.

If you are able to get your birth certificate before your release, we encourage you to put it in your master file to keep it safe. Keeping it with you may not be the best option because of privacy concerns.

If you are not able to get your birth certificate before you get out, you can request it at the county clerk's office after you are released. Call them before you visit as many may be closed or operate by appointment only during the pandemic. Speak directly with them to get instructions.

OUTSIDE ILLINOIS

If you were born in another state, contact a friend or family member so you can learn the process for getting a birth certificate from that state.

OTHER DOCUMENTS TO COLLECT

To get your social security card, birth certificate, and ID, you will need to have documents that verify your identity and include your name, your current address, and your date of birth. If possible, collect the original documents, not scanned or photocopied documents. Hold on to all documentation that may be helpful, such as high school or college transcripts for classes you took in prison, GED certificate, HIV/AIDS test results, medical records, and correspondence from banks, state or federal agencies (e.g., DMV, DCFS, ISP- IRS). Keep them in your master file or another safe place.



Take responsibility and look for as much information as you can. Go talk to the law clerks, everybody that you can to get information.

—Anonymous

Name of service	Location	Fee	How long it takes to get your records
Currency Exchange	Call (847) 759-8905 or visit mycurrencyexchange.com for locations	\$20	Up to 7 business days
VitalChek	Call (866) 252-8974 or visit vitalchek.com	\$2-\$50	10-14 days (+\$12.45) 5-7 days (+\$16.50) 3-5 days (+\$19)

The above services will obtain records for you, for a fee.

Social Security Card

All US citizens and permanent residents have a Social Security number (SSN), used by the government to track federal and state taxes and Social Security benefits. You will need your Social Security card when you accept employment, open a bank account, or set up utilities. If you do not already have a Social Security card, you will need to apply for one. If you have lost your card, you can apply for a replacement. **There is no fee for requesting your social security card.**

To get your Social Security card while you are in prison:

1. Use the form on page 214 of this guide to request a card by mail. You can also request a form from your prison library or counselor.
2. Since each Social Security Office has a different procedure for requesting your card, have a friend contact the Social Security Administration at (800) 722-1213 or online at www.ssa.gov/agency/ to find out what needs to be done.

As with your birth certificate, if you are able to get your Social Security card while still incarcerated, avoid carrying it with you. Memorize the number and keep the card in a safe place—such as in your master file—until you are released. Your SSN is sensitive information. Be aware that sharing it with another person could put you at risk for being charged with fraud.

Next, work to retrieve your other documents. Ask a family member or counselor to help you get your birth certificate. If you have completed any certificate programs or college classes in prison, try to get these certificates and transcripts aligned with your true identity so that you can get credit for what you have done. If you can get your GED certificate or other transcripts and certificates aligned with your true identity, you can use those documents to get your social security card and ID.

I needed a second form of identification to get my social security card. If you are in this sort of dilemma you can retrieve a copy of your medical record as a second ID. If you do not have your medical record you can go to a free clinic, take an H.I.V. test and request a copy of the record; you can use this document along with your birth certificate to get your social security card.

—Antonio

Securing Your ID

In some cases, you can begin taking steps to secure a state ID or driver's license before you leave. The Secretary of State has been sending Mobile Units to some IDOC facilities to help people get their IDs before they are released. Ask Clinical Services if this is an option at your facility. Policy makers are working on developing procedures that will help people receive their IDs before leaving prison. More information about getting your State ID or driver's license after release can be found in chapter 2 on page 45.

If you have your social security card and birth certificate, but haven't been able to get your State ID or Driver's License upon release, you can get a state ID card for free if you visit a Secretary of State office within 30 days of your release (normally it costs \$20). To qualify for the fee waiver, you will need an Identification Card Verification Form issued by IDOC, as well as the proper documentation (social security card and birth certificate). Ask Field Services for this form before you leave.

If you do not already have your birth certificate and social security card, but IDOC has verified your date of birth and social security number, we recommend that you request a 90-day temporary ID card from Field Services before you leave. This will give you some extra time to secure your birth certificate and social security card on the outside. You will need to go to a Secretary of State facility during that 90-day period and present proper documentation of social security number and date of birth to be issued a State ID at no cost. The temporary ID card is not an accepted form of identification by most institutions, but it can help you get your State ID.

These steps may be part of the mandatory release process, but it's a good idea to ask questions and make sure you have what you need from Field Services before you leave.

IF YOU ARE UNDER ALIAS:

If you are locked up under an alias, it is especially important that you begin the process of gathering your documents early. Being under an alias can make the process of getting your identification very difficult. The first thing you will need to do is write to the committing county where you are convicted or the state's attorney office. Ask them to amend the charging document to reflect your true name. The court is unlikely to change all of the court documents to fix this problem. You may need to talk to a lawyer to see if there are any legal remedies you can take before you are released.



PULLING TOGETHER YOUR DOCUMENTS



Use this worksheet to keep track of some of the documents and forms of ID you may need after you are released. Start gathering them now.

Item	Taken Care Of	Need to Tackle	Not Applicable	Page #
Social Security Card				pg. 28
Birth Certificate				pg. 27
Driver's License				pg. 45
Temporary Identification Card				pg. 29
State ID				pg. 29, pg. 45
Marriage License				pg. 48
Divorce Decree				pg. 48
Passport or Green Card				
Bank Account Information				pg. 103
Military Discharge				pg. 112



Prepare For Your Job Search

If you are getting ready to leave prison, employment is probably very much on your mind. Unfortunately, this is an area where you are likely to hit many roadblocks and challenges. Right now, there is a lot of unemployment because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While there are places that are hiring, there is a lot of competition for these jobs. It is important to be realistic and prepare yourself. Perhaps it doesn't seem fair that, even after you have served your time and "paid your debt to society," you will encounter employers who are unwilling to give you a fair chance. Sadly, many people in our society are prejudiced against people with records. The good news is that there are employers who are willing to give you a chance. And there are ways you can prepare yourself while still in prison to have a head start on finding a good job.

Build Experience

Take advantage of opportunities to earn certificates, gain job experience, and acquire skills while in prison. Work while you are incarcerated, if you're able. It provides a track record of what you're capable of, boosts your confidence, and can help you identify skills you didn't know you had.

Enroll in education programs, from Adult Basic Education to college programs. This can prepare you for work on the outside and also demonstrate your intelligence and dedication to prospective employers. Be on the lookout for programs and other opportunities to build your knowledge and skills. Getting involved in arts, parenting classes, and other programs will give you additional experiences that can help you to build confidence and perhaps improve your resume.

Write Your Resume

Another important thing you can do while you're still in prison is to write your resume. This is a summary on paper of your skills, strengths, and work experience. You will need a resume to search and apply for jobs. Even if you do not have access to a computer or typewriter, write your resume out while you are still incarcerated. You can type it out after your release.

Your resume should have several parts:

1. Your name, address, and contact information. (If you are not sure of your address yet, ask a friend or family member if you can use their mailing address.)
2. Education. Your resume should have a list of schools you've attended. Consider including your educational experiences in prison, especially if you have earned any degrees or certificates (high school level and beyond).
3. Work experience. List your jobs, including volunteer work. Include where, when and for how long you held each position.
4. Other professional skills. This includes certifications, technical skills, and languages you speak other than English.

5. Awards and distinctions (optional). If you've ever received a formal distinction for your work, such as employee of the month, or your education, such as scholarships or other awards, you should list them at the end of your resume.

Please note that it is not necessary to indicate on your resume that you gained education or work experience while incarcerated if you are worried that employers

might view this unfavorably. The sample resumes on page 215 can show you how other formerly incarcerated people have handled this situation.

Your resume should be a one- to two-page document. Review it many times, and try to have another person review it as well. Please see our forms section on page 215 for sample resumes.

If you sat at a table playing cards for ten years and now you want to come out and you want to go out and get yourself a job that's paying \$18-20 an hour – well, be realistic. You're not gonna do it. You're not going to have that job because you didn't do anything to prepare. What are you going to put on your resume, that you played cards for ten years?

—Anonymous

Network

Getting a job requires networking. Talk with family and friends to get information, develop contacts, and find job opportunities. Ask for their help. Let them know you are serious about finding work. Most people on the outside network heavily to find work. Make a few copies of your resume and mail them to friends and family members. Ask them to share your resume with prospective employers. For information about how to find and apply for jobs once you are released, see the Employment section in the "After You're Out" section on page 52.

Be hopeful. Many people have found jobs after incarceration and, with the right preparation and attitude, you can, too.

Be ready to pivot. Be patient with yourself. You're eager to get out, eager to do all of those things. Be realistic with yourself, what you can really do, what is within your control. You're going to be facing a lot of things.

—Roberto

Prepare For Parole

IDOC Parole Office: 1-800-666-6744

When you are released from prison, you will probably be on Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR), commonly known as parole. This means that you will remain under the supervision of the Illinois Department of Corrections until your parole period is over.

If you plan to submit a request for transfer from Illinois to MSR in another state, please speak with your counselor. You must submit that request within 120 days of your release date. After release, you can apply to transfer your MSR to another state at any time, as long as you have a family member who has established residency in that state by living there for at least six months. You will work with your parole officer to apply for that transfer.

While on MSR, it is necessary to comply with MSR restrictions. We realize that it can be frustrating to know that even though you are getting out of prison, you will not be completely free because you will have restrictions and obligations related to MSR. Hang in there. MSR is difficult, but many people successfully manage it. You can, too.

Preparing for Mandatory Supervised Release

The schedule for submitting an MSR plan varies by institution. Generally, the process begins around six months before your release date. You will be visited by the Prisoner Review Board, which will make recommendations regarding the conditions of your parole. For example, you may be required to attend anger management classes, or you may be placed on electronic monitoring for a period of time. A copy of the Prisoner Review Board Order can be seen on page 236.

In your MSR plans, you will submit the address of the residence where you intend to live—your “host site”—which will need to be approved. If electronic monitoring is a feature of your MSR, a parole officer will visit the home and determine whether it is suitable. If electronic monitoring is not involved, they may simply call your family member or halfway house and confirm that they have given permission for you to stay with them. They will also have to complete a Host Site Agreement which may come in the mail, or the parole officer may bring it when the home is inspected for approval.

I don't have any parole officer horror stories or anything. The hardest thing for me is remembering to call in every week.

—**Shaun W.**

Many of the conditions of MSR—the rules you will have to follow—will affect the people you live with. It is important to communicate early and clearly with anyone you plan to live with so that they understand how your parole conditions will impact them. We encourage host site residents to contact the Illinois Department of Corrections well before your parole date with any questions they might have. A copy of the Host Site Agreement can be seen on page 241. If someone is

going to pick you up from prison, it is a good idea for them to call the facility first to confirm the date and time, as this varies by prison.

When You Are Released

When you arrive at your host site, **you should call your parole officer within the first 24 hours.** The parole officer's name and telephone should be provided for you before you are released. It is up to you to make contact with your parole officer. If you cannot reach your parole officer or do not know who that person is, try contacting a nearby parole office and asking for help.

When you call your parole officer, they will likely set up a visit with you in the next few days. It is important that you not leave your residence until your parole officer visits. This will usually happen within 72 hours.

Just like being in prison – when you live with somebody on the outside you have to learn how to put up with them. On the outside, you have a little more space and a little more freedom, but you're going somewhere new and they might have rules and guidelines for you to follow just like you had inside. You have to be mindful of those things.

—Shaun W.

My biggest challenge has been the overwhelming scrutiny of my parole agents. But, putting it in perspective, you start thinking, "well no. I can take it. Look where I'm at. I'm out, I'm home. I can go to the fridge and open the fridge up. I can go out and run around and do exercise." You have freedoms now. But some freedoms come with a price, and that's one of the prices. You have to put everything in perspective.

—Anonymous

Electronic Monitoring

Many people, though not all, are given Electronic Monitoring (EM) for some period of time as a condition of their parole. If you have EM as a condition of your parole, there will be some additional restrictions while you are on it. On the day that you are released, you will be required to sign what is called an Illinois Department of Corrections Offender 360 Reporting Instruction document. By signing this form you

agree to go straight home and check in at the Parole Control Center by calling 800-666-6744. You will be required not to leave home once you arrive and to wait for further instructions. A technician will come to your home sometime within 72 hours to set up the electronic monitor. This monitor consists of two parts, an anklet and a box that plugs in the wall. You will bear the responsibility for making sure the monitor isn't

unplugged. Once the monitor is in place it will be up to you to work with your Parole Officer to determine what time you will be permitted to be away from your home. Since having a landline at the home you parole to is a requirement, it is equally important that you answer the phone when the parole agency calls to prevent you from violating any restrictions.

Just like the restrictions of parole, the restrictions of EM can be stressful for the entire household. Until you find a job, you will be inside the home most of the time, which can cause tension. If you will need rides during your movement times, you will need to work that out as well. We recommend communicating clearly with the people you will live with and depend on while you are on electronic monitoring about what you will need from them, what they will need from you, and how you will address problems as they arise.

Do the right thing. Follow the rules that you're told to follow. And be real diligent about it. Don't let yourself fall into any trap.

—Anonymous



BI SmartLINK

Some parole officers are asking the people they are supervising to download the BI SmartLINK® app on their smartphone. The use of this app may vary depending on COVID-19 restrictions. This app is changing how parole is managed for some people. BI SmartLINK® is a mobile monitoring tool that enables parole officers and case managers to conduct reporting and communication through video conferencing and messaging via smartphone or tablet. Ask your parole officer if they are using the SmartLINK app.

For many people on parole, communication with a parole officer is mostly through in-person visits. The SmartLINK app allows parole officers to reduce in-person visits, which can help keep people safe during the pandemic. Fewer in-person visits may be a welcome change for you and the people you live with. However, the app also adds a new level of surveillance to MSR. For instance, if you have travel or curfew restrictions, parole officers can use the app to see where you have traveled and make sure you are back at your host site by your assigned curfew.

This SmartLINK monitoring app has seven different features:

- Check-In
 - This feature verifies a released individual's identity and location using facial and voice recognition technology through fixed or randomly scheduled check-ins. The supervising officer or case manager can confirm location, curfew and travel restriction compliance.
- Resources
 - This feature provides agency-approved service providers such as housing, medical and employment.
- Messages
 - This feature allows the released individual to send secure messages to the supervising officer or case manager.
- Supervision Terms
 - This feature allows the released individual to review the conditions of supervised release.
- Calendar
 - Your supervising officer or case manager will use this feature to create calendar events, reminders and to verify attendance such as court appearances.

- Self-Report
 - This feature allows the released individual to report life changes through a series of questions for the supervising officer or case manager to review and follow up. Example: Has your employment changed?
- Documents
 - This feature allows the released individual to submit photo documents for the supervising officer or case manager to review. Documents

can include court documents, payroll stubs, proof of ID and more.

If you are not familiar with smartphones or messaging apps, don't hesitate to ask questions of your parole officer to make sure you understand how the app works. Our Communications chapter on page 91 provides more information about how to use these new technologies.

MSR Rules

In the state of Illinois, every felony prison sentence has a term of Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR), formerly known as parole. Parole officers have the final say for MSR rules. These rules can vary between parole offices and officers.

These rules are generally communicated through a legal document that you and your parole officer are both required to sign to confirm that you understand the rules. Make sure you spend enough time talking with your parole officer so that you have a solid understanding of the rules and instructions of your MSR. Ask questions! Some of the most common rules include:

- Do not commit any criminal acts
- Report to your parole officer on a regular basis
- Do not possess firearms
- Allow the parole officer to inspect and search you and your residence
- Refrain from using drugs
- Do not leave the state of Illinois

It is a good idea to keep a journal of your life during parole. Write down all meetings, calls, appointments, and visits with parole officers. Make sure to record drug tests and when you call to set up appointments to be drug tested. Testing is sometimes done by a private company that is separate from IDOC. It is helpful to have a record of the requirements you have completed, especially if they are mandatory. If you have a written record, you have evidence that you have done what you were supposed to.



If you are living with someone else while you are on parole, make sure to communicate with them. Parole officers may visit your home and disrupt their lives. MSR restrictions can affect them, even though they may not have a criminal record. It is important that whoever you are living with understands your parole restrictions and how they can impact their life.

Violations

If you are charged with violating the terms of your MSR, you may be sent back to prison. Sadly, many people who return to prison within the first two years are there because of parole violations, not because they have committed new crimes. We urge you to be diligent about complying with the conditions of your parole so that you

can stay on the outside. Many people make it through parole, and you can, too.

If some unfortunate event occurs that puts you at risk of violating your parole, you should immediately contact your parole officer to explain the situation. If you haven't

had any infractions and have adhered to all the rules of restrictions, your Parole Office can request that you not be charged with violating the terms of your MSR, so long as you haven't committed a forcible offense. Your success is contingent upon your progress.

If you are charged with violating the terms of MSR, the law states that:

- The Prisoner Review Board (PRB) will appoint an attorney, at no cost, to alleged violators who cannot afford representation, but request an attorney in cases where a timely and colorable claim exists that the violation did not occur; a violation is admitted to have occurred, but complex and substantial reasons exist to argue against revocation; or the alleged violator appears incapable of speaking effectively

for him or herself.

- The attorney will represent the alleged violator for the duration of the revocation process and will have an opportunity to present evidence, call witnesses and cross-examine witnesses.
- Alleged parole/MSR violators will be informed of their right to remain silent without obligation to answer questions about the alleged violation, if the violation relates to potential criminal charges.

If you have questions about parole violations or want to know how this may apply to you please seek assistance from a qualified lawyer (see our legal chapter on page 97).

Registries

Illinois State Police maintain two registries: the Sex Offender Registry and the Murderer & Violent Offender Against Youth Registry. Your conviction will determine whether you will be required to register on one of these registries. If possible, check with your counselor before you are released about whether you will be required to register, or ask a trusted loved one to contact the Illinois State Police. Before you are released, you should be given a form that tells you when and how you must register.

In most cases, you can register at your local police or sheriff department. This is something you will need to do right away when you get to your host site.

Information about the Sex Offender Registry and Murderer & Violent Offender Against Youth Registry can be found at the Illinois State Police website (www.isp.state.il.us) or by calling the Illinois State Police Registration Unit at (217) 785-0653.

While it is possible to transfer from one registry to another once you are released, it is much easier for this process to be completed while you are still in prison, if your counselor will assist you. That is why we highly recommend checking with your counselor prior to your release about any registration requirements. If you find that you are required to register as a sex offender but believe you are eligible to transfer to the Murderer & Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, your counselor should be able to assist you in getting that transfer completed before you come home.



Many people are not aware that they may be required to register on the Sex Offender Registry even if the act for which they are incarcerated was not sexual in nature. For example, if you were convicted of murder, you will be required to register on the Sex Offender Registry if you were 17 or older at the time of the incident and the victim was younger than 18.

Transitional Houses

If you can't stay in your own home or the home of a family member or friend for your MSR, there are some transitional houses, or halfway houses, in Illinois that

you may be able to live in. Typically, counselors make the call to place you in a halfway house just days before you are released. Spots are in great demand, and it's hard

for them to know what will be available in advance. This can create a fair amount of stress. It may be useful to bring a list of transitional housing/halfway houses (such as the one in the directory) to your counselor.

Transitional houses serve people recently released from prison as well as those who are homeless, recovering from substance abuse, or have mental illness. Transitional houses usually have strict rules that residents must abide by, such as a curfew and employment or religious requirements. Some also

provide supportive services, like substance abuse counseling and employment assistance. Typically, people are allowed to stay in transitional houses for six months to two years. Some are free, while others require you to pay a certain amount of your income, if you are working. Almost all halfway houses do not allow residents who have been convicted of sex-based offenses, and some prohibit offenses designated as violent.

For a list of housing resources, including transitional houses, see the Housing directory on page 142.

Transferring from the Sex Offender Registry to the Murderer & Violent Offender Against Youth Registry

Individuals convicted of First Degree Murder of a Child, Kidnapping, Aggravated Kidnapping, Unlawful Restraint, Aggravated Unlawful Restraint, Child Abduction, and Forcible Detention may be able to transfer from the Sex Offender Registry to the Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry. According to Illinois law, individuals are eligible to transfer if the following conditions are met:

- The sole offense requiring registration was a conviction or adjudication for an offense or offenses listed in the FAQ of the Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry. If the individual has a conviction for an offense which requires sex offender registration, this individual will continue to register under the Sex Offender Registration Act and is not eligible for transferring to this registry.
- The State's Attorney's Office in the county in which the individual was convicted has verified, on the form prescribed by the Illinois State Police, that the crime that required or requires registration was not sexually motivated. (Sexually motivated is defined as one or more of the facts of the underlying offense indicates conduct that is of a sexual nature or that shows an intent to engage in behavior of a sexual nature.) It is the responsibility of the offender to contact the state's attorney's office and request this form be completed. These forms have been provided to all state's attorneys in Illinois.
- The completed form has been received by the registering law enforcement agency and the Illinois State Police Sex Offender Registration Unit.
- If the individual was convicted in the military, out-of-state, or in federal court, it remains the

responsibility of the offender to have this form completed and verified by the county of your conviction.

If you believe you are being required to register in error, or if you wish to transfer from one registry to the other after you are released, the process can be confusing and frustrating. Your PO may be able to assist you, but more than likely, you will have to initiate this transfer yourself by contacting the State's Attorney's Office in the county in which you were convicted. Some State's Attorney's Offices are more responsive than others, and some returned citizens have had trouble getting them to send the form required by the State Police.

If your PO and the state police have verified that you should be able to transfer to another registry but you're having trouble getting the state's attorney's office to send the required form, we recommend getting someone to advocate on your behalf. This may mean contacting legal aid for a pro bono lawyer, or you might contact one of the advocacy groups listed in our directory. In some places, elected representatives such as state representatives and alderman can help with this. You may consider reaching out by calling their office, telling your story, and asking for their assistance.

Illinois State Police Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry FAQ: <https://www.isp.state.il.us/cmvo/cmvofaq.cfm>

Illinois State Police Sex Offender Registry FAQ: <https://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/faq.cfm>



Collect Health Records

Planning for health care before you leave prison saves money and helps you avoid problems like running out of medication or getting sick and having to go to the emergency room (which is very expensive). There are a few steps you should take before you are released.

1. Ask the healthcare unit at your facility (if possible) what the procedure is for the release of your health records. Generally, you will be able to complete forms to acquire those records. Request them about 90 days before your release. You will likely have to pay for any copies. There are separate forms for medical records and HIV and mental health records.
2. You especially want copies of your prison medical records if you had any particular medical issues. You can receive the records after your release, but if you wait more than a few months post-release to request them, you must send the request to the Department of Corrections in Springfield rather than to the facility where you were held.
3. Request a dental exam, an eye exam, and a physical exam to try to address any health concerns you may have before you leave prison. Women are encouraged to request a gynecological exam with a PAP smear and ask for a mammography if over the age of 40. Start early (within the year of your release) in case your dentist or doctor finds something you will need to address.

Before you leave, attain a copy of your medical records. 50 pages are free.

—Pablo

You can have a family member go online for SNAP benefits 3 weeks before release.

—Joe Joe

4. Get your medications ready. Prisons offer people a limited medication supply upon release, ranging from a 30- to 90-day supply. Generally, you will pick up your medications the day before you are released as part of your processing out, but you may want to request these medications ahead of time, just to be safe.
5. Begin the process of getting health insurance. People who just get out of prison are often eligible for Medicaid, a government-sponsored healthcare program for people with limited resources. You can begin the application process before you leave prison. If you have a loved one with internet access, they can submit an application for you at [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov). Otherwise, you will need to obtain a paper copy that you can mail in. Once you submit the paperwork, it takes 30 days to obtain insurance, so it is a good idea to fill it out a few months in advance so that you can have access to health care when you are released. This is especially important if you have certain health conditions that will require immediate treatment. You will be expected to pay for whatever treatment you need out of pocket until your Medicaid kicks in.

For more information about health insurance and how to apply, see the Health section on page 78.



Relationships

Maintaining Relationships During Incarceration

It will be easier to reunite with family and friends after incarceration if you maintain relationships during incarceration. For many, the most difficult part of incarceration is the strain it places on relationships. The inability to be physically present in the lives of those you love gives rise to many conflicting emotions, both for the incarcerated person and their loved ones. While there remains a sense of love, concern, and care, there may also be feelings of resentment, guilt, loss, frustration, anger, and grief that often remain unresolved. Such emotions may also be heightened due to social distancing policies that have arisen in response to COVID-19.

“If you have any emotions at all, you’re going to have guilt about making your family suffer the pains that you’re going through. Because you’re not suffering alone. They suffer with you while you’re in there.”
—Tony C.

Healthy relationships are open, honest, and possess depth and dimension. Strive to maintain regular, open lines of communication through letters and phone calls, when possible. Those who have managed to stay a presence in the lives of those they love will find that reuniting with them after release is smoother.

“The complexities of being in prison can startle any relationship. That’s why understanding and communication is key. In reality no one wants to be a burden; however, everybody needs someone. The pressure of maintaining a healthy relationship is hard for two people in the free world. When I was doing time, I had to understand the sacrifices I needed to make to maintain a healthy relationship with the people that mattered the most to me. I had to remember what it was like to be free, and I had to educate my family and friends of what it was like to be incarcerated.”
—Antonio

“A lot of times people get discouraged when family don’t take their phone calls. They don’t get a response, and they get discouraged. They think, ‘To hell with it, they don’t want to hear from me.’ Even if they don’t respond, you still have to try to cultivate those relationships. A lot of times people are super busy out here. It’s not that they don’t want to talk to you. Keep cultivating those relationships because they are what’s going to help you when you get out.”
—Anonymous

“It’s hard, but you have to make your kids understand that you don’t want to be away from them... You love them and you’re going to do everything you can to make sure you’re in their life.”
—Tony C.

Some relationships may end completely, and all relationships involve a lot of uncomfortable struggle during incarceration. However, it's possible to maintain healthy, loving relationships over the course of incarceration even though many ways of connecting with loved ones are severed, or at the least impaired.

Some find the strain of maintaining relationships while incarcerated so difficult that they opt to distance themselves as a form of self-preservation. Be aware that this distance can be extremely hard to overcome upon release.

“ You spend so many years in there and so much time keeping people at an arm’s distance. You never let anybody get close... But when you come home, you’ve gotten so used to keeping people at a distance that you just continue to do it. It’s hard to make new friends.”

—Tony C.

“ You don’t want to worry your family with those issues. You get on the phone, and you grind your teeth. Regardless of what you’re feeling, you’re going to tell them that everything is going to be OK. You get in this habit of keeping things bottled up, and you’re dealing with some degree of loneliness and emptiness, because you’re not sharing it with your family.”

—Roberto

Explore other ways to maintain relationships. While it's painful to not be physically present in your loved ones' lives, there are other ways to be present. Talk, listen, and provide emotional and mental support when and how you can.

“ Try to find ways to make it easier for them to accept you being gone. Because if you just sit and tell them how horrible it is and you bark at them every time they come to visit you or you yell at them in letters or on the phone, then they’re gonna get frustrated with dad and say, Well hey, you’re not even here, so what can you do?”

—Tony C.

The family members of incarcerated individuals can also do a lot to maintain relationships. They can help their incarcerated loved ones feel a part of their lives. Sometimes sharing the ordinary everyday things can help them feel connected.

“ I send him a little bit of money, enough to keep phone calls going, you know, and pictures and stuff and try to set up options for him so he knows he doesn’t have to go back to the same stuff. Just let him know that there’s help, there’s better things in life. I try to talk to him about the good stuff, about working and going to church, when we’re playing games with his little sister and stuff like that.”

—Heather B.

Preparing for Reunification

You might be scared, worried, or excited about reuniting physically with family and friends. You can prepare yourself for this transition by reflecting on your relationships and being honest with yourself about who is likely to be a positive, supportive influence in your life. You and your loved ones should set realistic expectations and negotiate how to maintain safe, healthy, and—if necessary, distanced relationships due to COVID-19. You are both in transition, and a period of adjustment will be necessary.

It is hard to be left at home and hard to come home. Even if someone has only been away for a few months, the effect of incarceration can be profound. For loved ones, having the person come home can take some getting used to as well. This difficulty does not mean a failure in the relationship. You might begin by letting your loved ones know what you are hoping for and what you will need from them during your reentry. This could include both emotional and financial support. Never be afraid to ask for patience. You should also listen to the needs and concerns of your loved ones. While issues will likely come up after release that will need to be faced, reuniting with loved ones will be easier if you can communicate your desires and expectations ahead of time and learn to negotiate and compromise.

“ The key thing is honesty. [If] you come out being honest with yourself and with [your loved ones], you can’t go wrong, because you’re not feeding them a fairy tale. You’re giving them you.”

—Keke

“ Keep in mind that you are entering somebody else’s space. You must be mindful of the relationships around you.”

—Pablo

People who return after a long incarceration often face a unique challenge: they must relearn themselves, their loved ones, and the world around them. Those who had young children may come home to find them teenagers or even grown with children of their own. There may be conflicting ideas of what the relationship should be.

“ Don’t come in like they’re supposed to know you or even respect you a little bit, because you’ve been gone. You gotta gain that respect and that trust back when you’ve been gone so long.”

—Keke

“ Recognize that we haven’t been part of that house for years, so I can’t come in and put down my dominance, something we’re used to doing when we’re in the cell. We’re used to carving up space and making it our own.”

—Joe Joe

Take time to acknowledge the ways in which you have changed. Recognize that just as you have grown over the years, your loved ones have as well. Allow for this growth. Be open to the person before you and who they are now.

“ First you gotta get yourself together, mentally. Because you might think you know them because they’re part of you, but you really don’t know them and what they’ve been through. You know what they tell you. Same thing with you.”

—Keke

“ Never expect anyone to evolve at your pace. When you are dealing with people you haven’t lived with in a while you have to be analytical, you have to examine the structure of your own character. And the character of those you live with. Once you are fully in tune with the compound presence of your household you should become as flexible as a bamboo stick, but it won’t be easy. So, get an evaluation and accept some help from those who can help you with your transition.”

—Joe Joe

“ Oftentimes when people are anticipating going home, they have ideals and expectations on how their reunification with family will be. There’s the dream and there’s the reality. It’s good to have these great expectations, but don’t set yourself up for disappointment if people don’t live up to the expectations you have of them. People have lived experience that might color the way they interact.”

—Joe Joe

SECTION TWO:
After You're Out

2

Getting Your ID

Congratulations, you're out! An important step, once you're free, is to secure your ID. Hopefully, you already have your birth certificate and Social Security card. If not, the fastest way to get them is to visit your local county clerk's office to obtain your birth certificate (if you are living in the county you were born in) and the Social Security Administration Office to obtain your social security card in person. We recommend this approach because you need these documents as soon as possible. These offices may be closed due to COVID-19, or you may need to have an appointment to get help. Call them first before visiting.

If you need to replace both documents, you may have trouble supplying the forms of identification required. In this case, you might consider ordering your birth certificate from VitalChek at <https://www.vitalchek.com/>. This service does not require identification. Instead, it verifies your identity through a series of security questions. This method costs significantly more than ordering from your county clerk (approximately \$50, with shipping), but once you have your birth certificate, you can use it to obtain your social security card.

State ID or Driver's License

Once you have your birth certificate and social security card, you are ready to get a state ID or driver's license. These are the most commonly accepted forms of ID. To obtain either a state ID or a driver's license, visit your nearest Driver's Services facility. To find out which driver's services facility is closest to you, either call toll free at (800) 252-8980 or, if you have internet access, visit the following website: <https://cyberdriveillinois.com/facilities/facilitylist.html>

These facilities may be closed because of the pandemic or you may need to schedule an appointment to visit.

Call the facility first before visiting and ask for instructions for how to obtain an ID or driver's license.

Do you plan to apply for a driver's license? Review the Illinois Rules of the Road first. You can pick up a copy of this booklet at any public library or download it at the following website: www.cyberdriveillinois.com. If you've been incarcerated for a long time, we recommend getting a learner's permit so that you can

legally practice driving until you feel comfortable taking the driver's test. To obtain a permit, you will need to pass a written test and a vision test. Once you obtain the permit, you may drive while accompanied by a licensed driver.

Note: The Secretary of State has started offering free state IDs to people getting out of prison (normally \$20) if you visit the DMV within 30 days of release (90 days if you have a temporary ID from IDOC). You will need an Identification Card Verification Form from IDOC to qualify for the fee waiver. This form can be requested from field services before you leave.



SUSPENSIONS

You may have had your driver's license suspended for a period of time. People get their licenses suspended for many reasons including not paying traffic tickets, parking tickets, or tolls; driving while drunk or using drugs (Driving Under the Influence, or DUI); or not meeting child support payments. Driver's licenses can be taken away if you do not make child support payments, even when you are incarcerated. See page 83 under "Legal Matters" for instructions on how to modify your child support payments so that this doesn't happen. If your license was suspended, you can take steps to get your license back after the suspension period is over.

REVOCATIONS

If your driver's license is revoked, it is taken away for good. Driver's licenses are often revoked for more serious DUIs (for instance, someone was injured or killed because the driver was drunk or using drugs while driving). It is still often possible to apply for a new driver's license after some time has passed. If your license has been revoked because of a driving fatality (someone was killed), you may not be able to get a new license, but it is worth checking to be sure. The waiting periods for applying for a new license are usually:

- 1st DUI offense: 1 year
- 2nd DUI offense: 5 years
- 3rd DUI offense: 10 years
- 4th DUI offense: life-time ban

It took me seven months to get my social security card and ID; this time would have been cut in half if I would have been given the information shared here.

—Antonio.

Visiting driver services can take a long time, so be sure to bring everything you need:

- An original document with your written signature (credit card, court order, or social security card)
- An original document with your date of birth (birth certificate, passport, high school transcript, college transcript from classes you have taken at prison)
- An original document with your Social Security number (Social Security card, IL driver's license record, or military service record)
- Original documents proving your Illinois residency (bank statement, credit report, utility bills, medical record, HIV test)
- Payment

Note: If you choose to drive without a license, you may face more serious penalties (more time without a license, jail time, car seizure)



Chicago CityKey card. If you live in Chicago, you may be able to get a Chicago CityKey card. The Chicago CityKey card is an optional, valid, government-issued ID card offered to all Chicago residents, including those who are undocumented. It is somewhat easier to obtain than a state ID and serves as a library card, transit card, and benefits card for businesses and cultural institutions in Chicago. You can also get a Chicago RX card as part of the program, which provides discounts on generic and name brand medications. The card may not allow you to open a bank account, but it does allow you to do basic transactions. For more information visit the City Clerk of Chicago's website.

Signing up for the Selective Service

All male US citizens and male immigrants who are 18-25 are required to register with the Selective Service. Sometimes called “the draft,” the Selective Service is a program that allows the US military to call men to military service in times of crisis. When this happened during the Vietnam war, people were “drafted” to military service by random lottery number and year of birth. Registering with the Selective Service does not mean you are automatically in the military. It means you may be called upon if there is a crisis.

If you did not sign up for the Selective Service before you were in prison and you are 18-25 years old, it is important to register immediately. If you do not, you may not be eligible for federal training or a federal job. You may also be prosecuted and face a fine or jail time. You can sign up online at: <https://www.sss.gov/register/>. We have also included a form in the back of the book on page 224. You can send the form by mail to:

Selective Service System
Registration Information Office
PO Box 94739
Palantine, IL 60094-4739

If you were incarcerated continuously from 30 days before you turned 18 through age 25, you are exempt from applying. You will need to request a status information letter here: <https://www.sss.gov/verify/sil/>. We have also included the form at the end of this guide on page 226.

If you do not qualify for that exemption, you may also request a status information letter indicating that you did not “knowingly or willfully” fail to register for Selective Service. You could mention if you were incarcerated shortly after your 18th birthday, left school early, or any other circumstances that contributed to your unregistered Selective Service Status.

Getting Your License Back

First, check with driver’s services to see how long your license is suspended or how long the waiting period is before you can apply for a new license. Instructions for accessing your driving record can be found on the Illinois DMV website: https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/drivers_license/purchaseabstract.html. You can also schedule a meeting with a hearing officer at a DMV office. Locations and phone numbers can be found here: https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dah_ih70.pdf

The hearing officer will let you know if you are eligible for getting your license back and help you prepare for your informal or formal hearing.

INFORMAL HEARING PROCESS

If you do not have multiple DUIs or a criminal DUI, you can schedule an informal hearing by contacting the driver’s services office nearest you. If you go in person to request a hearing, you will need a photo ID (see ID section on page 45) to enter the building. During the hearing, you will speak with a hearing officer who will tell you what you need to do to get your license back. This will likely include:

- Paying any outstanding traffic or parking tickets
- Paying a suspension or revocation fee – \$70 for failure to appear in court, failure to pay child support, parking and other minor driving suspensions – \$500 for any revocations, such as DUI or reckless driving
- If your license was suspended or revoked because of a DUI, you will need:
 - A Drug/Alcohol Evaluation by a licensed agency
 - Papers showing that you have completed a DUI

Make appointments for anything and everything. Don’t wait until you have all the requirements in your hand. Just make the appointment. You can always reschedule if you need to.



—Roberto

Risk Education Course

- Papers showing that you have completed substance abuse treatment, if necessary
- If your license was suspended because you did not pay child support, you will need:
 - Papers showing that you have changed your child support payment plan to one you can afford, and that the court agrees to these changes. See “Child Support” in the “Legal Matters” section on page 100.

FORMAL HEARING PROCESS

If you have multiple DUIs or a criminal DUI, you will need to schedule a formal hearing. It is stricter than the informal hearing and may include witnesses and evidence. To request a formal hearing:

1. Complete the request form (Form DAH H 12) https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dah_h12.pdf
2. Mail the form to the nearest driver’s services office
3. Pay a \$50 fee

At the hearing, a driver’s services hearing officer will decide if you should get a new license, receive a temporary driving permit, or be denied. It is a good idea to gather documents to show that you are unlikely

to commit further DUIs. You can also bring witnesses to speak about how you are safe, trustworthy, and responsible. Some people hire lawyers. If you are unable to get a new license, you may be able to get a temporary driving permit if you need to drive to get to work or school. Bring papers to the hearing showing that you are employed or taking classes, and be prepared to explain why you need a driver’s license to get to school or work.

AFTER THE HEARING

You’re almost there! Don’t forget that you will need to provide proof that you have purchased car insurance before you can get a new license or get your old license back.

If you go with the frame of mind that you are going to spend a hell of a lot of time in that place, it helps. Go with the right frame of mind, otherwise you’re going to be miserable.

—Anonymous

Marriage License and Divorce Decrees

Marriage licenses and divorce decrees can be obtained at the county clerk’s office in which you were married or divorced.

Resources to Meet Basic Needs

Even as you make plans for your future, there will be challenges to meet and obstacles to overcome along the way. Many people struggle with housing, food, healthcare, utilities, and other basic needs in the weeks, months and years after they get out of prison. Others find themselves challenged by drug and alcohol addictions and mental health concerns. To struggle is a normal part of life and of the reentry process. Be patient as you figure things out and know that there are programs and people who can help.

In addition to governmental programs like Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP—formerly food stamps), many communities in Illinois offer short-term assistance with things like paying rent, utilities, fuel, prescriptions, healthcare, and medical bills. You can also get help with credit counseling, disability benefits, and mental health counseling.

Getting Started

If you are having trouble meeting your basic needs, here are a few places that can help you get started.

- Learn about Illinois assistance programs by going to this website: https://www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/illinois_assistance_programs.html
- Apply online for help with buying food (SNAP), healthcare (Medicaid and Medicare), and the cash assistance program TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) at Illinois' Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) page. <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>
- Visit a hospital, non-profit organization, church, or state agency and ask for help. Organizations like Planned Parenthood and the Salvation Army have people that can help you find the resources you need. For contact information, see our Health resource directory on page 180.
- You can also get help by applying for assistance at a Department of Human Services (DHS) Family Community Resource Center. DHS can help you access the mental health or addiction recovery help you need. For a list of offices, go to the DHS office locator: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>.

Finally, Illinois Welcome Centers can help you navigate Illinois benefits as well.

Below is a brief list of some specific assistance programs to meet your basic needs:

FOOD

(See the food directory on page 161 for a list of food resources)

If you are having trouble paying for groceries, there are many food banks and meal centers throughout the state. To find a food bank or distribution center near you, see the online locator at www.feedingillinois.org/index.php/about/about-food-banks and call the food bank nearest you.

You also might want to consider applying for the SNAP, which helps low-income individuals and families buy food. Each month, money is put onto a special debit card (called a Link Card) so that you can buy food from most grocery stores. The amount of money you get depends on where you live, your household income, and how many people live in your household. To apply, go to <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>

HEALTHCARE

(See the Health chapter on page 78 and the Health Resources Directory on page 180 for more information.)

Medicaid

If you haven't done so already, apply for Medicaid using this website: <https://abe.illinois.gov/>. For people who have limited or no income, Medicaid helps make medical coverage more affordable and pays for services such as hospital care (inpatient and outpatient), health center and clinical services, visits to your healthcare providers (including physician and nurse practitioner), lab tests and x-ray services, nursing home care, and prescription drug coverage (in certain cases).

Medicare

Medicare is a government health insurance program for seniors and disabled individuals that helps pay for preventive care, doctor visits, hospital stays, and prescription drugs. To qualify, you must be either 65 years of age or older or meet the disability guidelines. To apply, call the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 and tell the operator where you live. You can also go to www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/. The Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) can also help you apply for Medicare. Call (800) 252-8966. To find a SHIP partner, go to www2.illinois.gov/aging/ship/Pages/default.aspx

If you are without health insurance for a time, there are community health and dental clinics that offer free or reduced services. You can see a list of such clinics at this website: www.freeclinicdirectory.org/illinois_care.html, and in our Health directory on page 180.

I would suggest trying to find a supportive network. Be willing to lean on that support system. We're so used to being rejected that we don't reach out much for help.

—Joe Joe

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

(See our Mental Health and Substance Use section on page 86 for more information)

If you have mental health or substance use challenges, make it a priority to get support in these areas. If you signed up for Medicaid, then you have access to some of these services. Even if you do not yet have health insurance, there are affordable clinics and programs that you can go to for help. The Illinois Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) Mental Health Department provides a list of mental health providers near you as well as lists of resources and treatments available. See their website: www.dhs.state.il.us/page.

Take your time. Get a plan together to achieve short term goals and long term goals. Ask questions. Everything changes so ask and learn.

—Brian N.

www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29763 or visit a DHS Family Community Resource Center. For a list of offices, go to the DHS office locator: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>

Consider joining a support group such as Alcoholics Anonymous (www.aa.org) or Narcotics Anonymous (www.na.org) right away to get connected to a supportive community. It will be hard to take care of the other areas of your life if you're facing addiction challenges.

SOCIAL SECURITY

You may be able to receive Social Security benefits if you are of retirement age or are disabled. Social Security offers you a cash benefit based on your work history and the amount you paid into the program. This money can help you and your dependents meet your needs. While you are unable to receive Social Security benefits while incarcerated, you can apply to receive these benefits again once you are released.

Treat everything like you're going to the DMV.



—Pablo

To get Social Security retirement benefits, you must meet certain work requirements and have paid into the Social Security system prior to your incarceration. You can get Social Security early retirement benefits starting at age 28. Social Security disability benefits can be received at any age as long as you have met the work requirements.

You can also apply for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, which provides a cash benefit to you every month to make sure you have a minimum level of income so that you can pay for basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter.

Apply for Social Security and SSI online at www.socialsecurity.gov and click on "Retirement" or "Disability." You can also apply in person at your local Social Security office. To find your local Social Security office, go to <https://www.ssa.gov/locator/> or call (800) 772-1213.

Note: Almost all disability applications are rejected at first. If you qualify, don't give up. Keep appealing until you get it.

I came home after ten years, I went to a homeless shelter and three days later I had a job. A week and a half later, I had an apartment. My first paycheck, I got a cheap studio apartment. So you can do it. Don't let your feelings from being incarcerated judge who you are and what you can do. Because you can make it.

—Tony C.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

(A list of homeless shelters and transitional housing can be found in our Housing Directory on page 123.)

Illinois housing assistance programs offer low-income individuals and families assistance to pay for rent and utilities. To find out more, go to https://www.needhelpayingbills.com/html/illinois_assistance_programs.html

The Illinois Rental Housing Support assistance program also helps people pay their rent each month. Call (312) 386-1009 for more information. Energy companies often have programs to help low-income individuals pay their utilities. Contact your utility company for more information. Lifeline Telephone Assistance offers monthly discounts on your basic wireless or home telephone service. The discounts can include a lower phone bill or free wireless minutes. To get more information, call the Universal Services Administration Company at (888) 641-8722 or go to: <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>

PHONE

If you qualify for SNAP or Medicaid, you may also be eligible for a free cell phone or discounted smartphone or internet service. SafeLink offers free phones and phone plans. Learn more here: <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment>. LifeLine is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. Eligible customers can get up to \$9.25 toward their bill. Lifeline can be used for phone or internet, but not both. Learn more at <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>. Learn more about phones and communication on page 91.

The advice I would give is to be patient. Things in the outside world move very quickly and I think that you have to be aware and accepting that you don't have to catch up.

—Edmund B.

Employment

There is a lot involved with finding employment, so this is one of the longest chapters in *Mapping Your Future*. It contains information that can help you plan your job search and be successful in it. You will hear a lot of discouraging talk about getting a job with a record. While it is challenging, there are employers who are willing to hire people with records and many community resources that can help you find jobs. We also recognize that the pandemic has made it even more difficult to find a job, and that many of the jobs that are available may put you at risk for contracting the virus. Be persistent and find creative ways to help pay the bills while you are on the job market. (See “Resources to Meet Basic Needs” on page 49). Keep at it, and don’t give up.

This chapter includes the following sections to help you get meaningful employment: thinking about your job search, identifying possible jobs, and the job application process. It also contains a section on what to do if you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of your record and how to access unemployment benefits. The last section addresses building a long-term career. This is something that you can start planning for even now.

No matter what, don’t ever stop persevering.

—Anonymous



Seek Help and Know Your Options

Your criminal record will make some parts of the job search challenging. You may have work restrictions, and your criminal record will come up at different points during the search. It will likely take you longer to find a job. The jobs you may find will likely be less than ideal, especially at first. We suggest that you find a career-building program or employment counselor to help you; our directory on page 168 has a list of places where you can go for employment guidance. If you talk to a career counselor, take time to assess what your skills are and create realistic expectations for short and long-term career goals. Many social services, transitional housing programs, and churches also provide employment help. Take advantage of programs and services to help you navigate employment challenges and build a meaningful career.

Make your job search smoother by knowing your options. Understand which jobs you can’t be hired for before you make a career plan, search for a job, or start training. The length of time that you are barred from a job or workplace might depend on your conviction or the type of job you are looking for. Visit the Council of State Governments Collateral Consequences website (<https://>

If they didn’t want to give me the job, maybe it’s not the job for me. I just have to look at it like that.

—Shaun W.



niccc.csgjusticecenter.org/) to see how different types of criminal convictions affect employment. Also see page 59 for recent changes to employment in healthcare, schools, and park districts for people with convictions.

There are still many jobs open to people with criminal convictions. The website “Jobs that Hire Felons” has a long list of companies whose hiring policies include people with criminal convictions: jobsthathirefelons.org

Identifying Possible Jobs

NETWORKING

There are many ways to find jobs. Networking is probably the most important. Successful job seekers often talk to many, many different people. The contacts in your network may not have a job for you right now, but they could have career advice. Or they might know someone who knows someone else with a job lead. Or they might learn of a job in the future. We suggest that you mention your interest in employment to friends, family, and casual acquaintances in your community spaces.

One good strategy is to contact people who perform the sort of work that you are interested in. Ask them for ideas, suggestions, and information that can help you find job leads. The power of these interactions is huge.

ONLINE

If you have been in prison a long time, you might not be familiar with online job searches. These days, many people rely on websites like monster.com, careerbuilder.com, and snagajob.com. You should not ignore these sites, particularly if you want to work for a large employer. However, they are much less important than they used to be, so do not invest a lot of time in them unless you’re set on applying for a job posted on one of these sites. Instead, focus on visiting your target employers’ websites and find relevant jobs posted there. Often, you will find a link to “Current Jobs” on the home page. Sometimes, the link to job postings is labeled

I think making connections is important because I’m still looking for a job, and you never know when one of these connections might work out in that respect. You just have to keep your eyes and ears open.

—Shaun W.

“Careers” or “Employment.” Job aggregators, websites that gather information and provide links to many different jobs, are also powerful and very useful. Indeed.com, for instance, is one of the largest sources of job postings in the world, collected from employer websites, job boards, association websites, publications, and more.

LinkedIn is currently the most effective professional social network. Head to linkedin.com to make a profile and review job postings (see the “jobs” link below the search bar at the top of every page). LinkedIn is one of the best online sites for connecting with people who work where you would like to work (and who worked there in the past).

When searching for a job online, be careful to avoid being scammed. Scammers may request money or identity information like date of birth, Social Security number, or debit/credit card number. Be cautious about giving out your SSN or other personal information on the internet.

If you choose to apply for a job online, your biggest obstacle may not be your criminal record, it will likely be your anonymity. Countless people submit online applications, especially to large companies. You want



Many jobs require driver’s licenses, or you may need a driver’s license to get to your job. If your license has been suspended or revoked, you can take steps to get it back. See page 45 in the Getting Your ID section for more information.

to help the employer see that you have a unique skill set that would make you the best candidate for the job. Focus on your unique skills and work-related experiences.

KEEP RECORDS

It is a good idea to keep a record of all the places you have applied to, including visits made in person, initial phone calls, and follow-up phone calls. On the next page is an example of a log you can use.

The Application Process

JOB APPLICATION FORMS

The purpose of a job application is to get you a job interview. Employers use written job applications to narrow the applicant pool for a particular job, deciding who is worth talking to in person. To maximize your chances of getting an interview, focus on what you have to offer an employer. Downplay the negatives (poor work history, felony convictions, lack of experience, minimal education). Most employers do not have a lot of time to review a stack of applications. In fact, most hiring managers will review your application for approximately 15 to 30 seconds, looking for a form that's neat and complete.

The "Employment" or "Previous Employment" section is usually the most detailed section of a job application. Here are some tips on filling it out effectively:

When filling in the "work performed" or "job duties" section, use the entire space to list your skills and accomplishments and contributions you made in your past positions. Think about and list everything of significance that you did in past jobs, from the beginning of your shift to the end of your shift. Do not list your wages from past employment. Instead, write

"will discuss at the interview." Sometimes people are not selected because their prior salary was too high, or employers may not offer an applicant what they are actually worth, using a lower previous salary as justification.

We suggest you list the jobs you held while incarcerated. The experience and skills you gained through these jobs are real and relevant. For in-prison jobs, you can list your employer as the State of Illinois on job applications.

Finally, keep in mind that many job applications and interviews will need to be completed online. Ensure that you're able to fill out digital job applications at a computer with a stable Internet connection; if you don't have access to a home computer, you might try visiting a local library or community center. If you're not comfortable using a computer or completing an online job application on your own, consider asking a friend, family member, community member or librarian for assistance.

If you encounter "Reason for Leaving" in job application forms, you may want to give a positive reason for leaving all previous jobs, even if you quit or were let go. Think about what happened after you quit or were let go. Did you get a new job? Did you start a training program or pursue education? Some examples of positive reasons for leaving are:

- You relocated (you left your job because you went to prison, or you were transferred)
- You desired a career change
- You became a full-time student
- The work was seasonal
- You had the opportunity to advance or make more money

If you choose to apply for a job online, your biggest obstacle may not be your criminal record; it may be your anonymity. Countless people submit online applications, especially to large companies. The most important task, when using online resources, is to find a way to make a personal connection, distinguishing yourself from the rest of the applicants.



EXAMPLE JOB APPLICATION LOG



Name of position	Company name and contact info	Application date	Response date	Interview date	Name(s) and contact info of interviewers	Thank you letter date	Notes

The job application will also typically ask for:

References. On average, employers ask for three references for each candidate. Be thoughtful about whom you list as references. These should not be family members. Good sources of references include: previous and current employers, supervisors, teachers, social workers, people you have engaged in volunteer work with, and people from your religious institution. Be sure to ask each person whether they are willing to be a job reference for you before you write their names down. You do not want to surprise anyone or include anyone who would not give you a good reference.

Criminal History. In Illinois, most employers are not allowed to ask about prior felonies on applications. Some still do. If you see this question and want to continue your application, answer truthfully. Even though they are breaking the law, we advise that you still answer truthfully. If you answer untruthfully you may get the job, but you would likely be fired if they found out. See “Your Legal Rights” on page 60 for instructions on how to report employers that do this. When answering the question “Have you ever been convicted of a felony?” check “Yes” and write, “Will discuss at interview.” Another option is to briefly explain that you were convicted a long time ago.

Unfortunately, disclosing your history on the application can result in you being screened out because of the stigma associated with felonies. Whatever your decision on disclosure is on the application, at the interview, emphasize the positive aspects of who you are today. Explain that you have taken responsibility for your actions and have learned from the situation. If you anticipate filling out an application at the place of employment, take along a copy of any information and dates that you might need to complete the application. This is preferable to trying to remember this information and making mistakes on the application. Remember

Some examples of positive reasons for leaving are:

- You relocated (you left your job because you went to prison)
- You desired a career change
- You became a full-time student
- The work was seasonal
- You had the opportunity to advance

that false information given on an application may be grounds for dismissal even after you have been employed for any length of time.

RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Many employers require a resume and cover letter in addition to a completed application form. Your resume maps out your employment history, giving details about your past jobs, your skills, and your interests. It’s a good idea to tailor your resume to the different jobs you are applying for.

Your cover letter is an actual letter from you to each prospective employer. It tells a short story about who you are—why you are seeking employment, your background, and what’s important to you. Keep your letter to a single page. Writing effective resumes and cover letters takes time, so begin working on these documents long before you apply to your first job. As discussed on page 30, you can even begin working on them while in prison. Examples of a resume and cover letter from someone who has been incarcerated can be found in the forms section on page 182. Once you are out, you may wish to look at online resources that can help you with these documents.

Here are two excellent ones:

- <https://blog.dce.harvard.edu/extension/how-write-great-resume-cover-letter>
- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html



Illinois is a Ban-the-Box state, meaning employers cannot legally ask you about felony convictions on their application. For more information, see Your Legal Rights on page 60.

INTERVIEWS

Once you've submitted an application to a prospective employer, wait to be contacted. Hopefully, they will be interested in scheduling an interview with you. However, be advised that most applications do not lead to interviews. This is an area where it will be helpful to be patient. You should continue to send out applications until you have an actual job offer. Many job seekers are nervous about interviews. They want to say the right things and make a good impression. This is completely normal. Practice what you'll say, and consider the following guidelines:

- Bring the right materials. Carry extra copies of your resume, contact information for your references, and any papers you need to complete your application, including copies of work licenses, your driving record (if required), and your Social Security or immigration cards. Bring a pen and notebook to write down information. It shows that you are truly interested in the job.
- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early for your interview. You might need to fill out paperwork before the interview, and locating the right person or room could take longer than you think. Arriving early shows you are responsible and eager to be there.
- Wear appropriate clothes. It will serve you best to wear something a bit more formal than what you would wear for the job.
- Consider your body language. Even when you are not speaking, you are sending a message. Make good eye contact, stand and sit tall, and smile.
- If you're participating in an online interview, be sure to test out your computer's video capabilities and Internet connectivity beforehand. To the extent that you can, you'll also want to ensure that you're in a location with as few disruptions as possible.
- Ask questions. At the end of a job interview, most hiring managers will ask something like "Do you have any questions for me?" Strong job candidates always have a few questions prepared — this makes you seem interested in the job, rather than desperate. If you brought a pen and notebook with you, you could prepare a list of questions in the back of the notebook.

If you anticipate filling out an application at the place of employment, take along a copy of any information and dates that you might need to complete the application. That is preferable to trying to remember them and making mistakes on the application. Remember that false information given on an application may be grounds for dismissal even after you have been employed for any length of time.



ADDRESSING YOUR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND

Job seekers with less-than-perfect work histories or criminal records may have a hard time answering some interview questions. Here are a few tips to increase your chance of getting hired:

Comfort the Employer. Let them know that your offense did not happen on the job, if it did not. For example, "Yes, I was convicted of a felony, but it was not job related." If your felony was job related, find an employment counselor to help you develop a specific job interview strategy.

Own It. "There was a time in my life when I was making some bad choices and I was convicted of...(state your offense)." Address any concerns an employer might have about your past. Then steer the interview back to your skills and the positive traits that you bring to the job. "I can see why that gap in my work history might concern you. But that was several years ago and, since then, I have maintained a solid work record. I come to work on time. I am a very hard worker and quick learner."

If you're scared to tell an employer, hey, I've been to prison, just tell them. Hey, I've been to prison, and what's the worst thing they can do? Say no, we're not going to hire you. And you go to the next door. Knock on the next door. Say hey, are you hiring?

— Tony C.

Keep it Positive. “I thought a lot about where my life was going and I decided to make some changes.” Talk about your current activities and future plans. Emphasize education and job training, community work, and other activities you have done since your release and in prison, if they are relevant. Talk about your career goals, how you chose them, and how the job you are applying for fits those goals. Employers are more likely to remember their first and last impression, so if possible, try to address your criminal background history in the middle of the interview.

Encourage the Employer. “I am a good worker and I want to work, I just need an opportunity to prove my skills to an employer.” Tell them that you want the job!

A list of employment resources can be found in the directory section on page 168.

Illinois is a Ban-the-Box state, meaning employers cannot legally ask you about felony convictions on their employment application. For more information, see “Your Legal Rights” on page 60.

Some examples of questions you could ask:

- What is the organization’s plan for the next five years?
- How will I be evaluated, and in what timeframes? By whom?
- What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?
- What computer equipment and software do you use?
- When will a decision be made about this position?

I thought I’d be prepared because I had my resume in hand. As it turns out, you need several resumes, adjusted to different jobs, and the ability to write cover sheets on the fly.

—Pablo.

IN HER WORDS:

Advice from an Employer

We wanted to know how employers approach hiring people who have a criminal history, so we reached out to Tanja, an employer who has hired many people who have been formerly incarcerated. In the interview below, Tanja explains what employers are looking for and how people should discuss their criminal history with employers.

What are the most important qualities you look for in a job candidate?

Tanja: For me, the most important quality is reliability (e.g., responding promptly and professionally). I also appreciate it when people are eager to learn and respond well to constructive criticism. The fit between the person and the position is also critical.

What information needs to be revealed regarding history of incarceration?

Tanja: I think it really depends on the position. It is a mistake to come in and tell me your whole life. That is too much too soon. But being super vague will make me wonder if you are trying to hide something. For me, honesty is critical. I let people know I am not here to judge and as far as I am concerned, they have done their time. What I care about is the present and the future. Can they do this job now? How much training and supervision will they need? What are their skills and how can these skills aid in the job performance?

What impresses you about candidates?

Tanja: I am usually impressed when I see someone who has done their homework. They know what the position is, they Googled the company and they know what we are looking for. It is ideal to tailor your history to the position and capitalize on your skills. Link these skills to the job announcement and tell me how these skills will be used to help me. Also demonstrate enthusiasm for what the company does. If it is the restaurant industry, tell me how much you enjoy the food and why. If you do not enjoy the food, find something you like about the company and share with me.

What questions should the interviewee ask the employer?

Tanja: Do your homework about my company, the job description, and ask me questions as if you had the position. Ask details about logistics: How many hours, what days and times do you need me? What qualities are you looking for in a worker? What would a typical day be like in the job? What are the opportunities for growth? Do you offer training, and if so, how does that work? Who will be my supervisor? What is their management style? These questions will make me believe you are serious about the job. In my case, I provide reentry services. I want to see you know the reentry process and that you are passionate about this issue.

What questions can they expect in an interview, and how would you handle the tricky ones?

Tanja: A) Why are you applying for this job now? B) What is your availability? Convince me that you will be available and reliable. Make sure you can make the work schedule work. C) What are your best skills? D) What skills would you like to develop in the future? E) What were you doing before? This question can be tricky if you have a big gap in your resume. If you were just released, be honest, but capitalize on the skills you have that make you right for this position even though you have been out of the market for a while. Having a strong resume tells me you do good work and you are reliable. Emphasize how the situation has changed, point me to your references and how they will assure me that you are worth taking a chance on. F) How do you see your fit with this job? How would you go about doing it?

Certificate of Rehabilitation

A criminal record is an obstacle to getting a license in certain fields, including education, transit, and childcare. Under certain conditions, you can petition the court to grant a Certificate of Rehabilitation. This allows you to apply for jobs that require these licenses, in spite of your record. They do not remove any offenses from your record. Instead, they may allow you to pursue employment in a particular profession even though your conviction history would ordinarily prohibit you from working in that field. Please see the "Legal Services" directory on page 196 for more information on Certificates of Rehabilitation.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT

If employers seem reluctant to hire you, you may want to tell them about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Employers who hire people with convictions receive a tax credit of up to 40% of the employee's yearly wages. The tax credit is only for employers who hire people who have left prison within the last year.

FIDELITY BONDING

When interviewing for a job, you may also want to tell the employer about the Illinois Fidelity Bonding program. Fidelity bonding is an insurance policy that protects employers from employee dishonesty or theft. The state offers six months of free fidelity bonding insurance for employees with past convictions. The bond covers up to \$25,000 in damages if the employee steals from the company.

Your Legal Rights

By law in Illinois, employers who have more than 15 employees on the payroll cannot access criminal background checks on potential hires until after an interview is conducted. This law is called "Ban the Box" because it prohibits employers from asking you to check a box on your application if you've had a criminal conviction. You may submit a complaint against an employer who violates this rule by visiting: <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/FLS/Pages/Ban-The-Box-Complaint-Form.aspx>

THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC)

The EEOC is a federal agency that administers and enforces civil rights laws for the workplace in all states. Their guidelines state that employers must consider a few things when conducting a background check and when choosing not to hire someone because of a criminal record:

Background Check. Employers who wish to do a background check must:

- Get the applicant's written consent ahead of time.
- Tell the applicant if the employer intends to disqualify him or her based on the contents of the

report. The employer must also give the applicant a copy of the report.

- Notify the applicant after the employer makes a final decision not to hire him or her based on the information in the report.

Employment Denial. In order to legally deny you employment based on a conviction, employers must consider:

- The nature and gravity of the criminal offense or conduct
- How much time has passed since the offense or sentence
- The nature of the job (including where it is performed, how much supervision and interaction with others the employee will have)

If there isn't a direct relationship between the job you are applying for and your offense, employers cannot legally use the offense to deny you employment. For example, it would be legal for a bank to deny someone convicted of credit card fraud or theft. But, it would most likely not be legal for them to deny someone who was convicted of drug possession. Employers can still

choose candidates with more or better experience, but irrelevant criminal history should not be a deciding factor in hiring. If you believe you have been

discriminated against, you can file a complaint by mail, telephone (1-800-669-4000), or in person at an EEOC office: <https://www.eeoc.gov/>

Unemployment Insurance in Illinois

Unemployment benefits in Illinois can be accessed if you meet certain guidelines. Unfortunately, most people who leave prison are not eligible. You must have lost your job through no fault of your own, such as a layoff, and you need to have made at least \$1600 in the last 12 months before you filed your claim. You cannot receive unemployment directly after you return home if you lost your previous job due to your incarceration or if you were in prison for more than twelve months.

However, you may be able to receive a stimulus check. In response to COVID-19, the US government passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in April 2020. This legislation includes expansions to the following unemployment benefits:

- The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) provides an extra \$600/week for individuals receiving regular unemployment benefits, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). Note that FPUC benefit payments will end after payments for the last week of unemployment before July 31, 2020.

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) provides up to 39 weeks of federally funded unemployment benefits to individuals not typically eligible for unemployment benefits, including independent contractors and sole-proprietors who have become unemployed as a direct result of COVID-19.

The next step is visiting your local Illinois Department of Employment Security office or an Illinois Work Net Center. To find a location near you, use the Illinois Department of Employment Security website: http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Office_Locator.aspx



Building A Career

Choosing A Job

Some people aspire to have a career, a particular line of work that they can grow within and enjoy and that provides opportunities for advancement. Landing a job that you enjoy is a goal that many returning residents share. Doing so takes time and planning, but the result is that you get to do work you are interested in.

What am I good at? Knowing your strengths and weaknesses is an important first step toward a career. Start by listing these. This exercise will take some time and concentration. Feel free to ask people who know you well for help with identifying your abilities and shortfalls.

What do I know how to do? Take some time to think about your work experience. This includes volunteering, mentoring, and especially participation in prison programs. Anything that had an impact on you and/or that you learned something from is fair game here.

What is out there? Which sectors of the economy are growing and which are contracting? Where are the greatest opportunities and the greatest needs? How do your skills align with the priorities of your community and the larger society? Check out the Bureau of Labor Statistics site to learn more about which occupations are growing or contracting: <https://www.bls.gov/emp/>

What do I want to do? Once you have written down what you are good at and the work you have done in the past and assessed the current and medium-term employment landscape, you are ready to weigh actual careers. Consider the following questions:

- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What kind of work would you be satisfied doing for the next 10 years?

- Do you want to work with people, food, or animals?
- Do you seek factory work, a desk job, or work done entirely on a computer?
- Are you drawn to building things, the service sector, or creative pursuits?

BUILD EXPERIENCE

Aligning your skills and interests with the actual job market will help you realize your career goals. You may not currently have a lot of experience in the field you want to work in or the career you wish to pursue. That does not have to be an obstacle to your plans. You have some options.

1. **Volunteer or intern with an organization part time.** Volunteer positions and internships are a good way to build experience and contacts. Search online, talk to people you know, and look on bulletin boards in libraries and other community venues to identify organizations that use volunteers or interns. Be proactive and contact them to learn how you can apply to intern or volunteer. This can be both professionally and personally rewarding. See our "Connecting with Community" section on page 138.
2. **Pursue your education. Some fields and jobs require college degrees.** Job listings almost always say if a certain degree is required (or preferred). Being a student can be rewarding. It can be a change of pace from full-time employment. You can receive money through financial aid, scholarships, and grants to support yourself while in college. See our education section on page "Education" on page 66 for more information.
3. **Start your own organization or business.** If you have the time and resources, starting

your own organization or business can help you build a meaningful career. This is a challenging career choice, but it can be satisfying. It takes perseverance and imagination, but you will be proud one day to be able to say you started your own after-school program, fitness coaching business, dog rescue, graphic design service, or house cleaning business. If you are committed to starting your own business, spend some time identifying what your community needs and wants. Talk to others who have started their own organization or who have experience running a small business for guidance. Many EJP alumni are examples of formerly incarcerated people who have gone on to do this work. Maybe this is the route for you too! For self-employment suggestions, see “Self-Employment” on page 52.

POPULAR EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Commercial Driver (CDL)

Many formerly incarcerated people have had success finding jobs as commercial bus or truck drivers. Here’s how you can get started in this field:

1. **Apply for a temporary commercial learner’s permit.** If you have had a CDL in the past or in a different state, speak with the Vehicle Services Department to find out what you need to do to get a license. Your learner’s permit is good for 180 days. To get a learner’s permit in Illinois, you will need:
 - A valid driver’s license. If your license has been suspended or revoked, see “Getting Your License Back” on page 47.
 - Proof of legal presence (such as a birth certificate or permanent residence card)
 - A \$50 fee
 - A completed application

2. **Complete training.** If you have not already had training, you may want to take a class at a commercial driver’s training facility. If you reside in Illinois, a list of Illinois certified training facilities can be found at: https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/driver_education/home.html
3. **Take the road and written tests.** A study guide for the tests can be found here: https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dsd_cdl10.pdf
4. **Get your CDL.** You will need to pay \$60 for the license and it will need to be renewed every 4 years.

HEALTHCARE, PARK DISTRICTS, AND SCHOOLS

In Illinois, working in some fields with a conviction requires a waiver. Illinois state employment laws changed in 2016, under pressure from community reform advocates and legislators, making it easier for people with convictions to be employed in certain jobs. For jobs in schools and park districts, if it has been seven years since you were convicted, you are not barred from working in these contexts.

Note: Employment laws may change again, and we will note any changes in future guides.

Healthcare Jobs

Healthcare employment is almost always in high demand and can be fulfilling. This includes jobs like nurse, athletic trainer, speech pathologist, certified dental assistant, and many others. Not all healthcare jobs require licenses, but the ones that do require you get a waiver if you have a felony.

In Illinois, if you have a felony or multiple felony convictions, you will need to wait a few years after you are off of parole before applying for a waiver.

- Three years for one felony conviction
- Five years for two to three felony convictions
- Ten years for more than three felony convictions

Before applying for a waiver, you will also need to:

- Complete parole
- Pay any court-related fines or have a payment plan in place.
- Do everything required by the court(s) that



Note: Not everyone gets their dream job, but many people end up doing things they enjoy. You can increase your chances by planning and by being realistic. Some careers take more time and money than others to achieve, and some take many tries to break into. Don’t be afraid to fail a few times.

sentenced you. For instance, you may need to complete a drug or alcohol recovery program.

You can find the healthcare waiver application online at <http://dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/forms/waiver-application-revised-may-2020.pdf>

You should send your completed waiver to this address: Health Care Worker Registry, 525 W Jefferson St, Fourth Floor, Springfield, IL 62761

If you have one of the following convictions, it will be harder to get a healthcare waiver: assault, battery, sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, and all types of homicide.

But, you should still apply! To do so, submit a waiver application following the same steps listed above. If you are denied, the next step is to appeal. You will need to

collect and mail a few things for your appeal. Send your appeal to this address: Health Care Worker Registry, 525 W Jefferson St, Fourth Floor, Springfield, IL 62761.

- A letter appealing your denial of the waiver. The appeal requires you to state the reasons why you appealed. This means the reasons why you want to work in this field, especially if you have a personal connection to healthcare.
- The original waiver application and any information they sent you when the waiver was denied.
- A copy of police reports for all disqualifying convictions. (Contact the police department where you were arrested)
- A transcript of the trial or court proceedings for all disqualifying convictions. (Contact the Circuit Clerk where you were sentenced, see page 205)

The following items will need to be included with your application:

- A written explanation of your conviction(s); what happened, how many years it has been, and any other circumstances that led to it. This is your chance to tell your personal story.
- Your work history.
- Your criminal history.
- Documentation showing you completed a rehab program (if required by a judge or parole).
- Documentation showing that all court fines have been paid, or that you have a payment plan.
- Documentation showing your parole has ended.
- Typed character reference letters. Include letters about why you would be a good fit for a healthcare profession from a co-worker or friend. Please also include their contact info.
- Typed employment reference letters. Include letters about why you would be a good fit for a healthcare profession from a co-worker or boss. Please also include their contact info.
- Anything that demonstrates your reliability or achievement. This could include awards, volunteering work or church work, proof of a college degree, anger management course completion, etc.
- You may also want to include a typed resume.

Self-employment

Being your own boss has its merits. You can set your own schedule, pace, and whatever money you make is yours (after you pay the business' bills). It does have some drawbacks, too. Small businesses require money to start and take a lot of work to maintain. Owning a small business can be a fulfilling long-term career if it is done thoughtfully.

If you can make money at it, people have created a business for it. That means there are many, many opportunities for your small business. When we were putting together earlier versions of this guide, we spoke to people with convictions operating businesses doing personal fitness, food delivery, freelance painting, and home cleaning. Their advice for anyone starting a small business was to jot down a few ideas on paper first.

You might also ask yourself these questions: What exactly do I see this business doing? Is there a clear need/demand for this kind of thing in the community? How am I going to pay for this? What is the timeline for starting my business? What happens if my timeline needs to change? It is also a good idea to seek feedback on your plan from others. They might see a challenge or a good idea that you initially overlooked.

For more details about starting your own business, please see the Illinois Small Business Development Center: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/smallbizassistance/Pages/default.aspx>



Note: People who have been incarcerated have notified us about lending companies that target people leaving prison. These companies will loan you money at a high rate. This money can be very difficult to pay back, especially for people who haven't yet found a job. Please be wary of these loan advertisements.

Potential Challenges. Plainly put, starting a business from scratch is hard. Weighing difficulties against benefits is an important part of helping your business succeed. If there are too many challenges, you may want to consider changing your timeline. People we've talked to who have been incarcerated highlighted that starting a business can cause strain on your relationships with friends, family, and partners. They suggest communicating your plans with the people you care about before you set anything in stone, keeping them in loop about how things are going, and taking care to maintain your relationships after you open your business. Starting a small business requires a lot of money. The people we talked to said they worked for a few years to save money first. Getting loans may be easy, but it can be tricky to pay them back while also paying rent and salaries to employees. Many businesses do not succeed, but the loans will still have to be repaid even if you have to close.

Next steps. If you have decided that you want to move from planning to creating your business, it is a good idea to seek out professional business help. In Illinois, you need to file with the state to make your business official. Depending on where you are, there may be additional hurdles. Talking with someone who understands the ins and outs of loans and taxes is strongly recommended. Lawyers who advertise experience with incorporation can file your paperwork, but they also charge a fee. Free resources do exist. Illinois Small Business Development Centers are a statewide resource that provides planning advice, counseling, training, and access to financing programs. To find one near you, go online to www.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance. Depending where you are, there might be a local business "accelerator" or organization you can work with. Searching on the Internet for these resources and seeking out your local business association/chamber of commerce are ways of finding additional support.



Education

Many people consider furthering their education after release. This guide is produced by the Education Justice Project at the University of Illinois and we are supporters of all levels of education. Education stimulates the mind, helps a person better understand the world they live in, and can open doors both socially and financially. It is a way of meeting new and interesting people, and can also help you support yourself after release.

This chapter contains information about different kinds of education, such as Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED), vocational education, and higher education (as in college). The first part of this chapter deals with ABD, GED, and vocational education. The second part of this chapter deals with higher education and includes sections on applying for college, financial aid, and other resources for college students. It concludes with tips from formerly incarcerated people who have taken college classes while in prison, and/or after their release.

We encourage you to think of yourself as a lifetime learner. It is never too late to learn or go to school or college, and life tends to be much richer when you feed your mind. If you were involved in educational opportunities while incarcerated, you probably already have a sense of this. If you have not taken advantage of education programs in prison, we encourage you to seek out whatever educational opportunities may be available before you leave.

Some people take classes to advance at their job, to explore a potential new area of employment, to complete a college degree, or just for fun or interest. Employers, apartment managers, and others may also look favorably at educational experiences. You can enroll in classes part-time or full-time. Explore the options in your community and beyond.

Adult Basic Education Programs

ABE programs serve students aged 16 and over who want to improve their skills in reading, writing, math, listening, and speaking. Typically, ABE programs are offered at adult schools, career centers, libraries, and community colleges. They're often free, or charge a small fee. Agencies like Kaplan and ELS Language Centers also offer ABE, but they charge higher fees.

In addition to offering courses in basic skills, ABE programs also include English as a second language (ESL) courses and GED preparation. A database of ABE programs in Illinois can be found at www.ilcco.net/AdultEd/index1.cfm. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of these programs might only be offered online.

General Education Development Test

The GED test allows adults who have not completed high school to show they have mastered the knowledge and skills associated with a high school diploma. A GED or high school diploma is a requirement for many jobs. We encourage you to prioritize getting your GED if you don't already have it.

You can register online to take the GED test at ged.com. Individuals should make sure that they meet the eligibility requirements for taking the GED exam. Tests are usually administered on a computer at an official GED testing site that you select during registration, though because of COVID-19, testing procedures have changed. Find out more here: <https://ged.com/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Students can prepare for the GED through programs at local community colleges, adult learning centers, and online study (most programs are offered online because of COVID-19). Most GED preparation programs are free of charge and open to individuals 16 years of age and older. Many programs allow students to enroll at any time. They also provide individual study plans that give students the chance to focus on the areas in which they need strengthening. For more information see https://study.com/illinois_ged.html

Vocational Programs and Apprenticeships

Vocational programs provide you with the unique skill sets required for a particular job or trade. They are also referred to as occupational, vo-tech, or career and technical education programs. These programs are available through community and technical colleges, as well as trade schools.

Often, vocational classes are offered in prisons. Such classes can be used to gain some experience and to gauge your interest in a field. You may consider exploring what vocational classes may be offered in prison before you leave. Apprenticeships are a good way to gain hands-on training in a trade or profession. They can also allow you to earn income while gaining valuable knowledge and experience in a specific profession. Apprenticeships are usually offered through trade unions.

Visit the website for Illinois workNet to find a vocational program: www.illinoisworknet.com. The Illinois American Job Center is another good place to look: <https://www.usa.gov/find-a-job>

For more information on apprenticeship programs in Illinois, go to <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/Apprenticeship.aspx>

Consider seeking simple certifications, like CDL, sanitation, limo driver, or forklift.

—Earl W., EJP Alumnus



Higher Education Programs

If you already have a high school diploma or GED, a next step on your educational path could be to enroll in a college program. For people who haven't been in school for a while, the most common path towards an academic degree begins at a community college. The low cost of tuition and the variety of programs offered makes

these colleges an ideal starting place. Many community colleges offer dual enrollment programs, which allow you to earn an adult high school diploma or GED and college credits at the same time. Associate degrees are usually two-year degrees, and bachelor's degrees are typically four-year degrees. When you transfer from a community

college to a four-year institution you've essentially completed the first two years of a bachelor's degree, at a much lower tuition rate.

You have to earn a certain number of credits to get a degree. Some credits have to be in general subjects like science, math, and history. If you finish these general credits at a community college and transfer to a bigger school, your credits can transfer over too. Make sure to check in advance that your school will count your transfer credits.

Check out the website of the Illinois Community College Board for information about planning for college, paying for college, and selecting a college. Visit it at: www.iccb.org/students/. You can also explore the websites of the schools you're interested in, or you can call, email, or visit an admissions counselor or academic advisor at these schools.

WHERE SHOULD YOU APPLY?

Not all colleges are the same. Deciding where to go may take some time, but it is very important to think about what kind of degree you want and what kind of college you want to attend, then research colleges online or at the local library. Almost all colleges have websites where you can learn about their price, academic programs,

non-academic activities, the town where they are located, and many other things. Going to college is a big decision, so you want to inform yourself as much as possible.

APPLYING FOR COLLEGE

Step 1: Get the Application

Most colleges have online applications on their websites. You can also call or e-mail the school's admissions office and ask them to send you an application, or go to the admissions office and pick one up. These days, the admissions process is usually done entirely online.

Step 2: Gather Your Information

Not all schools will ask for the same information, but you will probably need your Social Security number, a state driver's license or identification card, dates of high school and previous college attendance, unopened transcripts from high school, GED, and/or college transcripts, whichever you completed most recently. You can request transcripts from your former institutions. Many four-year colleges will also require ACT or SAT test scores.

Some applications may ask about your criminal history. If you indicate that you have been convicted of a felony, some schools will ask for additional information, which may be discouraging. But just because they are asking for the information doesn't mean your application will be rejected. You can also ask to speak with an admissions counselor about this step.

Step 3: Preparing for and taking SAT or ACT college entrance exams

As noted above many four-year colleges require applicants to take the ACT or SAT college entrance exam from students who are applying directly from high school or GED status. Community colleges do not require these exams. If you are applying to transfer from a community college, you most likely would not have to take these exams. You also may not have to take them if you are transferring in college coursework that you completed while incarcerated. An admissions counselor can give you more information.

We recommend that you avoid "for-profit" online universities, such as University of Phoenix, or Ashford University (you can find a comprehensive list of for-profit universities at wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_for-profit_universities_and_colleges). Statistics show that an overwhelming majority of students who attend these schools never finish their degree programs. Those who do may face difficulties when applying for jobs with credentials from these schools, as they are widely seen as having questionable reputations. These schools also tend to be very expensive, and usually only offer loans (which you have to pay back, often at very high interest) and not scholarships (which you do not have to pay back).



Stay focused on your goals.

—Greg A.



If you do need to take the SAT or ACT, there are many test-prep services, although they can be very expensive. Most colleges allow you to take either test. Some of these test prep services do offer discounts on the fees. They may not offer a discount, but it's always a good idea to ask. You can also purchase study guides for these exams and prepare for the test on your own. Khan Academy offers online SAT test prep for free at <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>

Step 4: Complete the Application

Most applications for four-year colleges require a "statement of purpose" essay. This can often be the toughest part of an application. But these essays are your opportunity to shine, especially if you have

completed college coursework while incarcerated. It is also important that you make your goals clear in these statements. It is a good idea to have a few people that you trust look over your statement in order to catch grammatical mistakes, and also to make sure that you present yourself with purpose and confidence.

Step 5: Submit the Application

At most community colleges you will receive a letter of acceptance or a phone call within a few weeks after you've submitted your application. Four-year colleges can take longer, and may have specific schedules for responding to applicants. If you have questions, contact the school's admissions office.

Paying for Your Education

Finding the funds to pay for your education is a challenge. Where do students get the money?

Generally, funding comes from one or more of the following sources: family resources, wages from full- or part-time work, support from an employer, and financial aid. This includes grants, student loans, work-study, and scholarships. Grants and scholarships do not have to be paid back. Loans do have to be paid back, usually with interest, depending on the lender. Work-study is basically a grant that you work off in the form of a campus job, where you earn the amount of the grant broken down into hourly wages. Veterans may also be eligible for additional funds for college. See <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/military>

FAFSA. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the starting point for accessing all federal student aid. You can find FAFSA online at www.fafsa.gov, or you can request a paper copy from 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243). State deadlines are different and are listed on the FAFSA form. Individual college deadlines may be much earlier than the federal deadline so be sure to check the school's website or call the financial aid office. You should complete and submit your FAFSA as soon as possible because some financial aid funds are first come, first served. If possible, complete and submit the FAFSA while still in prison so your aid is processed in time for you to start school.

Applying for federal student aid is free, can be complicated, and the range of awards is very broad. Awards are usually based on how much income a student has, and the cost of the school they want to attend. Financial aid, including Pell Grants, state grants, work-study and loans, is available to students on probation, parole or living in a halfway house. Your past history with creditors does not automatically disqualify you. Do not hesitate to ask for guidance from the financial aid office at your school. College financial aid offices generally offer email and phone support for applicants, as well as financial aid counselors you can meet with.

It is always better to ask questions and be informed when making financial aid decisions. The financial aid office at the college or university you are applying to is a good resource for your questions and concerns and will process your FAFSA for you after you have submitted it. They will get back to you with an offer for financial aid which may include a combination of grants (scholarships), loans and possibly work-study. You are not required to accept the package as a whole but can choose the parts that work for you, for example accepting a grant but not a loan.

There is a federal law that limits some people with criminal records from being eligible for federal student aid. The first restriction only applies if you were convicted of a drug offense (a misdemeanor or felony) while you were receiving financial aid in the past. But

even if you have a drug conviction that occurred when you were receiving financial aid, the law may not apply to you if a certain period of time has passed since the conviction or if you have completed drug treatment. A drug conviction prior to your start of enrollment would not have an effect on Pell Grant eligibility. If you have been previously incarcerated due to a drug conviction and have now been released and are pursuing a degree, you could potentially receive Pell Grant if you meet all other criteria. School financial aid staff should be able to give you more information about this.

The other restriction applies to an individual subject to an involuntary civil commitment after completing a period of incarceration for a forcible or non-forcible sexual offense. Such individuals are ineligible to receive Pell Grants. For more information on federal funding eligibility for those with a felony conviction, see: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/criminal-convictions>. It would also be helpful to speak with a financial aid officer at the schools you are applying to.

If a grant, loan, or scholarship offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Like “diploma mills”, there are many for-profit companies that take advantage of people who are looking to finance their education. Applying for financial aid should be free, and you should research the agency or company before applying.



Be aware that if you take out student loans, you will emerge from your educational experience with an obligation to repay that debt. Please consider carefully how you will handle the repayment of student loans after you have finished college, as this will impact future decisions about finances and future employment.

Remember to keep copies of all applications and related paperwork in your portfolio.

Work Study

Work-study positions are jobs offered to full-time and part-time students with financial need through the college they are attending. You can indicate your interest in work-study when you submit the FAFSA. Work study is a way to make money while in school, and build your work history. They are often offered first come, first serve, and you can decline an offer if you don't think it's a good fit.

Loans

Be aware that if you take out student loans, you will emerge from your educational experience with an obligation to repay that debt. Please consider carefully how you will handle the repayment of student loans after you have finished college, as this will impact future decisions about finances and future employment.

A full time, work study student with Link benefits can bring in \$800 a month plus free transportation. That is a game changer.

—Earl W., EJP Alumnus

Scholarships

There is a wide variety of scholarships available for college that can come from the college or other organizations. Many are related to a student's academic major, though some are related to their career goals, or other aspects of a student's background. The financial aid office can usually provide you with information on many available scholarships. Scholarship information is also available at public libraries and online.

EJP Scholarships

The Education Justice Project (EJP) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has offered courses to incarcerated students at Danville Correctional Center since 2008. In keeping with our efforts to promote higher education, we have a scholarship program. The scholarships described below are need-based and can be applied towards educational costs (e.g., tuition, books, fees) at accredited post-secondary institutions. Application materials include a cover sheet, an essay, and verification of enrollment in a higher education program. The deadline for application is typically in November. EJP offers:

- One \$1000 scholarship to a family member of an EJP student;
- One \$1000 scholarship to a family member of an IDOC or IDJJ staff person;
- One \$1000 scholarship to a family member of an incarcerated individual;
- Two \$1000 scholarships to individuals who have been released from an IDOC adult facility
- One \$1000 scholarship to an individual who has been incarcerated in an IDJJ juvenile facility.

For useful information about how to get your education after incarceration, see Study.com's guide, "How to Earn Your Degree and Get Hired After Incarceration." You can access it here: <https://study.com/resources/formerly-incarcerated-education-career-guide>



For the first time this year (2021), we are also offering two scholarships to formerly incarcerated individuals who have been deported to Mexico or who were incarcerated in Mexico. Applications for these are due on March 15 of each year. These scholarships provide support for study at any accredited postsecondary institution in the U.S. or Mexico:

- One \$10,000 MXN scholarship to an individual who was formerly incarcerated in Mexico;
- One \$10,000 MXN scholarship to an individual who was incarcerated in the US and subsequently deported to Mexico, or to a member of their immediate family.

For more information about how to apply for an EJP scholarship, please contact scholarships@educationjustice.net.



Be aware that if you take out student loans, you will emerge from your educational experience with an obligation to repay that debt. Please consider carefully how you will handle the repayment of student loans after you have finished college, as this will impact future decisions about finances and future employment.

Other Resources for College Students

TUTORING CENTERS

Many college campuses offer free tutoring to their students. Some have tutoring centers that cover all subjects while others have tutoring centers that focus on specific subjects like writing or math. If you are on a campus that has a tutoring center, take advantage of it. Your tuition pays for such services, so be sure to get your money's worth. Do not let pride get in the way of seeking out such services.

MENTORING AND STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Some colleges offer mentoring programs to new students. College mentors are more experienced students or other people who provide support to students who are new to college. Colleges increasingly have programs tailored especially for people with records, where they can get help navigating the system from others who have been in their situation.

CAREER CENTER

Most colleges have career centers that can help you find a job while you are in school and when you graduate. Career centers also offer workshops and tips on resumé writing, the job search, interview preparation, and related topics. Again, your tuition pays for these services, so do not hesitate to use them.

OTHER SERVICES

Most colleges also offer some healthcare services at your college, gym memberships, and passes for public transportation. Take full advantage of these services. Note: they are usually only good during the school year.

TIPS FROM RETURNED CITIZENS WHO WENT ON TO COLLEGE

- Start at a community college. The cost is significantly lower, and you can transfer to a four-year college afterwards.
- Take advantage of all of the resources you can.
- Apply for scholarships early and often, not just when you begin college. Some scholarships only provide a year of funding, or some may be available to students who have some experience in their field of study. Sometimes you may be eligible for more scholarships as your GPA improves. Financial aid

staff can help with this.

- Get to know the staff in the financial aid office. It is their job to direct you to scholarships, and it can be helpful if you can go to the same person for assistance.
- Go the extra mile. People often skip the scholarship applications that require essays, but the ones with essays can give you the chance to show who you really are.
- Your grades matter. Many scholarships and jobs after college take into account your GPA.
- Get involved. Honor societies, clubs and student organizations are gateways to scholarships, internships, networking, as well as making friends and developing a support network. Most things you do at college can be put on a resumé or scholarship application.
- Get to know your professors and the support staff. Go to your professor's office hours to ask questions, discuss your course progress, etc. You'll be surprised how much they can help. Sometimes they can help you find paid grading, teaching, or research opportunities that will give you excellent experience in your field. Getting to know your professors is also helpful if you later need to ask them for recommendation letters for graduate school, or employment.
- If you have any questions, ASK. Don't put pressure on yourself to figure these things out all on your own. This is true for learning about what colleges offer, and for your classes too.
- Do not give up if you are not accepted to college, or if you are not accepted to the college of your choice! You can always apply again. If you reapply, have folks you trust look over your application to make sure it's complete and to talk about how to strengthen your application.
- Sometimes students have to take time off from college because of funding, or if life gets in the way. That's common, and it's okay! It's almost always possible to return to college, and most schools are very happy when their students come back. It's also okay to finish up at a different college.
- Applying to college and being a student can be

complicated and difficult. But you have overcome the full process of the criminal legal system and the state prison system. You may also have completed college courses while inside. So when it comes to college, you've got this!



Housing

Finding a place to live is one of the most important parts of the reentry process. It can also be one of the most challenging parts. When searching for housing, key things to keep in mind are accessibility, affordability, and stability. You will want to look for a place where there are few or no barriers or restrictions to you living there. You want to find a place financially reasonable and within your means. And you will want to find a secure, stable environment where you can begin the process of starting your new life. This chapter takes a look at different kinds of housing and different stages of the housing process. It talks about some of the restrictions and obstacles some people face, and discusses housing discrimination and what to do if you've been discriminated against. It also offers an extensive list of housing resources available to you.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Many people who leave prison go to a relative's home. Others may go to a halfway house or transitional housing upon their release (Note: the terms halfway house and transitional housing often mean the same thing). There are benefits to going to a halfway house from prison, such as having a case manager. Some transitional housing programs, often called "recovery homes," help people recover from drug and alcohol addictions as well. Many transitional housing programs provide support services, such as employment help, case management, life skills training, and medical referrals. The quality of assistance you can receive at transitional housing programs varies by program. Some Illinois programs allow people to stay three months, others up to two years.

Our directory's Housing section provides a list of different transitional housing programs throughout the state, and a few in St. Louis. If you are looking for transitional housing in Chicago, you should complete an assessment through the Chicago Coordinated Entry System. Their website (www.csh.org/chicagoces) provides a list of social service agencies and churches where you can get an assessment. After your assessment is complete, a case manager will help you find the emergency housing, transitional housing, or permanent supportive housing that will best meet your needs. Many

housing programs in Chicago use the Coordinated Entry System.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS

If you find yourself without a place to stay, there are emergency shelters in Chicago and throughout the state. Some shelters are specifically for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse. Some have restrictions for people with sex offenses or those with violent offense designations. Many shelters offer food, laundry, and support services to help you find more permanent housing.

We have listed some emergency shelters in our directory, and you can find even more on national websites such as www.shelterlistings.org. If you are in Chicago, you can call 311 for city services and ask which shelters are accepting people. By completing an assessment through the Chicago Coordinated Entry System, you can also

There is a wide range of quality in transitional housing programs. It is important to learn about these programs before living there. You might ask things like whether they are religious, whether they allow you to work while there, and where they are located.



be directed towards emergency housing: <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>

BETTER HOUSING

Once you've been out of prison for some time, you might want to change your living situation. There's no rush! Especially if you were incarcerated for a long time, there are many advantages to living in a stable, somewhat controlled environment. And you don't want to find yourself in a position where you can't pay the rent and end up hurting your credit. There are a number of better housing options available, such as permanent supportive housing, subsidized or affordable housing programs, and private housing.

You are likely to face restrictions and obstacles when seeking better housing. However, recent legislation proposed or passed in Cook County and other parts of Illinois will make it easier for people with a criminal history to access public housing. See "Laws that Protect Against Discrimination" below.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

If you are a senior, veteran, or if you have a disability, mental illness or HIV/AIDS diagnosis, you may be eligible for a permanent supportive housing program. Permanent supportive housing typically includes support services, such as medical care and counseling. Some permanent supportive housing programs are free, while others are subsidized, meaning that you will pay a portion of the cost. Most programs do not have a limit on how long you can stay there. We have listed a few organizations that offer permanent supportive housing in our Housing Resources Directory.

If you are in Chicago, use the Central Referral System to find permanent supportive housing. Fill out an application online at crs.org, and a case manager will help match you to a permanent supportive housing. You can also use the Chicago Coordinated Entry System to find permanent supportive housing: www.csh.org/chicagoces

SUBSIDIZED AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

State or federally supported housing is cheaper than a private apartment, and some government housing authorities (Housing and Urban Development departments) have housing available for people who have been incarcerated. How much you pay for subsidized housing depends on how much money you

earn. Many places will require you to pay 30% of your income to rent. Other subsidized housing programs will provide a voucher for rent and utilities assistance. You can live in a private apartment or house of your choice, and they will help you pay for it. Government-subsidized and affordable housing programs often have long wait lists. Thus you should apply as early as you can. Some resources for finding state and federal housing are listed in the Housing directory on page 142.

Here are a few places to start:

- Chicago Department of Housing Services and Programs: Resources to address the needs of residents at all income levels. <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/doh.html>
- Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) Chicago: This program lets low-income families rent nongovernment housing at a discounted rate, with vouchers from HUD. Website: <https://www.thecha.org/>

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING RESTRICTIONS

Federally supported housing has some restrictions for those with a criminal history, though these restrictions are changing. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is allowed to deny subsidized housing to anyone with a lifetime registered sex-offender status and anyone with a conviction for producing methamphetamine. They are required to perform background checks and evaluate applicants on a case-by-case basis.

You should be aware that the HUD is allowed to deny housing to people with felony convictions, but it is not required to do so. HUD will also be interested in the criminal history of family members who will live with you. Violent crimes, drug use, and evictions for making or selling drugs in the past five years will likely lead to denial.

Please note that recent legislation in Cook County and other parts of Illinois will make it easier for people with a criminal history to access public housing. See "Laws that Protect Against Discrimination" below.

PRIVATE HOUSING

Private housing is often easier to find than public subsidized housing because there is more of it. However, it is also often more expensive. Private housing listings can be found online and in the classified section of newspapers. Some apartment finding websites include:

- www.apartments.com
- www.zillow.com
- www.forrent.com
- www.craigslist.org

You are likely to run into some barriers because of your criminal background, and it may take a while to find a landlord who is willing to rent to you. Large property management firms almost always conduct background checks, so you may have better luck with units in smaller complexes or in private homes. Unfortunately, we are not aware of any lists of “felon friendly” landlords.

Others who have come home from prison and have faced the challenges of finding housing will be your best source of useful information. If you are part of a reentry program, use it as a resource. We also encourage you to use your network of friends and family. They are most likely to know of places that will rent to someone with a criminal background. If you have a sexual offense conviction, pay attention to the locations of the properties you are considering. People with a child sex offense conviction cannot live within 500 feet of a school, playground, or other facility that serves children.

LEASING OR RENTING AN APARTMENT

Once you’ve found an apartment that interests you, call the landlord and set up an appointment to view the apartment. Make sure you arrive on time and dress for the occasion. You want to give a good first impression. If anyone asks you for money before you have even seen the apartment, you are probably being scammed. Do not pay anything before you have seen the apartment.

At your visit, you may be asked to fill out a rental application. This is a document that landlords use to screen applicants. There may be an application fee. Be sure to fill out the application fully and correctly. You will be asked to provide some personal information, such as your Social Security number, employer, rent history, and current address. You may also be asked for a list of references. You can use the same references that appear

on your resume. (Make sure you let your references know that you are listing them as housing references.)

Applying for housing can be intimidating. Many landlords require personal information in the application process and conduct background checks. The application may ask about your criminal history or indicate that they will be conducting a background check. Many people worry that if they disclose information up front, they may hurt their chances of getting an apartment. Even though this may be true, we suggest that you be up front if they ask. It will not necessarily disqualify you. Disclosing information can save time and an explanation after a background check is completed.

Be kind and courteous when you speak to potential landlords. Even if they choose not to rent to you, they may call you later if they can’t find anyone else to rent to.

Once a landlord agrees to rent to you, you will be offered a lease or a rental agreement to sign. A lease is usually a year-long commitment, and you agree to pay a certain amount each month for the whole year. A rental agreement is typically a month-by-month agreement — after 30 days, both you or the landlord are free to back out or change the agreement.

Read the lease or rental agreement carefully and understand the amount you are agreeing to pay per month before signing or paying any fees. These are legally binding agreements, and you won’t be able to back out once you have signed. Keep a copy of the lease or rental agreement in a safe place.

Here are some questions that you can ask the landlord during your visit:

- What is the monthly rent?
- Are utilities included?
- When is the rent due?
- What is the parking situation?
- How much is the security deposit?
- Are tenants able to make minor modifications (e.g., paint the walls)?

Many landlords require you to pay one to two month's rent as well as a security deposit before you move in. The security deposit shows that you are serious about renting the apartment. If you choose not to move into the apartment, the landlord keeps this money. Ask for a receipt for the security deposit and any other fees you pay.

When you move out, your security deposit will be used to cover any damages to the apartment that you caused. Your landlord should not use your security deposit to pay for regular wear and tear of living in your apartment, but for exceptional items: for example, a broken light fixture broken or carpet damage. You should receive a receipt for specific damages when you are moving out. Any leftover money from the security deposit should be mailed to you within 30 to 45 days.

BREAKING A LEASE

If you find that you need to move out before your lease has expired, you can do so. However, you will be expected to pay a fee for breaking the lease. The amount that you will pay will normally be listed in the lease, so read it carefully before you sign. You may be required to continue to pay your monthly rent until they are able to find someone else to rent the apartment.

LAWS THAT PROTECT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

In 2016, HUD issued new guidelines to protect people who have criminal records from housing discrimination. Arrest records and convictions can be used to deny people housing, but landlords can no longer automatically refuse someone with a criminal record. The landlord must prove that they are refusing someone to protect their property or the safety of people living in their housing.

It is also illegal, according to the federal Fair Housing Act, to discriminate in housing based on age, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disabilities. In Illinois, it is also illegal to discriminate based on marital status and sexual orientation.

If you live in Chicago, the Just Housing Ordinance came into effect on January 1, 2020. This ordinance is the beginning of changes to Chicago law and may help you secure housing. It prohibits housing discrimination based on an individual's covered criminal history, and it requires landlords to perform an individualized

assessment of an otherwise qualified individual's criminal conviction history prior to denying them an application for housing.

Here are a few key points of the Just Housing Ordinance:

- A landlord cannot consider criminal history that is more than 3 years old, unless the applicant is on the sex offender registry.
- For individuals with a criminal history that is less than three years old, a landlord must conduct an individualized assessment and can consider things like the nature and severity of the criminal offense, age, evidence of rehabilitation, etc.
- Landlords cannot consider arrests that did not result in convictions when evaluating rental applications.

Landlords are required to engage in a two-step tenant screening process.

- **Step one: Prequalification.** A landlord may screen a tenant to determine whether the tenant satisfies application criteria such as income, rental history, credit score, etc. Criminal background checks cannot be performed during this stage.
- **Step two: Criminal background check.** Only after the landlord prequalifies an applicant may a landlord conduct a criminal background check. They are not required to perform a background check.

Know your rights. Visit <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/justhousing> to learn more.

Some other cities also have housing discrimination laws and places you can go for help if you experience discrimination. For example, the Urbana Human Rights Ordinance forbids discrimination on the basis of criminal history.

The Illinois Department of Human Rights accepts housing discrimination grievances by phone, in person, or in writing. The Illinois Legal Aid Online has instructions, forms and resources to file a complaint: <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legalinformation/housing-discrimination-complaint-idhr>

You can also file discrimination grievances in the city where you live. Most cities have their rules online; these ordinances can be found by searching online.



Health

When you leave prison, you will be responsible for managing your own physical health. This can be a welcome change. On the other hand, managing your health can also feel overwhelming when faced with the complicated healthcare system. There are many different options for health insurance; many different kinds of clinics, hospitals, and healthcare professionals to choose from; and paperwork, applications, and bills to negotiate. Where do you start and how do you manage? Choosing a healthcare plan and a healthcare provider does require some work, but it is well worth it. Don't be afraid to ask for help from family and friends as you figure things out.

In this section, we cover:

- Health insurance options, including Medicaid and Medicare
- How to stay healthy with regular and specialty doctor visits
- Dental and vision insurance
- Paying for medications
- HIV prevention, testing and treatment

For information about staying healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic, please see page 10 in the chapter "Reentry during COVID-19."

Mental health and substance use are covered in the next chapter on page 86.

Insurance Coverage

It is important to have health insurance coverage so that you can be prepared to pay for doctor's visits, medications, vaccines, laboratory tests, and emergencies. Health insurance can be expensive and seem like yet another bill you have to pay each month, but doctor's appointments can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars if you are not insured. Insurance can help you keep these costs down so that you can get healthcare without risking bankruptcy from expensive hospital bills.

Upon release from prison, you have 60 days to enroll in one of the following health insurance programs, which we describe in more detail below.

1. **Medicaid** is a federal program that offers assistance with healthcare costs.
2. **Medicare** is a health care program for seniors 65 or older who have paid into the Social Security system.
3. **The Healthcare Marketplace** (part of the Affordable Care Act) is a program where you choose and buy insurance plans that are partly paid for by the government, rather than an employer.

4. **Employee health insurance.** Some employers offer health insurance plans where the employer pays for some of the cost of the plan. When you apply for jobs, make sure you know what healthcare benefits are available.
5. **Student health insurance.** If you're a full-time student, you may also be able to get health insurance through your college or university. Check with the office of student affairs at your school.

6. **Parents' insurance.** If you are 26 years old or younger and you have parents who have health insurance, you can talk to them about enrolling under their plan as a dependent.

Most important—eat right, exercise, and spend time with your family.



—Marlon C., Returned Citizen

If you don't have health insurance but need care, there are public and community health programs all over Illinois that offer free or low-cost services. Examples of services include vaccinations and immunizations, nutrition and food stamp programs, STD screening, cancer screening, HIV/AIDS services, dental health for children, pregnancy and maternity assistance, quit smoking programs, and hearing tests. Find free or partially subsidized care through public health programs or clinics at www.app.idph.state.il.us/cecweb or www.illinoisfreeclinics.org



Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal program that offers assistance with healthcare costs. Most hospitals and health clinics accept Medicaid payments. To qualify for Medicaid you must make below a certain dollar amount, depending on the number of dependents you have in your household. To see if you qualify, visit www.healthcare.gov

You can apply to Medicaid one of four ways:

1. You may be able to apply in prison before you leave. Talk to your counselor.
2. Apply online at Illinois' Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) page: abe.illinois.gov
3. Apply in person at a hospital or DHS Family Community Resource Center. You can find the nearest center by going online to: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>
4. Apply by mail or fax. You can call DHS to mail you an application by calling 800-843-6154 (TTY 800-447-6404). Complete the application and mail or fax it back to the nearest Family Community Resource Center.

GATHERING YOUR INFORMATION

Before applying you need to have a few documents ready:

- Income verification. This could be pay stubs, a financial aid award letter, a written statement from your employer, or a copy of your check stub showing your total income before taxes.
- Your Social Security number.
- Proof of residency—any document that shows your address and name together will work.

APPLYING FOR OTHER PROGRAMS

If you do not qualify for Medicaid, you may still qualify for Premium Tax Credits that can be used to cover part of the cost of a different health insurance. Other programs include SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and CHIP (Illinois' Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan for children). When you fill out your Medicaid application online through the Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) system (www.abe.illinois.gov), you can apply for these other programs as well.

See Resources to Meet your Basic Needs on page xxx for more information about these and other assistance programs.

If you are receiving Medicaid or benefits from any of these other programs, you should report any changes to your income or dependent status as soon as possible. If you begin making more money than is allowed, you

may no longer qualify for these programs and you will start to lose substantial parts of your tax return on a monthly basis. You can report changes through the ABE system, by visiting a Department of Human Services Family Community Resource Center, or by calling the Department of Human Services during normal business hours (800-720-4166).

Marketplace Insurance

The Healthcare Marketplace is an option for anyone who needs to get health insurance coverage, but may not be able to get Medicare, Medicaid, or insurance through their employer. It is a federal program that works with health insurance companies to offer plans for individuals and families. After you are released from prison, you have 60 days to enroll. You can also enroll right after major life events, or during the open enrollment period.

HOW TO ENROLL IN A HEALTHCARE MARKETPLACE INSURANCE PLAN

- **Online:** Go to www.healthcare.gov or www.getcoveredillinois.gov and complete the application online. There are also Spanish versions of the websites.
- **By phone:** Call (800) 318-2596 or (866) 311-1119 to talk to someone who can help you complete your online application.
- **In-person:** There may also be days during the open enrollment period when local community health centers can help you sign up for health insurance in person. Check <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov/#intro> or call your local Department of Public Health.

You have to be in charge of everything yourself. You're not going to get called in later for a physical. The onus falls on you.

—Pablo

GATHERING YOUR INFORMATION

Before applying you need to have a few documents ready:

- Your tax returns
- Social Security information
- Immigration documents
- Pay stubs
- Previous coverage information (if you had it).

Go to a community medical center. You can get a free full physical when you get out of prison. We have to make sure there are no underlying conditions that we aren't aware of.

—Joe Joe

Choosing A Plan

If you are buying insurance through the Healthcare Marketplace, or through your employer, you will need to select a plan that best meets your needs and the needs of your family. It's helpful to understand a little bit about the costs of different health care plans.

If you need frequent or expensive healthcare services, consider getting a plan with a lower deductible and a higher premium. You will pay more per month, but the insurance company will pay for services once your deductible is met. If you have high medical expenses, the insurer will cover more of the cost.

If you are pretty healthy and do not need to go to the doctor very often, you might think about getting a plan that has a lower premium and a higher deductible. That way, you don't have to pay a lot per month for services you might not use. But in an emergency, insurance will cover some of the higher costs of healthcare.

Important Health Insurance Vocabulary

- **Premiums:** required monthly payments
- **Copay:** a set fee for primary care doctor visits, specialty doctor visits, hospital visits, or medicine
- **Coinsurance:** splitting the cost of a visit with your insurance company (e.g., you pay 20% and the insurer pays 80%)
- **Yearly deductible:** required amount of money you must pay before the insurance begins to pay for any additional services
- **Out-of-pocket maximum:** the most money you will have to pay for covered medical expenses for deductibles and coinsurance before the insurance plan begins to pay 100% of additional expenses.
- **Approved network:** the hospitals and clinics that will take your insurance

TYPES OF PLANS

The type of plan you choose will determine where you can go to receive services. Different plans have different networks. When you enroll in a plan, the health insurance provider can give you a list of which doctors, hospitals, and clinics you can use. If you and your family already have a doctor you know and trust, make sure that doctor is in your plan's network first and request to keep that doctor. If you have Medicaid or Medicare coverage, you should find out if the doctor, hospital, or clinic you want to go to accepts Medicaid or Medicare patients. Call them to find out.

Different kinds of plans:

- **Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO):** Services are covered only if you use doctors, specialists, or hospitals in the plan's network (except in an emergency).
- **Health Maintenance Organization (HMO):** Limits coverage to care from doctors who work for or contract with the HMO. It generally won't cover out-of-network care except in an emergency. An HMO may require you to live or work in its service area to be eligible for coverage.
- **Point of Service (POS):** You pay less if you use doctors, hospitals, and other healthcare providers that belong to the plan's network. POS plans require you to get a referral from your primary care doctor in order to see a specialist.
- **Preferred Provider Organization (PPO):** You pay less if you use providers in the plan's network. You can use doctors, hospitals, and providers outside of the network without a referral for an additional cost.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Everybody's needs are different and some plans will cover things that others don't. Here are a few things to consider:

- Does your plan cover eye exams and glasses? (see Vision Insurance below)
- Does your plan cover dental services? (see Dental Insurance below)
- How much will it cost to put your child on your plan?
- Do you need to see a specialist, and does the plan

cover the specialist's service?

- Does the plan cover mental health services? (See page 86)
- Does your plan cover the prescription drugs you need at prices you can afford?

The process of choosing your healthcare providers can be overwhelming and confusing. Don't get discouraged. Look up the phone numbers of your insurance or medical providers and ask them to help you figure out what you need. It's their job to help you.

Once You Have Insurance

Your job isn't over! Make sure that you know the costs of the services you want to receive before you go to your appointments or schedule surgery. Don't wait for the insurance company to send you a bill. Health insurance companies provide booklets and websites to help you understand how much a hospital stay or specialist visit will cost, and you can always call your insurance company if you have questions.

When you receive bills, look over them carefully and ask questions so that you understand them. Health insurance companies and organizations make mistakes, so it's important to make sure you understand your bills before you pay them. It's also a good idea to make sure that the provider you want to see is in your insurance network. If not, you may have to pay the full cost of the visit.

Dental and Vision Insurance

You may be interested in a healthcare plan with dental and/or vision insurance. Some dentists will accept Medicaid payments—ask them to find out.

Dental and vision are not always included in Marketplace plans, so think about your needs and check each plan before you enroll (dental and vision plans are mandatory for kids). The Healthcare Marketplace offers separate dental plans you can buy if your health insurance plan does not cover dental visits. To find out more about dental plans offered through the Healthcare Marketplace, visit this website: www.healthcare.gov/coverage/dental-coverage

You can also visit this website for low-cost dental care without insurance: <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/finding-dental-care>. Another option for dental care is to find a dental college in your area. Dental students, under the supervision of professionals, can do dental work for a lower cost while gaining experience. To find a dental school in your area, visit this website: www.ada.org/en/coda/find-a-program

We strongly suggest that you get your teeth cleaned and examined every six months. Oral health is important for your overall health, as poor dental hygiene can lead to

bigger health problems in the future. You are important, so take good care of yourself!

VISION INSURANCE

Some health insurance plans offer vision care, which covers yearly eye exams and some of the cost of glasses and contacts. Check your health insurance plan to see what is covered because you may have to buy a separate plan for eye care. Medicare does cover eye exams, and Medicaid covers vision care for eligible children.

If you do not have vision care insurance and all you need are glasses, there are several programs that offer free eye exams for adults and glasses for uninsured or underinsured, low-income people. It is recommended that you get your eyes checked once a year. If you have vision problems like glaucoma, cataracts, or retinal tears, look for a plan that covers ophthalmologist services so that you can take care of your eyes.

- VISION USA (eye exams) - (800) 766-4466
- Eyecare America (eye exams) - www.aao.org/eyecare-america
- InfantSEE (free eye exams for babies 6-12 mo.) - www.infantsee.org

- Sight for Students (glasses for children) - (888) 290-4964
- New Eyes (free glasses program) - (973) 376-4903

Some big chain stores like Walmart and Target have eye departments that you can use without insurance, and this can be cheaper than going to a hospital eye

department. If you have a current prescription for glasses, you can buy affordable glasses online. The only downside is that you can't try them on before you buy them, so check the store's return policy. ZenniOptical.com and www.goggles4u.com offer frames starting at around \$10.

Primary Care Provider

Most health insurance plans require you to pick a primary care provider. This person will serve as your "medical home" and is usually a family physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or internal medicine physician. Having regular visits with a primary care provider is the best way to manage your health. Go see this person instead of going to the emergency room or urgent care, as it will save you money and time and increase your likelihood of staying healthy.

Going to the office of my primary care physician was actually a pleasant experience. It was nothing like it was on the inside.

—Pablo



A primary care physician can also give you a full physical examination, perform lab work, and provide prescription renewals. It is recommended that you have a full physical at least once a year and complete routine exams. Below are age and sex-based recommendations for health screenings.

Your primary care provider can also refer you to specialists for some health concerns. Make it a priority to visit these specialists as soon as possible. Use your primary care provider to coordinate these visits. One way to contact your primary care physician is by signing up through your hospital network's online portal. Most clinics and hospitals provide this service. This will allow you to receive and access your medical records at any time, and to easily send messages to your provider and schedule appointments.

Pharmacy

Some insurance plans will help you pay for expensive medical prescriptions, while others do not. If you are having trouble paying for your medicine prescriptions, there are some other affordable options available. Make sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist if there is a generic version of the drugs you need. Generic drugs are much less expensive.

Goodrx.com is a website that compares prices of prescription medications and tells you where you can go for the best price. You can download their app on a smartphone or use it on a computer or tablet. Big box and chain stores like Target, Walmart, Costco, and Sam's Club often have special programs where you can purchase generic drugs for very cheap (\$4 for 30-day quantity or \$10 for a 90-day quantity).

ROUTINE EXAMS THAT CAN KEEP YOU HEALTHY

Age	Men	Women
18-39	blood pressure, cholesterol, flu shot, syphilis screen, TDAP shot, HPV shot, chlamydia/gonorrhea, HIV, skin exam	blood pressure, cholesterol, flu shot, TDAP shot, HPV shot, breast exam, after 21 PAP smear, skin exam, chlamydia/gonorrhea, HIV
40-64	blood pressure, blood sugar, colonoscopy (over 50), stool test, flu shot, shingles shot (over 60), prostate screen (over 50), lung cancer screen only if you smoke, skin exam	blood pressure, blood sugar, colonoscopy (over 50), stool test, flu shot, shingles shot (over 60), breast screen, mammogram (over 40), lung cancer screen only if you smoke, postmenopausal bone screening, PAP, pelvic, HPV, skin exam
65+	blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, colonoscopy until 75, hearing test, aneurysm screen if smoker, only prostate and lung screening if you have risk factors, pneumonia shot x2, skin exam	blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, colonoscopy until 75, hearing test, mammogram until 75, bone screening, PAP until 65, pneumonia shot x2, skin exam

HIV/AIDS

WHAT DOES HAVING HIV MEAN?

HIV is a virus that spreads by attacking and killing healthy cells in the body. This happens all over the body, destroying cells or forcing them to create new infected cells.

HIV targets immune system cells, known as T-cells. T-cells fight off infection by killing cells that have been infected by germs. As more T-cells start dying, the immune system is open to attack. If the number of T-cells drops too low, the risk of infection increases and can lead to AIDS. When someone has AIDS, their immune system becomes too weak to fight off other infections. If untreated, people can die of AIDS.

Fortunately, people who have HIV today can go on to live long and productive lives as long as they take steps to stay on top of their infection. HIV is a chronic illness that can be managed with daily medication, regular laboratory testing and physician visits, and healthy

lifestyle changes (exercise, stopping smoking, getting enough sleep, etc.).

Sometimes HIV testing is offered as part of the prison outtake process. We suggest you take advantage of this free testing, as knowing your status is very important.

RISK

The most common way for HIV to be transmitted is through sexual contact, but infected and untreated mothers are able to pass it on to their children. Avoid contact with blood, semen or vaginal fluid of sexual partners who are HIV-positive. Do not share needles or syringes and make sure to use protection (condoms) for any sexual contact.

Know the risk of spreading HIV to a sexual partner who is not HIV positive. Being treated with antiretroviral medications can reduce your chances of transmitting HIV to a partner. Taking antiretroviral medications

regularly lowers the levels of HIV in your blood. This does not mean that the virus is completely gone, so take precautions and use condoms even though the risk of transmission is low. If you do not have HIV but are in a relationship with someone who does, you can take PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), which reduces the risk of being infected.

There are also certain sexual activities that can increase your chances of transmitting HIV. For more information about HIV transmission and risk factors, visit: www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics

TESTING FOR HIV AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Testing for HIV is done through a blood, urine, or oral sample. A blood test is the most common and the most accurate. Locations to get tested can be found by using the CDC's HIV Test Locator at: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/hiv>

If you test positive, know that you can still live a long and meaningful life. A follow-up test will be done to verify the diagnosis. You should make an appointment to see a healthcare provider to stay healthy and possibly begin treatments.

You should still be cautious if the test comes back negative. If you have recently engaged in high risk behaviors with someone who has HIV, it is possible that the tests cannot yet detect HIV in your body. You should request another test at a later date. Check the CDC website for recommendations.

Being in prison increases the risk of acquiring many infectious diseases. After release from prison, you should be tested for Hepatitis C (HCV), Hepatitis B (HBV) and tuberculosis. HIV, HBV and HCV can be detected by a blood test. Tuberculosis can be tested by blood or by a skin test; if these tests are positive, the disease is confirmed by a chest X-ray.

 *Make sure that there's not something wrong with you that they didn't test for or detect while you were inside. When I first got home, they ran all these tests. I got called a few days later asking if I could come in again to see the doctor. When I came in, she went over the results, and she said, it doesn't look bad but you have chronic kidney disease. She wrote me a referral to go see a kidney specialist and she gave me some literature to read about the disease and how I could have gotten it.*

—Shaun W.

Mental Health & Substance Use

If mental health challenges or substance use are preventing you from functioning well or feeling good, get help from a mental health professional. If you are feeling especially bad or feel like you might be a danger to yourself or someone else, get help right away. Call the suicide hotline at **(800) 273-8255**. You can also call 911 or visit an emergency room if you are in crisis.

Even if you are not in crisis, don't delay getting help if you are feeling depressed, anxious, angry, or if you struggle with other mental health challenges. If you aren't feeling well mentally and emotionally, it makes it so much harder to move forward in positive and productive ways. When you are feeling mentally healthy, you will find that things will seem more manageable and you'll feel more hopeful.

A mental health professional can help you:

- Work to change harmful behaviors or cycles
- Feel stronger as you face challenges
- Help you come up with goals and plans to solve problems
- Identify how your ways of thinking are influencing how you feel

Mental health professionals can diagnose mental disorders and help you decide if it you should take medicine to treat them. They can also offer treatment for drug and alcohol addictions.

If you signed up for Medicaid, then you have access to some mental health and substance use services. These services often include counseling, therapy, medication management, support groups, and substance abuse treatment. Other health insurance plans may offer similar services, so be sure to find out what services your plan covers. It's a good idea to start by contacting

your primary care provider. They can help you with immediate care and refer you to other specialists (such as psychiatrists, psychologists, and counselors).

Even if you do not yet have insurance, there are affordable clinics and programs that you can go to for help. The Illinois Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) Mental Health Department provides a list of mental health providers near you as well as lists of resources and treatments available. See their website: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?> or visit a DHS Family Community Resource Center. For a list of offices, go to the DHS office locator: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12&officetype=5&county=>. Note that some offices may be closed due to COVID-19. It is recommended you check the website or call before traveling to the office to ensure it is open.

Advice for socializing outside? Learning coping skills and anger management. Being less abrasive and open-minded.

– Earl W., EJP Alumnus

If COVID-19 is a concern when you are seeking help, there are virtual options available to you. The Illinois DHS "Call 4 Calm" hotline provides free, anonymous emotional support for Illinois residents experiencing stress or other mental health concerns related to COVID-19. Text "talk" to 552020 to access this service. Once you text, a counselor from a community mental health organization will call you.

You can also call the Crisis and Referral Entry Service (CARES) line at (800) 345-9049. The CARES line is available throughout Illinois 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Another option is to call the **Illinois Warm Line** at (866) 359-7953 to get help with mental health and/or substance use challenges from wellness support

specialists. We have listed several other mental health care services in our directory.

See our Mental Health directory on page 180 for more mental health resources.

Support Groups

If you are struggling with drug or alcohol use, there are support groups you can go to, such as:

- Alcoholics Anonymous (www.aa.org)
- Narcotics Anonymous (www.na.org)

Drug rehabilitation programs are also likely available in your area if you need them. You can find them by doing a web search for “drug rehab programs” in your town.

There may also be support groups in your area for reentry, grief, mental health, domestic abuse, disabilities, parenting, divorce, sexuality, and other issues you may be struggling with.

Support groups can be tricky to find, especially if you live in a rural area. The easiest way to find one is through an internet search. Terms like “formerly incarcerated women,” “substance use support groups,” and “community support group + name of your community” will help you find local communities of support. You can also ask your primary care provider for information about a support group. Community centers and churches are also good sources of information. Many of them sponsor support groups at their facilities or can direct you to others.

Approach your first meeting with an open mind and try to find out all you can. You may need to attend several meetings before you feel things are “clicking.” If you don’t feel you have found “your” group, keep trying.

Seek counseling. There is nothing wrong with therapy.

– **Marlon C., Returned Citizen**

Even within the same organization, chapters can be very different and members come and go.

If COVID-19 is a concern when you are seeking group support, please note that many meetings have moved online. Visit www.aa.org or www.na.org to find a virtual meeting convenient for you.

What we’re competing with is not feeling like a helpless infant all the time. We don’t want to feel like we need to ask you for the simplest thing.

– **Joe Joe**

As you size up the right support group for you, look for:

- Regularly scheduled meetings with an ongoing agenda to reassure members that the group will be there for them in the future with support and information.
- Warmth and friendliness between members and a welcoming attitude toward newcomers.
- Some focus and structure to meetings, while allowing time for members to mingle informally.



Transportation

How are you going to get around? Transportation is important for employment, connecting with friends and family, and generally building a meaningful life. Unfortunately, it can get expensive.

If you return to a city like Chicago you'll have many transportation options. In small towns and rural areas, public transportation is usually limited and your only realistic choice might be a car. Below we discuss the various transportation options that might exist in a community, so that you can think about what will work best for you. At the end of this chapter, we discuss how to get your driver's license back if it has been suspended or revoked.

Buses and Metro

Save money by using public transportation. If you use the bus or metro train often, buying a monthly or yearly pass will reduce the cost of your fare per ride. Students, senior citizens, veterans, or persons with disabilities may qualify for reduced fare. The best way to learn about public transportation in your area is to do a google search for "public transportation" with the name of your city. Or you can visit the website www.google.com/maps and enter your origin and destination addresses to get step by step instructions of what public transportation you can use.

Chicago Bus and Metro Resources (CTA)

- Chicago Bus and Metro Route Information: www.rtachicago.org
- Reduced Fare for Seniors and People with Disabilities: <https://www.transitchicago.com/reduced-fare-programs/>

Trains and Long-Distance Buses

Trains can be a good long-distance option. The Metra is a train system that connects to suburbs around Chicago <https://metrarail.com/>. For longer distance trips, consider Amtrak. It has service throughout Illinois and around the country: www.amtrak.com/illinois-services-train

Another option for long distance travel is the bus. Some companies include Greyhound, BoltBus, and MegaBus. It is always a good idea to compare prices between trains, planes, and buses, as well as between bus companies.

Transportation during COVID-19: While public transit (buses, trains, subways) in Chicago and other places around Illinois remain open, they may have reduced services. When you are using public transit, sit as far away from others as possible, avoid touching surfaces and your face, wear a mask, and wash your hands afterwards.



Ride-hailing Apps and Taxis

Ride-hailing apps are a fairly new form of transportation. If you have a smartphone and a credit or debit card, you can download ride-hailing apps like Uber or Lyft to take short trips in your city where services are available. Ride hailing services are just like taxis, but the drivers are self-employed and use their own cars. Before you ride, read these tips on how to be safe <https://www.uber.com/us/en/ride/safety/tips/>. You will want to make sure the car you are entering is the one assigned to you by checking its license plate against the information listed on your phone.

Taxis are available in all major cities and the industry is regulated by the government. The regulation helps protect drivers and consumers alike and keeps prices consistent, but taxis are usually more expensive than ride-hailing apps.

Biking

Biking is a good way to save money, explore your community, and get fit. In some communities you can rent bikes. In other places, look for second-hand bike stores. If you bike, make sure you understand the rules of the road. In general, bicycles should follow the same rules as cars: they should stop at stop signs and traffic lights, use hand signals to switch lanes or make a turn, and yield to pedestrians. Wear a helmet to avoid serious injury. Below are some resources on biking:

- You can rent bikes to use in Chicago at: www.divvybikes.com
- Chicago bike maps: www.chicagocompletestreets.org/streets/bikeways

Carpool, Rideshare, and Carshare Programs

Another option for saving money on transportation is carpool and rideshare programs. You can look up carpool programs online or talk to family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors about scheduling carpool days and sharing the cost of gas. See, for instance www.pacerideshare.com

If you will only need a car occasionally, consider joining a carsharing program like Zipcar. Carsharing programs allow you to reserve a car when you need it, but you aren't responsible for the insurance, payments and repairs, things that make owning a car so expensive.

Cars

If you do buy a car, we recommend not buying a fancy, expensive car unless you can truly afford it. Instead, buy a less expensive used car that passes a mechanical evaluation from a reputable dealer. If you purchase a car from a private party, be sure to go together to your local motor vehicle department to transfer the title to your name, before you pay. You can also check a car's history, including past accidents, online using trade sites like autotrader.com. Buying from a private seller can be cheaper, but it is also riskier than buying from a reputable dealer. A few tips:

1. If you are taking out a loan to buy a car, make a budget and decide before you begin your search to see how much you are able to spend on monthly payments. See the "Finances, Credit, and Taxes" section on page 86 for more information on buying with credit and budgeting.
2. Before going to a dealership, do some research on the types of cars that will meet your needs and will be safe and reliable. Edmunds.com and Consumerreports.org are great places to start. Know the "bluebook" value of the cars you are interested in by looking for the specific make and model at Kelley's Blue Book (kbb.com).
3. Avoid car dealerships that advertise directly to people with bad credit. Be wary of companies or people who push you into purchasing a vehicle before you are ready.
4. Once you've found a vehicle you are interested in, check the vehicle history report, ask the seller lots of questions, and test drive the car to make sure that you are getting a reliable vehicle. It's a good idea to ask a mechanic to look at it before you purchase it.
5. Check prices on similar vehicles and go to more than one place to compare vehicles. This can help you negotiate a good deal.
6. Read the fine print carefully and understand the rules before you sign anything. Remember, what counts is what is in the contract, not what the

salesperson promised.

7. Make sure that you fill out all of the appropriate paperwork, especially if you are buying from an individual owner. You should get the title and registration before you give them any money.
8. Make sure that you have car insurance and a driver's license before you drive your car away. It is illegal to drive without insurance or without a license. See page 28 for information about getting a driver's license if it has been suspended or revoked. See below for information on car insurance.
9. Finally, be safe. We care about you! Please don't drink alcohol, text, or talk on your cell phone while driving, and always wear your seatbelt. It reduces your chance in the case of a serious accident by 50%.

CAR INSURANCE

Driving in Illinois requires car insurance. If you are pulled over while driving without insurance you may face a fine or prosecution. You will need to purchase an insurance plan and typically make a monthly payment to the insurance company. In accidents that are not your fault, an insurance agent will examine your car and pay out the money they owe you under your plan (as long as they agree that the accident was not your fault). In accidents that are your fault, your insurance company may or may not pay you to repair your car (depending on your plan). They will also likely pay to repair any cars you may have hit (up to the maximum amount of your plan). Any accident may raise the amount of your monthly payment.

Buying any kind of insurance can be confusing, so you may want to shop at an insurance company where you can talk to an agent by phone or in person. It is important to understand what the maximum amount of coverage is for the plan you are buying. If your coverage amount is too small to cover damage in an accident you caused, you could be on the hook for the difference if that person sues. Also, if your coverage is too small to cover the cost of damage in an accident not caused by you, you may not receive enough money from the insurance company to repair your car. You can compare insurance prices on the Illinois DMV website: www.dmv.org/il-illinois/car-insurance.php.

To have valid insurance under Illinois law, you have to buy an insurance plan that has both liability insurance and uninsured and underinsured motorist insurance. Liability insurance covers costs associated with injuries or property damage to others resulting from a car accident you might cause. Uninsured and underinsured motorist insurance covers injuries to you and/or your passengers in a car accident with an uninsured driver (or a driver whose auto insurance limits are not adequate to cover your costs).

CAR REGISTRATION

In Illinois you must have your car registered with the Secretary of State's office. To register a vehicle in Illinois, go to www.dmv.org/dmv-office-finder.php and find your local DMV office. Then go to <https://www.dmv.org/car-registration.php> to find the documentation you will need to bring to the DMV to register your car. Car dealers will complete this paperwork for you, but if you buy from an individual, this is your responsibility. Note that registration expires every year, and hence, it is your responsibility to renew it. You can find information about this process at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. Failing to register or renew your car will result in a very expensive ticket.

CAR INSPECTION

In Illinois your car also may need to be inspected for emissions and safety every two years. Not all cars need to be inspected (e.g. newer models, certain types, certain zip codes). In order to find out if your vehicle needs inspection, go to www.ilsos.gov/regstatus and type in your vehicle VIN (Vehicle Identification Number).



Communications

The world of personal and professional communication has changed rapidly in recent years. If you have been inside a long time, you might feel overwhelmed by all the new technology and devices. It's possible that you've never even used the internet before. Don't worry! You'll be able to figure it out, and this section will help. It addresses a range of topics, from the basics of using the internet to finding a cheap cell phone quickly.

Even if you had access to computers and cell phones before you went to prison, this section may still contain some useful information. Digital communications are changing all the time!

Become Acquainted With the Technology

Phones and computers are necessary for much of what you need to do after leaving prison. They are used for work, banking, communicating with family, making appointments, meeting with parole officers, ordering pizza, watching TV shows, paying bills, shopping, applying for jobs, and much more.

If you have been locked up since before these technologies became popular, take time to understand how vast they have become. Ask your family and friends to help you learn how to use a cell phone, smartphone, or computer. This might be overwhelming at first. It may feel like the world has moved so fast while you were in prison. Don't get discouraged. A lot of the technology

we use now was invented to help make things easier for people.

Learning how to use new technologies and digital devices can be fun. Play around by using these technologies to explore games, news, sports or even cat videos. This exploration will help you learn to use these new technologies; it is not time wasted. Also, keep in mind that if you've used your mp3 player or tablet you have already entered the galaxy of technology. What you don't learn today you can learn tomorrow. Take your time and become familiar with the technology that you use—eventually it will become second nature.

Getting a Phone

We recommend that you get a phone when you get out. You will need a phone to keep in contact with family, friends, your employer and your parole officer. There are three types of phones:

- **Basic cell phones** allow you to call people and send text messages. They are usually cheaper and easier to use.

- **Smartphones** can make calls and send text messages, and they can also access the internet (more about the internet below). Smartphones have programs (called "apps") that can do things like play music, give driving directions, check the weather, take pictures, and access social networks (Twitter, Facebook, etc.). It can be very useful to have a smartphone for searching for jobs, looking

up services, finding your way around, and more.

- **Landline phones** are phones connected to people's homes or businesses that aren't portable. Fewer people are using landline phones these days, but they are still one of the cheapest options out there.

Lifeline and SafeLink. If you qualify for Medicaid, SNAP, SSI, Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefits, or Public Housing Assistance, you should also qualify for a free or discounted phone or internet service through Lifeline and SafeLink.

SafeLink is a program that offers free smartphones or a SIM card and a phone plan (minutes, texts and data) for income-eligible customers. You can use one of their free smartphones or purchase your own phone, and they will give you a SIM card that will allow your phone to connect to their mobile network. Their basic phone plan has a limited amount of data, texting, and minutes, but you can add more for a fee.

Lifeline is a federal program that works with SafeLink to lower the monthly cost of phone and internet (Wi-Fi access in your home). Eligible customers can get up to \$9.25 toward their bill. Lifeline can be used for phone or internet, but not both.

How to apply. When you apply for public benefits (such as SNAP or Medicaid), ask if you can apply for SafeLink and Lifeline as well. Ask a friend, family member, case manager, or counselor to help you apply for SafeLink at safelinkwireless.com. You can also get enrollment support by calling 1-800-723-3546. You can apply for Lifeline at lifelinesupport.org. To apply for these services, you will need your contact info, mailing/home address and social security number. You will also need to be able to verify that you qualify for public benefits, or have proof that you meet the income requirements. These services are typically limited to one person per household.

You can find SafeLink phones and service plans at many stores around the state, including Walgreens, CVS, Family Dollar, and Schnucks.

Phone Services and Plans

If you are unable to get a phone plan through SafeLink or Lifeline, or you want to purchase your own phone and plan, EJP alumni have suggested MetroPCS and

Family Mobile (Walmart) as affordable phone purchase choices. The phones you get will not be top of the line, but are not overly expensive either. If you had a cell phone before you were incarcerated, ask your family if they still have the phone. It might still work, but you may want to reactivate service or change the number. Contact the phone service provider for help with this.

Smart phones, like all cell phones, come with service plans with monthly rates. You have two basic options for service plans:

- **Prepaid phone plans or no-contract plans.** You pay in advance for the service each month. You can discontinue at the end of each month or switch to a different service.
- **Post-paid phone plan with a contract.** You enter a contract to pay a monthly fee for service. They tally up your costs at the end of each billing cycle and charge you.

Phone plans have different service options. Generally, the services will cover the following:

- **Talk:** How many minutes you can talk on the phone each month. Many plans these days have unlimited talk time.
- **Text:** How many text messages you can send each month. Many plans these days have unlimited text.
- **Data:** Data enables your phone to connect to the internet when you don't have access to Wi-Fi (see Technology Basics below). If you only need a phone for calls, you may not need to purchase a data plan. Keep in mind that you can connect your phone to the internet through free Wi-Fi at the library and many other public places and restaurants. If you do need data, we recommend starting with a small amount of data (1 or 2 GB of data) and getting more if you need it.

Carriers (phone service companies like T-Mobile and MetroPCS) offer different plans and rates. Some carriers offer deals for sharing a cell phone plan with family members. Think about what you will use your phone for and how much you can budget for phone service and data. And remember that both SafeLink and Lifeline offer discounts on internet and phone services. Some phone or internet service providers may also offer discounts.

Technology Basics

Are you unfamiliar with the world of information technology? Here are some technology basics to help you get started.

Internet or world wide web: A vast network that connects computers and phones all over the world. Through an internet connection, people can share information, access resources, and communicate around the world. Sometimes people call the internet the world wide web, or they will say, “you need web access,” which means you need to be able to connect to the internet.

Online: When you are “online” you are connected to the internet. People might say, “Get online to access this resource.” This means that you can access the resource on a computer or smartphone through the internet.

Smartphone: a mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer. It typically has a touchscreen surface, internet access, and you can download applications (apps) that provide lots of different tools for work, entertainment, finances and more. Most people these days have a smartphone.

Wi-Fi: To access the internet, you need to be connected to it. One way to do that is through Wi-Fi access. Wi-Fi access allows you to connect to the internet wirelessly. You can access Wi-Fi for free at public libraries and some restaurants (McDonalds, Starbucks), or you can purchase Wi-Fi access for your home.

Data: Another way to connect to the internet is through a smartphone data plan. Data allows you to connect to the internet on your smartphone if you are in a place that doesn’t have Wi-Fi access. Data plans can be expensive, and they usually have limits to how much data you can use every month.

Web browser: A web browser is a program that allows you to access the internet on your phone or computer. Examples of web browsers are Google Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, and Safari.

Search engine. A search engine is what you use when you are trying to find information on the internet through your smartphone or computer. First, you will open a web browser. You should see a bar at the top with a little magnifying glass icon. This is how you can access the search engine. You can type a question or web address into the bar and it will search for the information you need. Google, Yahoo, and Bing are search engines.

Website: Organizations have “websites” where you can find information, resources, entertainment and more. There are many different kinds of websites on the internet.

Web address or URL: This is the “address” or location of the website or resource on the internet. You type this address into the search engine bar to access the website or resource. We have included many web addresses to websites in this guide and in the directory. Web addresses are typically formatted like this: <http://example.com>. When you type in a web address, you can leave out the <http://> or www.



I need assistance with the most basic things. That does make me somewhat defensive, and I’ll end up trying to do things on my own and then I crash and burn.

—Pablo



Learning to Use the Internet

Make it a priority to find a reliable way of accessing the internet. Until you have your own device, the best way to get on the internet may be to use a computer or cell phone belonging to a family member or at the public library.

If you have a smartphone, laptop, or tablet, free wireless internet (Wi-fi) access is available at the library, as well as many restaurants, coffee shops, hotel lobbies, chain technology stores, and even parks! You may have to ask what the password is before you can log on with your device.

Most resources on the internet are found using a search engine (Google is the most common). Open up a web browser (such as Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, or Safari). The home page will have a search box where you can type in what you are looking for. Here are some tips for effective searches:

- Start with the basics. Start with a simple search like “Where’s the closest Amtrak?” or “Pizza in Chicago.” You can always add a few descriptive words if necessary.
- Don’t worry about the little things. Google’s spell checker automatically uses the most common spelling of a given word, whether or not you spell it correctly.

Getting Help

- Ask a librarian to help you figure out the basics. They are there to help.
- GCF global has a lot of free tutorials about how to use technology. Type this address in your search engine and click on the topic you are struggling with: <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/topics/>
- Wikihow also has lots of resources to help you figure out how to use technology. Type “wikihow” in your web browser, and then enter your question in the search box at the top of the page.
- Many community colleges, libraries, and adult basic education programs offer lessons on everything from basic word processing to programming code.



Apps

Most smartphones, regardless of the brand, are equipped with a number of basic applications (called apps), such as a camera, a clock, a map service, a browser (for example, Safari or Chrome), a calendar, a note taking app, a calculator, and an address book, as well as an app to send and receive text messages and an app to make calls. Be aware that apps can use up your phone data.

There are many other apps you can download as well. They can be found in your phone’s ‘store’ (the app store or play store, depending on the brand). Many useful apps are free, and they will tell you if they are not. You will need to have either data or a Wi-fi connection to download apps. You then search for the app you would like to download in the store and click “get”

or “download.” You may have to enter your phone’s password to confirm the purchase. It should show up on your homescreen in just a few minutes. If an app requires money to purchase, your phone should give you the option to enter your credit or debit card information and will ask you to confirm the purchase before downloading.

Facebook is an app, as is its messaging service called “Messenger.” Instagram and Twitter are other apps that allow you to share and view photos and comments. Other apps that may be appealing include Spotify (which you can use for free to play music, but it will shuffle the music and also play advertisements, like a radio) or banking and transportation apps for your city (Citymapper, for example). As always, it is a good idea

to be cautious with what information you provide to apps and exercise careful judgment about what you'd like to keep private.

One phone app that many parole officers use is the **BI SmartLink** app. With this app your PO can monitor you without having to come to your house, which is especially convenient during the pandemic. Parole officers may use the app to message or video conference you, or to notify you about scheduled appointments. Keep in mind that this app allows your parole officer to track your location, so be aware that they may be able to see where you have been.

You can also use the app (or another messaging app) to communicate with your parole officer. For example, if you are on a home monitor with strict movement, you might be running late from an appointment and not be able to get home at the approved time. You can use this app to communicate directly with your parole officer and let them know your situation. They will be able to lay eyes on you, thus preventing you from violating whatever order you may be under.

EMAIL ACCOUNTS, PASSWORDS AND SECURITY

You will need your own email address, since email is now more common for informal and professional communication than paper mail. One way to do this is through Gmail, because Gmail accounts are free. Type gmail.com into the web browser and click "Create account." You will select your own email username. It should be something easy for you to remember, like your own name, or some combination of your name, initials, and numbers. You will likely use your email to communicate with prospective employers, so ensure that your email address is professional. Your password should also be something easy for you to remember, but hard for other people to figure out.

You are likely to use the internet to set up other accounts for things like paying bills or accessing files for school or work. The easiest way to keep your personal information safe is to keep your password secret and to change it periodically. Also, don't use the same password for every online account you have. If you forget a password, you can usually change it securely by following instructions on the website. If you had email and other online accounts before you were incarcerated, you may want to reactivate them or close them. Change the passwords for security purposes.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Many people communicate with others and access news and other information through social media on their smartphone or computer. Social media are websites and applications that allow people to share experiences and interact virtually (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter). Especially during the pandemic, social media has enabled people to stay connected with others and find out what's going on. Some social media sites are used mostly for personal communications while others are used professionally. We describe two of the most popular social media platforms here.

Facebook is the most popular social media company in the US. People use this site to share photos, updates, and articles. Some people use Facebook mostly for keeping in touch with family and friends (especially those who live far away); others use it for work. You can comment publicly on posts created by others or message users individually. You can also join Facebook groups to meet other people and get support. TASC, for instance, has a Reentry Facebook Group, Winner's Circle, that has weekly meetings over Zoom. Learn more here: <https://www.facebook.com/TASC.HealthAndJustice>

If you would like to create a free Facebook account, you may do so from any computer by typing <https://www.facebook.com/> into the search bar and clicking "Create Account."

LinkedIn is a social network created specifically for finding jobs, connecting with potential employers and recruiters, and sharing your work experiences. To create an account, type <https://www.linkedin.com/> into your web browser and click "Join Now." It will ask you to provide basic information, create a password, and personalize your profile, adding your education and work experience. You can also write a brief introduction to



If possible, do not submit sensitive personal information (like your Social Security Number or credit card information) at a public computer or over public internet.

highlight your skills and interests. This page will function as your digital resume. You can find more detailed instructions by searching “How to Create a LinkedIn Account Wikipedi.”

Staying safe on social media: Use caution when sharing information on Facebook or other social media apps. You can adjust the privacy settings so that only your friends see your posts. Public posts can be accessed by parole officers or prospective employers. Keep in mind that social media sites track user data and companies can use that data to try to sell you things. Additionally, the information that you see on social media may not be well vetted. It’s a good idea to confirm what you read through other sources.

VIDEO CONFERENCING

Given the ongoing pandemic, video conferencing has become a central part of many people’s lives. There are multiple options for video conferencing, such as Facetime, Google Chat, and Skype (detailed instructions for using all of these services can be found on Wikipedi of Youtube) but the most common video call provider is Zoom. Job interviews and support group meetings will likely be hosted over Zoom for the foreseeable future, as might communication between family and friends. If you have a personal or family computer or smartphone, it may make sense for you to download the Zoom app to your computer or phone (you can use Zoom without downloading the app, too). To download it on

your computer, type in “zoom.us” and click “Sign Up It’s Free.” You will enter your name and email address and agree to the terms of service. You will receive an email to activate your account and create a password. You can download Zoom as an app on your phone, too, through the app store.

In most cases, you will be a guest at a Zoom meeting and receive an invitation to your email with the link that says “Click to Join.” When the webpage opens, you may join via the app or your web browser. There is also an option to call in with your phone. Zoom has some helpful tutorials on how to get started, such as this one: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034967471-Getting-started-guide-for-new-users>

Video conferencing etiquette tips:

- If you are in a group, mute yourself when you’re not talking (click on the microphone icon).
- Be aware of your backdrop. It’s nice to turn your camera on so people can see you, but you can also turn your camera off (click on the camera icon) or use a virtual backdrop if you don’t want people to see you or your living space.





Legal Matters

After you are released, there may be circumstances that require you to go to court or request legal assistance. For example, many formerly incarcerated individuals petition the court to get their criminal records sealed, or they apply to get a Certificate of Rehabilitation so that they can have access to better jobs. Others may need to work with the legal system to regain custody of a child, change child support arrangements, and work with the foster care system.

Navigating the legal system can be challenging, but there are resources to help. This section includes information on working with lawyers who offer free services and doing your own legal work. It deals with various matters, including child custody, foster care, child support, sealing records, and Certificates of Rehabilitation.

Please note that we are not lawyers and we are not providing legal advice. We have done our best to provide information that will help you understand the legal options you have. Please seek the assistance of a lawyer if you have any questions or need clarification.

Pro Bono and Pro Se

Navigating the legal system can be frustrating. Because of this, it is almost always better to get the help of a lawyer rather than trying to do your own legal work. Lawyers have a firm grasp on the rules and how local judges and courtrooms work. Lawyers are often expensive, but there are lawyers who will work on your case for free (pro bono). These services are available through legal aid programs. See the Legal Services Directory on page 167 for a list of legal aid programs.

There are a number of legal situations, such as sealing criminal records, family law, and small claims matters, that are often resolved without legal representation (pro se). Pro se is cheaper, but it is almost always better to hire a lawyer or find one who will work for free. If you decide to file pro se, most counties offer pro se help desks. Call your county's Circuit Clerk's office for information. The service is free and desk attendants are available to offer advice for pro se forms, courthouse directions, and legal consultations.

Helpful pro-se resources

For information on addressing pro se legal matters, we recommend visiting Illinois Legal Aid Online at <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/>. They provide legal aid referrals with their Get Legal Help tool on the website.

You can also visit a legal self-help center where you can learn about the law, your legal rights, and how to go to court. If you have a legal issue, you can go to a legal self-help center in your community to use a computer for free, search online for answers to your legal questions, find and prepare court forms, and get other help depending on your location. Many legal self-help centers are inside libraries or courthouses. For a directory of legal self-help centers, visit this website: https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help/lshc-directory?field_counties_target_id_entityreference_filter=All



These desks do not always have phones and usually must be contacted in person. The hours of help desks in and around Chicago are listed online at

this web address: <http://www.cookcountycourt.org/FORPEOPLEWITHOUTLAWYERS/HelpDesksintheCourthouse.aspx>

Child Custody

Illinois custody laws changed in 2015. Instead of custody, parents are now granted “Parental Responsibilities” and “Parenting Time.” Parents who are granted “Parental Responsibilities” have the ability to make long-term decisions about a child’s future, such as school placement and healthcare. Parents can be given “Parenting Time” to spend with their child, and the court will decide how much time the child will spend with each parent. Parents who do not have Parental Responsibilities rights may still be given a reasonable amount of Parenting Time.

Custody of children can be a complicated matter. Many people choose to hire a lawyer so that they have a better chance at getting the parenting time and responsibilities they want. This option is the most effective, but can also be costly if you are unable to find a pro bono lawyer to help guide you through the process.

If you choose to work without a lawyer and represent yourself in court cases you will need to file a Petition to Modify Custody. Petitions can be found online, or

by visiting your county’s circuit clerk office. There will typically be a filing fee. Once your petition is filed and read, a hearing should be set to modify custody.

The Illinois Legal Aid Online organization has many resources related to child custody on their website here: <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/child-custody>

Sample resources:

- An Easy Form program for creating a parent plan here: <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/parenting-plan>
- A guide for starting a case to get parental responsibilities or custody: <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/starting-case-get-parental-responsibilities-or-custody>



When judges decide how to divide Parental Responsibilities and Parenting Time, they consider the following:

- What the child wants and needs, considering the child’s age and maturity
- The wishes of the parents
- The home, school, and community environment of the child and the child’s adjustment to their environment
- The mental and physical health of the child and both parents
- How well the parents can get along
- How much parents participate in decision-making for the child
- Any past agreement or informal plan on child custody made by the parents
- The distance between the homes of parents and transportation challenges
- Whether a parent has ever acted in a way that has hurt the child physically, morally, mentally, or emotionally

Foster Care and Reinstating Parental Rights

You may be able to get your rights restored if your child has been placed in foster care, or with a relative, or even if your parental rights have been terminated. The first step is understanding how the process works, and the second is understanding where you are in your own case.

Parental rights can be terminated if a child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months. Before this can be done, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is required to follow a process in court, called a juvenile abuse and neglect (JA) case.

After your case has started, your child may be removed from your household. If this occurs, DCFS must try to place your child with family members, or people who act like family members in the child's life (called fictive kin). DCFS may not know of all eligible family members or fictive kin, so it is important to be aware of what is going on with your case and to let DCFS know if there is an eligible family member they may not know about.

You are never required to sign over the rights of your child, but your rights may be terminated by a judge after the full process has been followed and 15 months have gone by with the child out of your care. If your rights have not been terminated, Illinois law requires that DCFS make reasonable efforts to help you get your child back and resolve your case within a certain period of time.

If your child has been removed from your care, you can be assigned a lawyer if you cannot afford one. If this doesn't happen automatically, let the judge in your case know that you cannot afford a private lawyer as soon as possible.

It is important to make sure you know what is going on in your case, as the 15-month clock starts when your case begins. As part of this process, DCFS will provide a list of guidelines specific to your case. You must complete them before your parental rights can be restored (through your lawyer). The guidelines include

things like parenting classes, counseling, continuing education, anger management, drug or alcohol classes, and/or minor changes to your home. You are required to make both 'reasonable efforts' and 'reasonable progress' toward the DCFS guidelines in order to be able to get your child back.

As you might expect, it is very difficult to show you are making reasonable efforts while incarcerated, but it is not impossible. It is important to attempt to try to meet DCFS guidelines (as well as you can in your particular facility), and to document this compliance for your attorney.

Once you leave prison, you can work toward fulfilling the guidelines and documenting these efforts for your attorney. DCFS does have an obligation to fairly allow you to complete the guidelines they create, but parental right reinstatement is ultimately up to the judge in your case.

If you no longer have parental rights, it is possible to have them restored, but it is not common. You do not have the right to have an appointed lawyer to file a motion to reinstate your rights, so you will either have to hire one or file on your own. In order to file, a few things have to happen:

1. At least three years must have passed between the original termination of your rights and your filing for reinstatement,
2. Your oldest child must be 13 or older and,
3. You must show a 'substantial change in circumstances' since the termination or the entry of the order. Leaving prison and showing you have stable employment and housing can be a part of convincing a judge that your child should return home with you. (705 ILCS 405/2-27)

Child Support

If you are not living with your child, you may need to pay child support payments to the parent who is taking care of your child. Child support lasts until children turn 18 (19 for children still in high school). You will pay a certain percentage of your income in child support. The amount you pay depends on the number of children you have. A judge may order you to pay additional expenses like healthcare, daycare, or school costs.

REDUCING PAYMENTS

It is very important to make any child support payments that you are responsible for. Wages can be taken out of your paycheck if you fail to pay child support. Under some conditions, child support payments can be reduced. You can file a petition to change your child support orders. You can do this on your own or with the help of a lawyer. Child support orders can be changed if you have a sudden change in income, if you are incarcerated, or have significant healthcare costs. Let the court know about your change in situation as soon as possible. You can file your petition by mail, but you will likely need to appear in court (with or without a lawyer) to discuss your case.

If a court has ordered a suspension of your driver's license for failure to pay child support, it is important to petition to reduce that payment. Many judges allow you to make payments according to your income, and will remove the suspension as long as you are doing so.

GETTING PAYMENTS YOU ARE OWED

If your child lives with you and your childcare expenses have changed dramatically recently, you can get legal help to receive more child support from your child's other parent. Childcare expense changes include things like medical bills for the child, new education expenses, or a big change in your household's cost of living. You may also appeal for more child support if the other parent's income has increased a lot recently.

If you are not receiving the child support payments you believe you are owed, contact the Illinois' Department of Healthcare and Family Services by calling (800) 447-4278, or by visiting their website: www.illinois.gov/hfs/childsupport

Sealing Records

Once you have been off of parole for at least three years, you can start the process of sealing your criminal record. Sealing your record can make it easier to find employment because Illinois employers cannot ask about a sealed record.

Sometimes it is also possible to get a record expunged. An expunged record is erased; it is no longer accessible by the state or the public. This is typically only possible if your charges were dismissed.

All crimes **except the following crimes** are eligible to be sealed: DUIs, Reckless Driving, Crimes involving mistreatment of animals, Sex Offenses (misdemeanor public indecency and prostitution can be sealed), Domestic Battery, Violations of Orders of Protection.

To begin the process of sealing your criminal record, submit a Petition to Seal. The Petition to Seal a Conviction form can be obtained at your county Circuit Clerk's office. This form can also be found online at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/prb/Pages/CertificateofSealing.aspx>

Information on Expungement

The Office of the State Appellate Defender provides information to the public about sealing, expungement and other forms of criminal records relief. Access their website at <https://www.illinois.gov/osador> call 312-814-5472 and ask for the Director of Expungement.



Once you have filled out the form, submit it to the Circuit Clerk's office of the county you reside in. There is a fee for filing these petitions which varies by county.

Note: It is up to the judge whether your record is sealed. It is not automatic. At least once a year, the Cook County Circuit Clerk's Office, the Champaign County Circuit Clerk's Office, and other offices hold

expungement fairs in their counties. These fairs are often great resources for learning more about expungement and sealing options from trained volunteer lawyers. You can check the websites of other circuit clerks to learn if they offer comparable services. Note: sometimes they ask you sign up in advance to attend, due to the number of people interested in attending.

To fill out this petition, you will complete a full criminal history. You will need to gather the following information for each arrest listed on your record:

- The case number.
- The date of your arrest.
- The law enforcement agency that arrested you (city or state).
- The charges that were brought against you.
- The final outcome (disposition) of each case, such as supervision or probation.
- The date each case was completed, such as the date your probation ended.
- The chief legal officer of the unit that arrested you. (If you were arrested by state police you need the state's attorney of the county in which you were arrested. If you were arrested by city police you need the lawyer which the city hires to do legal work. This can be found by calling city hall of the city whose police arrested you).
- The state's attorney that prosecuted your case.

Certificates of Rehabilitation

These are official documents that can restore rights you lost as a result of your conviction (e.g. the right to earn an occupational license or serve on a jury). Certificates of Rehabilitation allow you to apply for jobs that require licenses issued by the state such as jobs in child care, education, and transit.

Illinois recently expanded the list of who is eligible for a Certificate of Rehabilitation. Everyone is eligible except those with:

- Class X felony or murder convictions
- Aggravated DUI or aggravated domestic battery convictions
- Sex offenses that require post-release registration
- Arson offenses that require post-release registration
- Felony convictions for a crime that caused someone a permanent disability.

Illinois has two kinds of Certificates of Rehabilitation. The number and type of convictions you've had will determine which you should apply for.

1. A Certificate of Relief from Disabilities (CRD) can be obtained after some time has passed after your release. There is a waiting period of one year for misdemeanors and three years for felony convictions. This period begins after parole. A CRD restores your eligibility for over a dozen specific occupations that ordinarily bar people with convictions.
2. A certificate of Good Conduct does the same thing as a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities, and also allows you to run for public office.

OBTAINING THE CERTIFICATE

To receive a CRD or a CGC, you must file a petition with the Circuit Clerk of the county you were convicted in. The petition is free. This process will be easier if you hire a lawyer, but can be done on your own with a fair amount of time and energy. Note: The Circuit Court that entered your conviction has exclusive jurisdiction to grant either kind of Certificate of Rehabilitation.

Petitions of Rehabilitation are granted if three criteria are met:

1. **Eligibility.** Your conviction is not one of the exceptions listed above.
2. **Rehabilitation.** Judges use general guidelines and their own judgment to decide if you meet a definition “rehabilitated,” including how many times (and how often) you have been convicted, your employment history, whether you have sought higher education, if you went to substance abuse counseling (if your conviction is drug related), whether you do community service, and if you have done other positive things after getting out.
3. **No risk to public safety.** You can convince a judge that you are not a risk to public safety.

As part of your petition, you will be asked to provide the following:

Letters of recommendation to show that you are “rehabilitated and not a risk to public safety.” These letters should come from people such as family members, counselors, clergy, or employers who can show through details how you fulfill the rehabilitation guidelines listed above (Number 2).

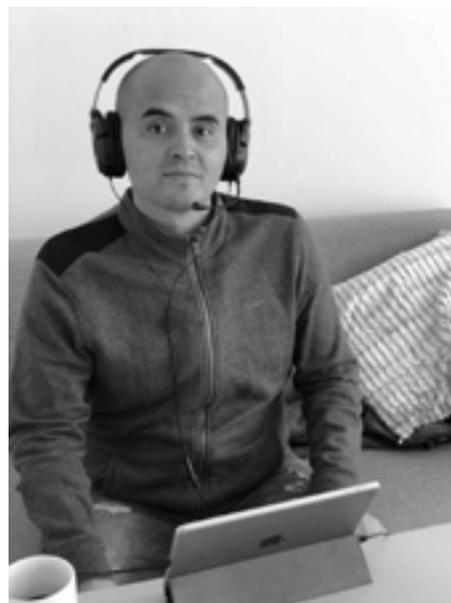
A full criminal history. For details on what needs to be included, revisit the “Sealing Records” section on the previous page 83.

For more information on certificates of rehabilitation and other forms of relief see the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County’s website. It is useful even to individuals who live outside of Cook County. <http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/>

If you need help obtaining a certificate of rehabilitation, consider contacting a legal-aid organization. For example, Safer Foundation has partnered with a statewide group of attorneys and law school clinics to assess a potential applicants’ eligibility for relief, and if eligible, they will represent the applicants free of charge. See <https://saferfoundation.org/Safer-Policy-Institute/Resources/Relief-from-Statutory-Barriers-Certificates-Waivers>

Go slow. Breathe.

—Darrell W.





Finances, Credit, and Taxes

Take small steps toward managing your money, especially if you are going to be financially independent for the first time. Thinking about money can be stressful. Making smart decisions about your money can help you gain control over your financial life. Having control over your finances will help you avoid money troubles in the long run and feel more secure about the future.

In this section, we cover banking basics and how to open a banking account. Then we address budgeting, financial planning, and credit. At the end of this section, we go over filing taxes.

Banking

It's a good idea to open a bank account so that you have a safe place to put your earnings and avoid the fees that come with check cashing and money transfer services.

BANK ACCOUNTS

There are two basic types of bank accounts: checking and savings accounts.

A checking account keeps your money secure while giving you easy access to your money so that you can make purchases and pay bills. When you open a **checking** account, you get checks and a debit card, which you can use to make purchases, pay bills, or get cash from your account using ATMs. Some checking accounts have monthly maintenance fees while others do not, so make sure you ask about fees.

Once you have some money saved, it's a good idea to open a **savings** account. A savings account allows you to earn interest on your money. This means that if you leave the money in your savings account, it grows over time (usually at a very slow pace). You cannot write checks from a savings account, but some savings accounts will allow you to access your money through an ATM.

Banking has several advantages. For instance, depositing your paychecks in a bank account is cheaper than paying fees for check cashing services. Some employers can even put your earnings directly in your account. A debit card allows you to avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Many banks offer free access to online banking services, which you can use to keep track of your earnings and spending, pay bills automatically, and transfer money between accounts. If you have a bank account, you can avoid fees to money transfer companies by getting free phone apps such as Venmo, which allow you to transfer money to other people's accounts, and vice versa, for free. Finally, you can work with banks to get car or mortgage loans, develop a retirement investment plan, and invest in stocks.

You don't have to be a U.S. citizen or have a Social Security number to open a bank account. You can open an account using the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) assigned to you by the IRS, regardless of immigration status. Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) for more information about ITINs.



THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A BANK

Banks and credit unions offer different products to choose from, like checking and savings accounts, consumer and mortgage loans, rewards programs, and credit cards. Before choosing a bank, it's important to think about your unique needs. When you first go to the bank, ask to speak with a bank representative to make sure that you understand their services and how they can meet your needs. You can also learn about banks' services on their websites.

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

You will need the following items to open a checking or savings account:

- A photo ID (state ID or driver's license)
- Your Social Security card or proof of ITIN
- Proof of address (a billing statement or post office "change of address" letter)
- A check or cash to make an initial deposit (ask the bank about minimum deposit amounts)

If your application is denied, the bank should provide a reason for the refusal. You can then take steps to address the problem, or find another bank that has a more flexible application process.

HOW TO USE CARDS FOR PURCHASES

If you've been in prison for a long time, buying things at the store may look very different. Perhaps you carried around cash in the past or wrote paper checks. Most people these days use debit cards or credit cards rather than paying with cash.

Here are some card options:

- **Debit cards** look just like credit cards, but are different. Most debit cards are linked to a checking account, and you can only spend money that you have in your account. Debit cards can be used anywhere that you use a credit card. You can also use your debit card to withdraw cash from an ATM machine.
- With **prepaid debit cards**, you can load money onto the card when you get it, then use it to make purchases. Prepaid debit cards are often used by those who can't get a bank account (maybe you haven't been able to get your ID yet). Bluebird by American Express and Chime are prepaid debit

Here are a few things to consider:

- Will you travel a lot for work, fun, or visiting family? You may want to choose a bank that has many branch and ATM locations. Online banks are also an option.
- What fees does the bank have? Some possible fees might be an overdraft fee (when you take out more money than you have in the account), fees for closing accounts, fees for foreign transactions, and monthly maintenance fees.
- Has a bank ever shut down your checking account? You may be considered a high risk customer and banks might reject your account application. Don't worry though, because some banks offer second chance checking accounts. Call and ask smaller local banks and credit unions about their account policies. Smaller companies tend to be more flexible towards people who have had financial trouble.
- Is your bank or credit union backed by the government? If it is, that means that if the bank closes or has other problems, your funds are protected. Make sure your bank is a member of the FDIC or NCUA.
- Does your employer, school, or community have a credit union? Credit unions have some advantages over banks. See the chart on the following page comparing banks and credit unions.
- Are you a veteran? If so, you qualify for a USAA account. USAA members and their families can often get good rates on loans. Visit [usaa.com](https://www.usaa.com) for more information.
- Do you have bad credit? Many banks use a database called ChexSystems to check your bank customer history, but they don't always pull your credit report when you apply. Ask them what their policies are.

cards with no monthly fee.

- The **Link Card** is Illinois' electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card for food stamps and/or cash benefits. You can use it just like a debit card at stores that accept EBT. Most grocery stores, dollar stores, pharmacies, and gas stations accept Link Cards. To find out more about applying for a Link Card, see "Meeting your Basic Needs" page X.
- With a **credit card**, you are borrowing money and will need to pay it back in full. We discuss more about credit cards in the next section.
- There are also **gift cards** where people can put money on the card and then give it to someone to use like a debit card. Some cards--like a Visa Gift Card--can be used at any store, while other gift cards only work for specific stores.

Debit cards and Link Cards require you to select a 4-digit PIN number, which is like a password. Before you use your card, make sure you have your PIN number set up. Usually, there is a number on the back of the card that you can call to set up the PIN number. Illinois's EBT customer service number is 1-800-678-5465. When using a debit card or Link Card, make sure you know how much money you have available. Normally, your card will be declined if you don't have enough funds.

It can be embarrassing if you don't know how to use a card for purchases. Here's a brief guide (summarized from Wikihow) about what to expect when you make purchases at a grocery store or other location.

1. After the cashier has finished scanning your items, they'll invite you to pay.
2. There will likely be a card reader on the counter. Card readers look somewhat like calculators. They typically have a screen with instructions to follow.
3. The screen on the card reader may ask if you agree to pay the amount listed on the screen. You may have to press "enter" or "yes" to continue.
4. Next, the screen may ask you to swipe your card. Other times, the cashier will let you know when the machine is ready for you to swipe your card.

5. Some card readers require you to swipe your card on the right side (black stripe facing down and to your right). Others require you to stick the card in the bottom of the machine (stripe facing down) and leave it there until the screen lets you know that you can remove your card. Don't worry if you don't get it right the first time. Turn the card around and try again. Lots of people make mistakes and have to swipe their cards multiple times or get help from a cashier.
6. The card reader may ask whether you want to pay by "debit" or "credit" (hit the "debit" button if you are using a Link Card). If you are paying with a debit card or Link Card, it may ask you to enter your 4-digit PIN number. Once the screen says "Approved" you should get a receipt. You can take your items and your receipt and leave.
7. Some debit cards allow you to get withdraw cash with your purchase. The card reader screen will ask if you want cash, and you will enter the dollar amount you would like. The cashier will then give you the cash you requested. The amount will be removed from your bank account.
8. If you are using a credit card, you may be asked to sign a paper receipt or sign your signature on the screen with a special pen that is attached to the card reader. It will ask you to press "enter" or "accept" when you are finished. Once you have finished signing and receive your receipt, you should be ready to go.

Remember: It's OK to ask for help! Lots of people have problems using their cards sometimes. The cashiers are there to help you.

Learn more about how to use a debit card here: <https://www.wikihow.life/Use-a-Debit-Card>

Learn about how to use an ATM here: <https://www.wikihow.com/Use-an-ATM>

	Banks	Credit Unions
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to open an account • Many branches and ATM locations • More options for types of accounts, loans, and credit cards • Online banking and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit Unions are non-for-profit institutions. They are owned by their members. • Because credit unions are smaller companies, they have better customer service • Higher interest on savings accounts • Lower rates for loans • More flexibility
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have more restrictions or are less flexible when you make banking errors • Higher interest rates on loans and credit cards • Banks are owned by investors who may not act in the interests of the bank's customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership is more exclusive in credit unions than banks • Fewer locations • Fewer product options • Poorer online services

Budgeting

One of the simplest steps you can take to manage your finances is to make a budget. Budgeting can help you understand where your money is going so that you do not spend more than you earn. There are thousands of different budget forms you can download online for free, or you may just want to make your own. To make your own, add up how much money you make every month, then make a list of everything you spend money in a month and compare the two numbers. See page 89 in financial resources for a budget template.

The first time I went to the store by myself I had a link card, debit card, and money. I got up to the front of the line and didn't know how to pay for my groceries. I saw this contraption for a card that looked real complicated and didn't know how to use it. A long line of people were behind me and getting restless when I was just standing there looking dumbfounded. I didn't want to tell anyone I had been locked up and didn't know how to use a link or debit card. I was embarrassed and panicked!

—Michael

Open a bank account. Work on building up your credit. If you get a credit card, use less than 30% of the credit limit, buy things with your credit card, and then use the 30 day grace period to pay the bill in its entirety. That's the slow way to build credit.

—Michael

EXAMPLE BUDGET

My monthly income: \$2,000	
My expenses	Cost
Rent/Mortgage	\$700
Child Support	\$300
Electric Bill	\$50
Water Bill	\$20
Car Payment and Insurance	\$200
Gas	\$50
Health Insurance	\$100
Cell Phone Bill	\$50
Groceries	\$200
Savings Deposit Goal	\$50
Total expenses per month	\$1720
Leftover for other expenses	$\$2000 - \$1720 = \$280$

Financial Resources

You can find information online about banks, credit unions, account options, and strategies for saving your money. Some financial planning websites have chat features so you can ask an advisor a question and get an answer right away. For help with financial planning, check out [Learnvest.com](https://www.learnvest.com) and [Mint.com](https://www.mint.com). For helpful articles about understanding money and frugal living, check out The Simple Dollar (thesimpledollar.com). NerdWallet (nerdwallet.com) is also a useful tool for information on banking, credit, financial planning, investments, mortgages, car and health insurance, etc. Business Insider Magazine has a list of some top-rated

money advice websites: <https://www.businessinsider.com/best-websites-money-advice-2014-12>

AVOIDING SCAMS

You don't want to become a victim of fraud. Visit this website for a list of common financial scams and their warning signs: <https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/common-scams-and-crimes>

New types of scams are emerging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit these website for an overview of some of the scams to look out for:

Here are a few scams to avoid:

- Be wary of emails or calls that offer large sums of money or “free gifts” in exchange for a small fee. If the reward sounds too good to be true, avoid it.
- Beware of companies that try to push you into signing up for something immediately. Only sign up for services you understand. You can always ask them for more information if you are confused.
- Only give personal information (such as account numbers and social security numbers) to companies you know to be trustworthy.
- Never pay for a letter of credit.

- <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/protect-yourself-from-covid-19-scams-040620>
- <https://www.fbi.gov/coronavirus>

Disclaimer: Please remember that we are not advocating any particular websites or services. The resources listed here are suggestions. It is important to weigh any advice you are given. They may be free, but may not always be exactly what you are looking for. Feel free to do your own looking online.

Annuity.org is a free financial web resource with comprehensive, easy-to-read financial guidance. It covers things like setting a budget and sticking to it, personal finance basics, how to use credit responsibly, and much more. Two resources that may be especially helpful are:

annuity.org/financial-literacy/
annuity.org/annuities/types/income/



Credit

You may be considering getting a credit card so that you can buy things with credit. Buying on credit means that you buy things now and pay for them later. A bank loans you the money to make the purchase, and you agree to repay the bank at a later date. Usually, this means that you make a purchase with your credit card, and then you make monthly payments to the bank until the loan is repaid.

Keep in mind that when you buy with credit, you have to pay interest—an extra fee to the bank for using their credit services. Interest rates can be very high. Think hard before you get any credit card, and make sure you do not sign up for too many. The more cards you have, the more payments you will have to make (the average in the U.S. is five to seven cards per person). Also, too many credit cards will have a negative effect on your credit. Credit card companies make money through customers who are not able to pay off their purchases and end up getting deeper and deeper into debt. You do not want to be that customer!

A credit counselor affiliated with a nonprofit organization that has no interest in selling you a credit card can give you unbiased advice about getting a credit card. One example is www.credit.org, which offers free telephone counseling sessions.

Sometimes, credit cards can lead to a lot of financial trouble. If you buy too much with credit cards, it can quickly become difficult to pay your monthly payments. A service like www.credit.org can help you manage your accounts if you become overwhelmed by your credit card payments. A good practice is to only buy things with your credit card that you can pay back within a month.

For some major purchases, such as buying a car, a house, or paying for college tuition, buying on credit makes a lot of sense. You may be unable to pay for a car all at once, but the cost becomes more manageable if you can spread it out over many months. Make sure to choose a car that is affordable so that you can manage the monthly payments, and try to get an interest rate that is as low as possible. Again, it is important to be

cautious and to talk to a credit counselor before going into debt for a purchase.

If you decide to get a credit card or make a major purchase using credit, your bank will look at your credit score before deciding to loan you money. A credit score is a number that indicates your likely ability to repay a loan. If you have a good credit score, it will be easier to obtain loans and qualify for lower interest rates. If you were in debt before you went to prison, you will need to take steps to improve your credit score. Credit scores range from 300 (bad credit) to 850 (excellent credit).

Here are some guidelines for managing credit:

Get educated. Being uninformed can lead to costly mistakes. For a good primer on your credit score, check out this website: www.consumerfinance.gov/ask-cfpb/what-is-a-credit-score-en-315

Be prudent. Avoid businesses (such as car dealerships and payday loan offices) that advertise directly to people with bad credit. They often have extremely high interest rates that only benefit the business. They are counting on your not being able to pay your debts. Do not support any company whose business model depends on your lack of financial success.

Be cautious. Read the fine print carefully and understand the rules before you sign anything. Remember, what counts is what is in the contract, not what the salesperson promised.

Pay your debts. If you've gotten behind on any of your debts—or have had debts fall into collections—pay them, or make a plan for beginning to pay them. For information about managing debt, see this website: www.consumer.ftc.gov/topics/dealing-debt

Pay your bills on time. Make it a priority to pay all of your bills on time. Paying on time is a good habit and can improve your credit score. The easiest way to do that is by setting up an automatic payment with your bank on your bills' due dates. Marking the dates on a calendar is fine, too.

Use credit cards wisely. If you choose to have a credit card, don't charge what you can't pay back at the end of the month. If you must borrow money with a credit card to pay your credit card bills, it's time to talk with a credit counselor.

If possible I would suggest you have a loved one that you trust and who believes in you to add you to some line of credit much like parents do for their children. Trust me, you will need it.

—Shaun W.

Tax Basics

Once you start earning money, you will be required to start paying federal and state taxes. The amount you pay in taxes will depend on how much you earn, who is living with you, as well as other things, such as childcare, disability, and healthcare costs. Taxes are withheld from your monthly paycheck.

Every year, you must file your taxes. When you file taxes, you let the government know how much you have earned and how much you have paid in taxes, and some information about your situation (children, disability, healthcare costs, etc.). The government decides whether you have paid too much or too little in taxes. In many

cases, you will find that you have paid too much, and you get a tax refund. If you have paid too little, you have to pay the amount you owe. If you do not file your taxes, you have to pay a fee and you will owe back taxes for the money you didn't pay.

W-4 FORM: CLAIMING INCOME AND TAX EXEMPTIONS

When you start a new job, you are asked to fill out an IRS Form W-4 within the first few days of your employment. This form helps your employer know how much of your paycheck should be withheld in taxes. It is important to fill out this form so that you can arrange to

pay taxes month by month instead of paying your taxes all at once at the end of the year. To learn how to fill out a W-4 form, visit the following website: www.wikihow.com/Fill-Out-a-W-4

YOUR W-2 FORM AND FILING TAXES

Every year, you will need to file your federal and state taxes by April 15. Many people choose to file their taxes in January so that they can receive a tax refund sooner. To file taxes, you will need a W-2 form from your employer(s). Employers usually distribute W-2 forms to their employees in January.

Next, you will need to decide which type of tax return to complete. Some of the more common forms are 1040 or 1040-A, the US Individual Income Tax Return, the 1040-EZ form for Single and Joint filers with no dependents, and 1040-NR form for US nonresidents. Because filing taxes can be confusing, many people get help from a tax professional (called a certified public accountant, or CPA).

Simply bring your W-2s and any other IRS forms to their office. For a fee, they will file your state and federal income tax returns. The advantage to using a tax professional is peace of mind and less hassle. It's often worth the fee to avoid making costly mistakes and spending lots of time figuring things out. This is a good idea for people with complicated tax situations (multiple jobs, several dependents, etc.). If you are looking for a CPA, ask someone you trust to recommend one that they use.

There are also online tax filing websites that can help you file your taxes. These websites are less expensive than a tax professional. For those with simple tax situations, this is a great option because the website will guide you through your return using a series of questions and automatic calculations. Remember to read all instructions and offers carefully. It should be free to file your federal tax return, but most online services charge to file your state tax return.

Some of the most used online tax filing websites are:

- www.e-file.com
- www.turbotax.intuit.com
- www.hrblock.com
- www.taxact.com
- www.jacksonhewitt.com

Some places offer free tax help for people. See this website to check if there is a program near you: <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-you-by-volunteers>

The most common types of income tax returns include the following:

- Form 1040 (U.S. Individual Income Tax Return)
- Form 1040A (U.S. Individual Income Tax Return)
- Form 1040EZ (Income Tax Return for Single and Joint Filers With No Dependents)
- Form 1040NR (U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return)
- Form 1040NR-EZ (U.S. Income Tax Return for Certain Nonresident Aliens With No Dependents)



Veterans

This section covers VA benefits in prison, restoring your VA benefits after you leave, and accessing other VA services, such as disability benefits, housing support, reentry services, and healthcare. Although you aren't able to receive your VA pension while incarcerated, you can transfer benefits to family members. Once you leave prison, there are many veteran programs and benefits that are available. These programs can help you adjust to life on the outside.

For assistance with VA benefits and services, contact a VA representative by calling (800) 393-0865 or going to the website: www.state.il.us/agebncy/dva

VA Benefits While in Prison

In general, you will not be able to receive your VA pension while you are incarcerated. After you are imprisoned, there is a 60-day period when you will continue to receive full benefits. After that period you may still receive full benefit checks, but that money must be returned to the VA.

If you have an injury or disability that is 80 to 100% related to your military service, you can receive 10% of your pension while incarcerated. You cannot receive any of your pension for injuries or disabilities that occurred after your service.

Veterans who are incarcerated are still eligible for other benefits, including education and training, healthcare, insurance, vocational rehabilitation and employment, and burial services.

TRANSFERRING BENEFITS TO FAMILY

While you may not be able to receive full VA benefits while in prison, you can transfer your pension to family members if they qualify for financial need (this is called apportionment). This includes a spouse, children, or parents who rely on your financial support.

You (or an adult you are giving your benefits to) should apply for apportionment within one year of the day you were incarcerated. To apply, mail a letter to the Chicago VA Regional Office (VARO) at 2122 W Taylor St. Chicago, IL 60612. Your letter should state who you are and whom you want to transfer your benefits to. You must also complete and mail VA Form 21-0788. There are three ways you can access this form:

1. Ask a prison counselor for assistance. They may be able to get the form for you.
2. Ask someone on the outside to download the form from the website below: www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0788-ARE.pdf
3. Tear out and use the form that is on page 231.

Female Veterans. VA Medical Centers have program managers who assist female veterans. They offer help with VA benefits and healthcare. Contact the closest VA Medical Center to find a program manager who specializes in female veterans.



If you have questions about the process, ask someone you trust to call the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) at (800) 827-1000.

Once they receive your application, the VA will review it. They may ask your spouse or children's guardian

to fill out the same form. They will notify you if the apportionment is approved, and your family will retroactively receive your benefits. That means that your benefits will be saved and given to them, starting 60 days after your incarceration.

Reinstating Benefits After Release and Reentry Services

You can have your benefits resumed 30 days before your scheduled release date. If you are in prison, ask your counselor or someone on the outside to help you contact the IDVA to get your benefits restored. They can call (800) 393-0865 or go to www.state.il.us/agebncy/dva for help.

The VA has a reentry program called Health Care for Reentry Veterans (HCRV) Program. They offer:

1. Post-release assessments

2. Referrals to medical, psychiatric, and social services, including employment services and housing assistance
3. Short-term case management after reentry. All VA Medical Centers have reentry staff. Contact the closest VA Medical Center to begin receiving services

A list of Illinois VA Medical Centers can be found on page 201.

Filing Disability Claims

If you have a disability that is a result of your military service or is related to your service, you can file a disability claim online or in-person. Disability benefits can be received while you are incarcerated and once you are released.

To file an online claim, visit the website www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/apply and create an eBenefits account by clicking "Register." You will need to provide some personal information to open an account. Then click "Apply for Disability Compensation" to apply. You will need your medical records and any other proof of disability for your claim.

You can also apply for a disability claim by filling out a paper application at a VA facility, or mailing the claim to a VA facility. You can find VA facilities in Illinois by visiting: www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?STATE=IL&dnum=ALL

Check out this website to learn how to file a claim: <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/>

The VA does not accept all claims. In fact, they reject almost all claims made the first time you submit. It is important to be persistent if you have a claim. The process can be complicated and contentious, so you may wish to get help from a Veterans Service Organization (such help is free). Some veterans hire a claims agent or an attorney. You can search any of these options at this website: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search

Health

After you leave prison, you can begin receiving care at VA medical centers. You can enroll in their system by visiting a VA medical center, or by phone at: (877) 222-VETS.

You can only receive care if you were honorably (or generally) discharged. You can receive treatment for injuries unconnected to your military service.

Not all VA healthcare is free. Your insurance will be billed for care, and you will have a copay for inpatient,

outpatient, extended care (nursing home care), and medication costs. Some of these services may be free if your income is below a certain limit or if your illness is connected to your service. For more on eligibility, go to <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility/>

The VA also offers mental health and substance abuse treatment at VA medical centers or at Vet Centers (depending on the treatment). Visit www.va.gov/health/vamc/ for a list of VA Medical Centers in Illinois.

Housing

The VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program provides help for veterans that are homeless. This includes benefit help, case management services,

and help getting housing. Contact the closest VA Medical Center to begin receiving services.

Employment

The VA has multiple employment resources for honorably (or generally) discharged people.

Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Representatives (DVOP) help veterans find jobs. They provide job training and link veterans to employers. You can find a VA employment representative by calling Illinois' employment office at (217) 782-7100.

The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project (HVRP) helps veterans with job search preparation, vocational counseling, occupational skills training, on-the-job training, trade skills certification and licensing and job placement assistance, and referral to supportive services. Contact the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs for more information: (800) 437-9824.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment services help veterans with service-connected disabilities by providing job training and counseling. They offer help finding a job, job training, and job development advice. To connect with this program, call (800) 437-9824 or visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/about-us/Pages/contact-us.aspx>

Veterans Industries and Compensated Work Therapy programs offer structured work opportunities and supervised therapeutic housing for homeless and near homeless veterans with physical, mental health, or addiction problems. These programs contract with businesses to provide paid work for these veterans. In Illinois, Veterans Industries Programs are located at the Hines, Marion, Danville, and North Chicago VA Medical Centers. For more information go to <https://www.va.gov/health/cwt/>



Voting

According to Illinois state law you are eligible to vote if you are a US citizen, 18 or older, have completed the custodial portion of your sentence, and have been released from the Illinois Department of Corrections. You are eligible to vote even if you are on parole, probation, mandatory supervised release, or electronic monitoring. If you previously lost your right to vote because of a felony conviction, you must re-register to vote after release. However, you are not eligible to vote if you are temporarily released on furlough or living in an IDOC Adult Transition Center (ATC), as you are still considered to be serving your sentence in that situation.

IDOC is required by law to notify election authorities that your eligibility to vote has been restored, and to give you a “Civics in Prison” handout on your release, which has more details on voting. If they did not give it to you or if you no longer have it, call the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights at (312) 888-4193 to get one.

Your vote matters. Less than half of the US population votes. This means that only a small number of people choose the representatives who make the laws that apply to all of us. Your votes can make a difference, especially at the local and state levels.

The next election is Nov. 3, 2020, and is for US President, US Congressional representatives, state representatives, county states attorneys, and, in many areas, judges. There will also be other important offices and issues on the ballot, depending on where you live. In order to vote, follow these three steps:

Step 1: Register to Vote

This can sometimes be complicated. But please do not let that stop you! Legal volunteers at the non-partisan Election Protection hotline 866-OUR-VOTE can help you for free.

In Illinois, you need to show two forms of identification in order to register to vote. Forms of acceptable ID to register to vote include: Illinois state ID or number (NOTE: IDOC is required by law to provide you with a state ID); Illinois driver’s license or number; Social Security card, or the last four numbers of your Social Security number; Medicare or Medicaid card; birth certificate; mail that is addressed to you, at the address you wish to register under; credit or debit card in your name; military ID card; Illinois vehicle registration or insurance card; Illinois college or school ID; Work ID; LINK or public aid card; lease or mortgage in your name; U.S. passport or passcard.

There are three different ways you can register to vote.

- **Online:** to register online go to <https://ova.elections.il.gov/>.
- **Mail:** to register by mail, go to <https://elections.il.gov/Default.aspx>, then go to the tab that says “Information for Voters.” Print out the form, fill it out, and mail it.
- **Same day:** to register on election day, you must show two forms of ID since you’ll be registering and voting at the same time. One of the IDs must show your current home address. People who are homeless or who recently moved are also eligible to vote this way. Tell the poll workers that you wish to do “election-day registration.”

After registering online or by mail, you should receive a voter card at the address under which you registered. It will have your name and will tell you where to go vote, and when. If you don't receive this card or if you misplace it, contact the Illinois State Board of Elections online at elections.il.gov/Main/ContactUs.aspx, or via phone at (217) 782-4141, or (312) 814- 6440. You can also call 866-OUR-VOTE.

Step 2: Learn about the candidates and issues

This guide cannot tell you how to vote. But you can learn about candidates and issues by listening to the news, talking with people you trust, and looking up candidates and issues online. You can also find voter guides and ratings for judges online.

Step 3: VOTE!

In Illinois, you are not required to show ID in order to vote. No one should ask you for ID to vote unless you are registering on election day. But it is a good idea to take your voter registration card and ID with you in case there is confusion at the polls. Normally, there are four ways that you can vote:

- In person, on election day or during the early voting period.
- By mail-in ballot. Contact your election authority or 866-OUR-VOTE if you need help requesting a mail-in ballot.
- By provisional ballot, if there are serious problems at the voting location. Because these ballots are not counted unless voters come in later to verify their identity, this kind of voting is not the best option. Call 866-OUR-VOTE if you run into this issue while voting.

The early voting period might be shorter this year due to COVID-19, so you are encouraged to vote early or vote by mail if possible. Keep an ear open for news on such changes, or call the numbers above.

You can take notes, voting guides, and this voter information into the voting booth. It's a good idea to do this, because there can be a lot to remember. Take your time when you vote and do not let anyone rush you. If you need help, ask a poll worker. They cannot tell you who or what to vote for, but they can answer questions about the process or help you mark a ballot, for example because of a disability, if you have difficulty reading, or if your English is limited. You can also request a ballot in other languages. Again, call 866-OUR-VOTE if you run into any problems while voting.

SECTION THREE:
Healing & Moving Forward

3

Beginning to Heal

Prison hurts in a lot of ways, and those who are incarcerated sometimes push others away to protect themselves from that pain. Some people avoid relationships, grieving, and emotional self-care to avoid feeling helpless, or armor themselves with distance and indifference to keep from being vulnerable.

My family thinks that because I'm free, all my problems are over, but really we carry all this baggage with us. The coping mechanisms we had on the inside are still with us, and they create barriers on the outside.



– Pablo

Healing is a part of moving forward and reconnecting pieces of one's life. It is a process, and requires equal parts vulnerability and strength. For those who've had to protect themselves with emotional armor, shedding that protective layer can be a daunting prospect. While it may be difficult to acknowledge the pain of incarceration, it is necessary in order to heal. Opening up to yourself and to trusted others is a vital step in reclaiming your life.

Prison is often traumatic, and the process of recovery will take time. The work towards recovery is a form of healing. Vulnerability is not weakness nor is asking for help. Seeking the assistance of a professional is a valid option. Support groups and individual counseling can help people deal with unresolved traumatic experiences that may have occurred during incarceration, such as the loss of a loved one. See the Mental Health section for information on finding support.

Ditch that machismo and ask for help. It's out there. It's not a bad thing. Everybody needs it.



– Pablo

This section addresses a number of aspects of wellness that can help you heal and move forward. It is based on suggestions given to us by EJP students. Wellness can be a complex concept and it is different for different people. In the context of reentry, wellness is about making meaning out of your past experiences and having them inform the development of who you are and want to be in the world. It is about forgiveness, healing, caring for yourself, and reconnecting with others.

Emotional wellness involves being respectful of yourself and others. It means being aware and accepting of your feelings, whether they are positive or negative, and expressing your feelings to others in a way that is healthy and constructive. It also means taking the time to consider others' feelings and perspectives. Much conflict comes from misunderstanding, and it's important to take the time to listen and to talk things out. People can have different perspectives, but knowing how to disagree respectfully is key to a healthy relationship. There may be other unresolved issues you're dealing with, such as grief, anger, or depression. Be patient and realize the path to emotional wellness can be a long one. It is okay to seek professional help. Counseling can be an important part of learning how to be emotionally well.

Reach out to somebody. One of our coping mechanisms that's prevalent with individuals who are incarcerated is that we retract ourselves, isolate ourselves to try to deal with it, with the psychological hurdles we're going through.

– Pablo



Physical wellness is taking care of your body. There are many ways to stay active and healthy, and it's important to do so. You can consider finding a gym, jogging, walking, or biking. Many people find enjoyment in access to fresh fruits and vegetables and it's good to eat healthy and drink plenty of water. Practice safe sex by using condoms. For those with addiction issues, reaching out for assistance through counseling or recovery programs can be a really positive step. You can read more about healthcare in our Health section on page 78.

Social wellness involves seeking out healthy relationships with many different kinds of people. As we discuss in the Relationships section on page 40, this will be a time of strengthening old relationships and building new ones. There are many different ways to do this, and many different ways to meet new people. While it can be difficult to put yourself out there, it can also lead to meaningful, healthy relationships.

Advice for socializing outside? Learning coping skills and anger management. Being less abrasive and open-minded.

– Earl W., EJP Alumnus



Spiritual wellness is pondering a larger meaning or purpose to life. This can, but does not necessarily have to, involve religion. You may decide to join a church, synagogue, or mosque to practice your faith in the company and support of others. You may also decide to join a support group to find community and purpose. Set aside some time each day to be open, listen, and reflect upon what's going on inside. Practice mindfulness or meditation. A description of some ways of doing so can be found on page 121.

Take a breath. You're going to be in for a ride, and you better pack your patience.

– Pablo



Occupational wellness is about contributing meaningfully and respectfully in your job. Your job may not be ideal; however, how you go about doing it is entirely up to you. Recognize what you bring to the table and make yourself an asset to your workplace. Invest in yourself by investing in what you do. Find ways to do a little extra and try new things if you are able. Take the time to realize the value of the work you do, and honor that. Also, beware of toxic work environments. Some jobs can be unhealthy, physically, emotionally, or otherwise.

Environmental wellness means being aware of Earth's resources and trying to create a clean, healthy, and beautiful environment. Respecting the Earth and being aware of both your place in it and your responsibility to take care of it is important. There are many ways to contribute. You can grow vegetables in a community garden or volunteer to help with community clean up. Spend time in nature, even if it's at a local park, to help you be physically and mentally healthy.

What I felt was most difficult when I first got out is figuring out how to relate to other people. You have both the lack of 'normal' experiences that most people have as late-teenagers and young adults. Plus, you have the negative effects of long-term imprisonment.

– **Greg A.**



Mindfulness

If you have had a mindfulness meditation practice while in prison, you no doubt know how important it has been for you while on the inside. You may be wondering how you will continue when you return.

If you're new to mindfulness, welcome! We will introduce you to some simple but powerful mindfulness meditation practices that you can begin trying out today.

Beginning or maintaining a mindfulness meditation practice looks different for all of us, as you will see in the stories shared below from prison or reentry mindfulness program participants. This chapter provides an overview of mindfulness and some resources that we hope will be useful for people who have a broad spectrum of interests, needs, and circumstances. The chapter covers the following topics:

1. What is mindfulness?
2. What are the benefits?
3. How Do I Meditate?
4. Meditation Scripts
5. Mindfulness Resources
6. Meditation Groups

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to our present experience (including our thoughts, emotions, and body sensations) without judgment, or without giving yourself a hard time. Whenever you bring intentional awareness to your five body senses or your mind, you are being mindful! It is a natural human phenomenon that is available to us at every moment. Mindfulness can be practiced in many ways; meditation is one of several ways to practice mindfulness.

The practice of mindfulness is not about fixing, or assuming something is wrong or broken within you. Instead, mindfulness is about accepting what is going on internally with gentleness and compassion. It helps us stay connected to the moment, and respond to situations in a non-reactive, caring manner.

Though mindfulness has its roots in Buddhist meditation, for many people in the US, mindfulness is not a religion. It is instead a practice of exploring their minds and bodies. In fact, some understand mindfulness to be a practice employed in every religion. In Christianity, for example, some people practice contemplative prayer which has similar features to meditation.

Mindfulness Meditation is the best tool that I have in my toolbox that helps me deal with, cope, and overcome the pressure of incarceration.

– **Prison Mindfulness Program Participant**

The value of mindfulness-based meditation in prison is the equivalent of an oasis to a desert beaten man.

– Prison Mindfulness Program Participant



I thought my troubles would be over if I could just get out. Freedom was the answer to all my problems. Little did I know that freedom was just the beginning of a whole host of new challenges. I experienced nausea every time I rode in a car and two months later I still do. I thought “maybe it’s the food that doesn’t agree with my stomach.” After a while, I questioned myself, “what is wrong with me?” I still don’t have the answers to that question. All I can offer is the way in which I coped with the symptoms. I meditated. I simply concentrated on my breath. I followed my breath going in and followed it leaving my body. Each breath unique, each breath a momentary pause to reset myself.

– Prison Mindfulness Program Participant



Does your heart race every time you step out of your house or enter a public place? Many of us reentering society experienced that same thing. It’s not uncommon to feel this way. I found that my anxieties overwhelmed me to the point of confusion. Practicing mindfulness helped me be aware of physically overwhelming experiences at the onset. I could feel perspiration on my upper lip. My palms started getting sweaty. My body tenses up. These are the warning signs that remind me to just breathe. During these episodes I found that I was not breathing. Doing nothing else but concentrating on my breathing made this off-putting experience bearable. Soon thereafter, I was more and more in control. Practicing mindfulness is not a fix all for something that is wrong with you. It is the constant practice of self-awareness.

– Prison Mindfulness Program Participant



What Are the Benefits of Mindfulness?

Since the 1970s there have been thousands of studies of mindfulness in the US that document its health benefits. The benefits range from improved self-awareness to stress management, increased cognitive flexibility to emotional regulation. It has been found to even change the physical makeup of the brain! Meditation helps the brain adapt and change over time. That means we are not stuck with our old self-defeating habits of mind, but can use mindfulness practices to develop happier lives. Other benefits of mindfulness include:

- Increasing Immune Function
- Lowering Blood Pressure
- Lowering Heart Rate
- Improving Executive Functioning (focusing, following directions, handling emotions)
- Lowering Anxiety and Depression Levels
- Helping Facilitate Post-Traumatic Growth
- Increasing Self-Compassion
- Boosting Resilience
- Decreasing Burnout

If you would have told me a year ago that prison meditation was a survival skill, I might have chuckled. After one short year of mindfulness practice, I'm starting to realize it might be just that.

– **Prison Mindfulness Program Participant**

This is seriously one of the best things to ever happen to me.

– **Prison Mindfulness Program Participant**

Have you felt alone, out of place? You are not alone. I experience that regularly. Things have changed since I last experienced freedom. Life has passed me by and I'm lost among new technology and infinite variety. No one seems to understand what I am experiencing. I can't help but feel broken. Is something wrong with me?

The answer to this question is an emphatic "No." What I was experiencing was a reaction to the trauma of isolation for so many years. I rely on mindfulness to assist me in channeling my focus. I can be overwhelmed by the overstimulation or I can concentrate on the task at hand. Mindfulness assists me in ignoring the peripheral that excites my anxieties and allows me to center my focus. I do so by simply concentrating on the breath. This simple act is what grounds me and allows me to function normally.

– **Anonymous**

How Do I Meditate?

No formal training is required to meditate! Be assured that there is no one right way to meditate, no “good” meditation, and certainly no “bad” meditation. If you can breathe you can meditate. You will find that your meditation experience will be different each time you meditate.

PRACTICE ALONE OR WITH A GROUP

Sometimes this choice is not available to you and we provide resources to help you develop your own meditation practice, wherever you are. If you are still incarcerated, you may know a person who has developed their own meditation practice who can give you helpful suggestions. Meditating with a supportive group, whenever possible, is the traditional way to develop your mindfulness skills, and it gives you access to the experience of others in the group. See the section on Meditation Groups, which lists a number of groups throughout Illinois.

WHEN TO PRACTICE

In the beginning, we encourage trying to meditate for short periods (5-10 minutes), and then increasing your meditation length to your comfort level. Experiment with different times during the day. A lot of people find that meditation first thing in the morning or later in the evening feels best. Make a commitment to practice every day, understanding that if something comes up that keeps you from practicing at your usual time, it's not a problem! Letting go of what we think “should” happen is a part of the practice too.

HOW TO SIT

One of the most common ways to meditate is in a seated posture with your eyes closed or open. You can choose to sit in a chair or cross-legged on a pillow, floor, or

bed. Try to maintain a stable yet relaxed posture with a straight back and your hands resting in your lap or on your thighs or knees.

COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Everyone experiences feelings of restlessness, boredom, and sleepiness at some point when they meditate. You will likely notice just how much thinking goes on in your mind too! That's totally okay. You don't need to get rid of thoughts when you are meditating. When you notice a thought, do your best to label what is happening. For instance, you can note to yourself “thinking about the past”, or “feeling restless” or “noticing boredom.” Then see if it is possible to return your attention to the meditation as best you can, such as the breath. Remember there is a reason we call meditating “practice.” There is no such thing as the perfect meditation. Do your best to keep an attitude of curiosity and non-judgment, no matter what comes up.

MEDITATION AND TRAUMA

When we practice mindfulness meditation, sometimes our mind digs up long-hidden memories and experiences that are disturbing or traumatic. This may create anxiety, which sometimes can feel overwhelming. Mindfulness meditation can be a tool to help us process these emotions, but it is not a cure-all to really difficult experiences like trauma. Bringing your attention to a focus point, a safe image, or sound, can be less triggering for you than focusing on the body. If difficult memories persist, you can consult with a mental health professional or seek other forms of care that acknowledge and appropriately respond to trauma. Also, there are health-focused mindfulness groups that are designed to help with difficulties, described on page 187.

Meditation Scripts

Many begin their meditation journey by following written or audio versions of meditations. We've included a few samples of meditation scripts including breath, sound, gratitude and walking meditations. We recommend reading each meditation slowly to get acquainted with it. After a while, you can say the meditation silently to yourself, perhaps giving each step about 1

minute, but feel free to go at your own pace. The basic structure of a traditional meditation often begins with grounding yourself in the moment by focusing on the sensations of sitting or the breath. Then meditations generally transition focus on one particular part of your experience like slowly scanning the body from the head to the toes, or focusing just on sounds. Usually at

the end, if the focus is not already there, meditations transition back to the breath.

A SEATED BREATH AND BODY MEDITATION PRACTICE

ABBREVIATED FROM MINDFUL MAGAZINE

1. Begin by getting comfortable in a seated position, sitting up straight but you're not sitting up rigidly straight. It's a position of ease. You can close your eyes or lower your gaze toward the floor.
2. Take a few deep breaths. Also, get a sense of your body sitting here, and a sense of how you're doing this moment physically, emotionally, and mentally. Is there any tension or tightness anywhere? Also, is the mind busy or calm? Begin to recognize this body naturally breathing.
3. As you breathe in, bring a beginner's mind, noticing it as if for the first time. Breathing out, bringing the same sense. Just resting your awareness on the breath.
4. Begin to get a sense of your body sitting here. Instead of just noticing the positioning of the body, feel into your whole body at this moment. This body is full of sensations from warmth to coolness, achiness, pressure, holding, pulsing, itchiness. Perhaps some areas don't have any feeling at all – a blank. Just spend the next minute feeling the sensations. Whatever is being experienced, just allow it and let it be, being curious about what's here.
5. If at any point your mind wanders, just see where it wandered to. Are you remembering something that has happened? Are you feeling anger or regret? Are you planning, perhaps practicing what you will say to someone. You can just notice your thoughts as if we were sitting in a movie theatre, noticing people talking and the images come and go on the screen. So, beginning now to bring awareness to thoughts themselves. Just notice the thought or emotion as if it were someone else's thought, not yours. Even the thought "I don't know what I'm doing" is a thought. Noticing an opening up in yourself as you become more aware, more accepting.
6. Coming back to the breath. Breathe in, and breathe out. And as you gently come back to the breath, notice how the whole body expands when you inhale, and contracts when you exhale. The whole body breathing.

7. As you bring your time with this meditation to an end, congratulate yourself for taking this time to engage in your own practice for your health and well-being. And realize that you can take a few minutes to meditate whenever you wish.

GRATITUDE MEDITATION

MINDVALLEY ACADEMY

Gratitude practice can help us tap into hope, our own internal resilience, and boost our mood. That said, it's not easy to focus on the positive when you feel overwhelmed by how difficult your present circumstances may be. Please be patient with yourself as you try out this meditation, and remember you can always return to the breath if it feels overwhelming.

1. Seat yourself in a comfortable position and take a few deep and slow breaths.
2. Draw your attention to something that's currently troubling you. It's best to start small with this practice. Name a minor annoyance or irritation that's been bothering you. For example, perhaps the room you're in is cold and drafty.
3. Then see if you can flip the negative circumstance to find a small positive aspect. For example, perhaps the room is cold and drafty, but it's raining and you're able to stay dry.
4. As you continue to identify things that are unpleasant, do your best to find a small positive opportunity that the circumstance provides. Challenge yourself. Stretch your gratitude muscles. Try to see if you can find something that is perhaps positive about these experiences, such as ways they have helped you learn or grow. Perhaps you notice how you have persevered in new ways, or found new ideas or connections you would not have noticed otherwise. Another way you can try this meditation is to simply repeat "I am grateful for _____" and notice what comes up.

SOUND MEDITATION

BY DIANE WINSTON, MARC, UCLA

1. Notice your body exactly as it is. See if you can tune in to any sensations that are present to you in your body at this moment. There might be heaviness or lightness, pressure, weight. There might be vibration, pulsating, movement, warmth, coolness. These sensations can be anywhere in your body, and all you have to do is notice them. Notice what's

I am by no stretch of the imagination a meditation savant. I simply do. Time is a rare commodity that makes sitting for extended periods of time difficult. Therefore I don't always follow a specific regimen other than just to breathe in times of stress. This sounds simple enough but it can be very difficult, especially when you are not practicing regularly. Nonetheless, the stresses of the day always bring me back to the breath and I say to myself "just breathe" and I do.

– **Anonymous**

happening with curiosity and interest.

2. Take a breath. As you breathe in and breathe out, relax. Not much to do except to be fully present and aware.
3. Now let go of the body's sensations, and turn your attention to the sounds inside or outside your space, your cell, day room, or home. There may be all sorts of sounds happening: loud sounds, quiet sounds. You can also notice the silence between the sounds. But the sounds are coming and going.
4. Note the sounds instead of narrating them. One tendency of our mind is to want to think about the sounds, to start to make up a story about the sound, or we have a reaction to it: I like it. I don't like it. See if instead, you can simply listen to the sound. Notice it with curiosity and interest. The sounds are coming and going.
5. Check in before you check out. Now once again, notice your body right now, standing sitting, or lying down. Notice any sensations that are obvious to you. Take another breath, soften, and when you are ready open your eyes if you've had them closed.

MINDFUL WALKING

ADAPTED FROM *MINDFUL WALKING*, SEGAL, WILLIAMS & TEASDALE *MINDFULNESS-BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY FOR DEPRESSION*

Mindfulness is essentially about being aware of what we're doing, thinking, feeling. Walking meditation is simple to do, and you can do it without drawing attention to what you're doing. Everybody walks, but most of us don't focus on the process of walking and how the body feels.

1. Standing still, bring the focus of your awareness to your feet. What are the sensations of the contact

of your feet with the ground and the weight of your body? You might find it helpful to flex your knees slightly a few times to get a clearer sense of the sensations in the feet and legs.

2. When you start walking, notice how you transfer your weight into the right (or left) leg. Notice the physical sensations in the legs and feet as the left (or right) leg "empties" and the other leg takes over the support of the rest of the body.
3. With the left leg "empty", allow the left heel to rise slowly, move it forward, feeling the sensations in the leg as you do so, and place it down to get ready for the next step, and feel your weight transfer to this leg.
4. Continue walking, being aware of the sensations in your feet, legs, hips, and upper body (if possible).
5. If you stop, or have to wait, still be aware of the physical sensations of standing, and then of walking when you start moving again.

Our thoughts are just thoughts, not the truth of things, and certainly not accurate representations of who we are. In being seen and known, they cannot but self-liberate, and we are, in that moment, liberated from them.

– **Jon Kabat-Zinn**

Have you experienced disappointment with freedom? I have and that is not something to be ashamed of. This is more common than you think. My life after release is nothing like I envisioned it. I romanticized freedom and for some reason I feel more locked up out here. At least, that's what the stories in my head were saying. I constantly ruminate on these disappointments. Rumination occurs naturally when you allow your mind to take control. Mindfulness has taught me how to take control of my thought process. This has allowed me the freedom to take life as it comes and adjust as needed.

– Prison Mindfulness Program Participant

Mindfulness in Daily Life

Being mindful doesn't mean you have to sit on a cushion and be still. Think of all the things we do in a day.

Most of the time we're not fully aware of what we are doing, and our minds wander off on "more important" business. Mindfulness can actually be practiced in our everyday routines, like washing dishes or brushing our teeth. In fact, many mindfulness training programs ask participants to start out by picking one habit, and doing it mindfully for 1-2 weeks. Give it a try!

MINDFUL OF BRUSHING YOUR TEETH

When you brush your teeth in the morning, instead of being lost in thought the whole time, gently bring your attention back to the body each time you realize the mind has wandered off. What can you see? What can you hear? What's the color of the toothpaste? What's the smell? What flavor is it? You don't have to think too much, it's more a case of being present to notice all these things.

Now, gently focus your attention on the sensations. Be mindful of your arm moving from side-to-side and the sound of the toothbrush against your teeth. Feel the bristles against your gums, against your teeth.

This may sound silly, but brushing your teeth is an especially good activity for practicing mindfulness, because it's so repetitive. Like meditation, it offers a very defined framework within which to focus.

Our minds seem to be set up to go into autopilot for those actions we repeat over and over, like brushing our teeth.

The ride home from Lawrence was a bit difficult. I was noticing everyone was on their phones and all I had to do was look out the window. As if I already didn't stand out enough. For Christ's sake I'm carrying a cardboard box for luggage. I don't know if it was the COVID but people were standoffish. This probably was a good thing because I had several panic attacks. I don't know how I would've handled sitting right next to someone when I'm constantly on guard of my personal space for protection. Thank God for mindfulness. Meditation didn't always work but I immediately recognized it when it was needed.

– Prison Mindfulness Program Participant

Mindfulness Resources

Want access to more meditations? Check out this website for dozens of more meditation scripts! https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XSgYqKhvpM1uqg3_00Q074nBXIZq4CLO/view?usp=sharing

If you would like to begin learning about meditation from the guidance of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous People of Color) here is a BIPOC Mindfulness Resource Guide with podcasts, meditation scripts, and more: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s3I700SH5hAXVCDBDMZddhDSMN3ogXpG/view?usp=sharing>

Many people find that reading about mindfulness and meditation practices helps them develop their own practice. Check out this resource for a list of books that we have found helpful in our own practice.

Phone apps. There is no shortage of free mindfulness phone apps. Once they are downloaded on a smartphone

they may offer guided meditations, meditation timers, calming sounds, tips on how to meditate, ways to combat anxiety or depression, advice on how to sleep better, ways to hone your focus, and so much more. Want to learn how to download a Phone App? Check out page x.

Meditation phone apps have grown in popularity for many reasons. First, they can be accessed anytime! While on the bus or train, at work, or before bed. A meditation app can help you keep track of your meditation beginning and end by gently providing a pleasant deep soothing gong sound or a gentle ring through your phone or headphones. Want to meditate for 5 minutes or 45 minutes? You get to choose on a meditation app! It can also be a space for accountability.

Check out our Mindfulness directory on page 187 for a list of helpful apps you can download.

“*Remind yourself that the deepest stillness and peace does not arise because the world is still or the mind is quiet. Stillness is nourished when we allow the world, the mind and the body to be just as they are for now, moment by moment, and breath by breath.*”

(Williams & Penman, Mindfulness)

It is common to question your purpose. I do so repeatedly. And from what I'm told so do many other formerly incarcerated people. My relationships aren't exactly as I had envisioned. That was one of my greatest disappointments. I had everyone else's lives figured out, if only they would allow me to do the driving. Mindfulness meditation provided me the space and compassion to accept people as they come. My vision is just that—mine. I learned to let the little things go and focus on what makes that person special to me. Sitting with this allowed me to relinquish the judgmental mindset. A mindset that was doing nothing but causing me and everyone around me harm.

– **Prison Mindfulness Program Participant**

Mindfulness in Daily Life

Meditation groups are wonderful ways to connect with others to share and deepen a meditation practice. They provide community, accountability and a supportive space to connect with others. These groups come in many forms. Some are offered face-to-face while others offer online groups. Many meditation groups begin with a handful of interested friends meeting in one person's home. Some groups meet regularly and are ongoing. Some have been meeting for decades. See our mindfulness directory on page 187 for a few meditation groups in Illinois.

For beginners, meditation groups offer free instruction, guidance, support, and feedback. While many meditation groups may describe themselves as Buddhist, using words like "Sangha" (community), "Zen" (meditative state) or "Vipassana" (insight), many groups are open to anyone joining their group.

Mental health mindfulness groups meet over a specified number of weeks, usually 8 to 10, and have a structured agenda each meeting. They frequently meet at health-care facilities such as a hospital or with a therapist, and are secular, clinically based methods of learning about mindfulness. These groups usually have a cost associated with them that may be covered by insurance. They are also more likely to be available in larger cities across Illinois.

Here are two mental health mindfulness programs that may be helpful:

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction was developed to help people with chronic pain that was not adequately dealt with through medications. Over the past four decades, it has broadened in appeal and attracts people who wish to use mindfulness skills to develop healthy responses to stress of all kinds.
- Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy was developed to help people develop more mindful ways to address stress, anxiety, and depression. It explores patterns of thinking and helps people shift to more helpful attitudes. It can help you develop skills to use when low moods and anxiety arise.



Building Healthy Relationships

Incarceration creates barriers for maintaining relationships with family, friends, and other loved ones. The high financial and emotional cost of keeping in touch can put strains on these relationships. Reentry removes many of these barriers. However, the process of reconnecting with loved ones and rebuilding healthy, positive relationships will likely require thoughtfulness and care. Returning from prison is a challenging transition not only for the one returning, but for their family and loved ones.

People whose loved ones are incarcerated can feel isolated. Often, their feelings of loss and the pain of separation do not seem socially acceptable. Both incarcerated people and their loved ones may feel guilt. Open and honest communication about these feelings is made more difficult if you're trying to keep things positive. Some people may cope by being closed off and guarded, as a way of surviving prison, but these habits may strain relationships.

Even under the best of circumstances, being away from family, friends, and loved ones for an extended period of time means that you will all need time, patience, and openness as you work to get to know each other again. This process can begin before you leave prison, as we discuss in *Before You Leave: Relationships* on page 40.

We acknowledge that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to the relationship challenges people face when leaving prison. Below, we share the wisdom of formerly incarcerated individuals who have generously described the challenges they faced and how they have worked to overcome these challenges and build healthy relationships.

Making Up for Lost Time

Keke describes "starting all over" with his children after being released from prison. He had to prepare himself mentally for how little he knew his children and how little they knew him.

“ Don’t come in like they’re supposed to know you or even respect you a little bit, because you’ve been gone. How are they going to respect somebody that ain’t been there? Even though you talk to them, send them letters, it’s different than being there physically with them every day, talking to them, understanding when they’re sick or, like I said, daddy and daughter dances. You might think you know them because they’re part of you, but you really don’t know them and what they’ve been through. You know what they tell you. Same thing with you.”

Tony also mentions the challenges of reconnecting with family. While in prison, “you keep them at an arm’s length because you know [while you’re in there] you could lose them.” In fact, Tony says:

“A lot of us watched family members die. Family members get sick. Family members move away. You’re watching the world go past you, and to keep that family interested in your life and to keep yourself interested in their life is really hard because you can’t experience that life with them.”

After leaving prison, many people try to make up for the time lost, but not always in the best ways. Keke talks about how being the “demanding father” doesn’t work. “You can’t say, ‘oh, you gotta do this, you gotta do that,’ no, you can’t talk to them.” Instead, “You gotta let them talk to you.” Kilroy echoes Keke’s advice, explaining, “No one likes to be spoken at, they want to be spoken to. No one is willing to listen to anything you have to say until you first convince them that you care.”

David provides another example of how being overbearing with his children did not work:

“In prison I became more educated, more aware. When I got out, I wanted to save the world. My relationships with my children became complicated because I had the tendency to correct them in their behavior. I was bombarding them with advice, and the more I did this, the more they were pushing me away. I had to learn to relax, to not be overbearing.”

Keke describes the small ways he rebuilds these relationships.

“I take time out of my day, even five minutes, to call them and see what’s going on. I text them every day, every morning. . . . I talk to them and get their point of view and see what’s going on, try to spend time. I tell them I love them, how you doing, how your day going, what you got planned. Little simple stuff. I let them talk. You gotta try to be involved, no matter how old they are, they still children, they still want that relationship with you.”

Tony tries to help his children avoid the mistakes he made.

“I let my kids know when they were young that, hey, Dad went through this and I want to raise you better than what I went through. That way they don’t have to go through these things. . . . I want my kids to have the idea that dad knows where you’re headed to if you keep heading on a bad road. I do everything I can and change my path and learn what I need to learn to be able to give them a better future than what I had in my past.”

Working Through Feelings of Guilt

Tony also mentions the guilt many individuals feel for making their families suffer.

“If you have any emotions at all, you’re going to have guilt about making your family suffer. . . . They suffer with you while you’re in there. . . . To them, you’re kind of dead because you’re not around any longer. . . . You’re not there to hug, to hold, to say hey, give a call and say goodnight. You’re in a grave, you’re in a tomb. So, yeah, I think if you have any emotions at all, there is a guilt. And we don’t like to show it because, hey, we’re tough guys. But down deep inside, we do have those feelings of guilt and those

feelings of remorse. Even now I struggle with showing those feelings and showing that remorse that I have and trying to make something of it.”

To work past these feelings of guilt, Heather talks about proving to family members that you have changed.

“*You can say you’re going to do better til you’re blue in the face, but until you actually get out and try doing something different, then it doesn’t really matter. You have to try. Even if it’s working at McDonald’s, it’s still, you know, they respect that and admire that. Just because you get up and you go and try to do the right thing, instead of just giving up and saying fuck it, getting drunk, doing whatever. And I feel better every day, getting up and doing my thing.”*

Dealing with Relationship Complexity

Inside prison, relationships are often defined for you and you don’t have the opportunity to experience the nuances of interpersonal relationships the way you will on the outside. Be ready for complexity, confusion and even conflict that might result from your efforts to navigate new relationships.

As Pablo explains,

“*On the inside, we have clearly outlined relationships. I don’t step on your toes, you don’t step on mine. But on the outside it gets messier. Everything’s infused with feeling. We’re dealing with emotions we don’t deal with on the inside.”*

You’ve changed while in prison, and so have your loved ones. It’s going to take time to understand each other and learn to navigate these complex relationships.

Overcoming Isolation and Opening Up

Tony talks about the challenge of reconnecting with loved ones when you’re used to being closed off. He explains that while in prison, “you keep them at an arm’s length because you know you could lose them.” In fact, Tony says:

“*A lot of us watched family members die. Family members get sick. Family members move away. You’re watching the world go past you, and to keep that family interested in your life and to keep yourself interested in their life is really hard because you can’t experience that life with them.”*

Roberto also describes the tendency to “keep things bottled up” while in prison, to tell family members that “everything is going to be OK” regardless of what you’re feeling. He warns that this leads to “loneliness and emptiness.”

Pablo talks about how strategies that isolate you from others may have been helpful in prison, but they are not always helpful on the outside.

“*The coping mechanisms we had on the inside are still with us, and they create barriers on the outside. When you retract and people are not knowing the reason for your isolation, they think it’s having to do with them.”*

Roberto recommends talking to a counselor or taking some time to reflect on why you are isolating yourself:

“ What is driving you to do this? Maybe you want to protect your family. You don’t want to be seen to mess up. Maybe you don’t want to deal with their rejection. You need to identify these things, confront them.”

Keke’s prison experience has made him want to be more honest and open with his partner, but he describes how that can be difficult if you haven’t been honest with each other in the past:

“ The most challenging thing is [to] be honest with [your partner]. If she’s taking time out of her life to stand by you, give her your life. You come out being honest with yourself. . . . you’re not feeding them a fairy tale.”

Learning to Ask for Help

One of the biggest relationship challenges for formerly incarcerated people is figuring out how to ask for help from loved ones. Reentry is an overwhelming process, especially for those who have been in prison for a long time. Pablo notes:

“ My family thinks that because I’m free, all my problems are over, but I need assistance with the most basic things. That does make me somewhat defensive, and I’ll end up trying to do things on my own and then I crash and burn.”

His advice? “Ditch that machismo and ask for help. It’s not a bad thing.”

It can be embarrassing to have to ask for help. As Joe Joe explains, “What we’re competing with is not feeling like a helpless infant all the time. We’re so used to being rejected that we don’t reach out much for help.” He offers the following advice for family members of people who are returning home:

“ It’s helpful if loved ones can create an environment where they’re not trying to hover over you, not trying to mother you, but at the same time recognize it’s a lot to take in. We’ve aged in prison.”

Lee, whose spouse was incarcerated, argues that “healthy adult relationships aren’t about putting your needs in the back seat.” She explains:

“ You want to be considerate and not wear out your welcome. The effect of that is that maybe you’re not expressing the things that you need. It’s OK to say, “Hey, I need you to do this thing for me.” Learn to communicate what you need.”

Joe Joe acknowledges that family members may not be able to help you in the ways you expect.

“ You’re dealing with family, and they are stretching their resources to support you. Don’t have unrealistic expectations of what a person should or shouldn’t do for you. [Instead,] develop an attitude of gratefulness. Recognize that everything is a gift.”

Joe Joe offers this final piece of advice regarding asking for help:

“ If you strive to lighten someone’s load rather than adding to it, they are going to be more receptive to help. This is what really wins people over and will help get you where you need to go.”

Becoming Aware of Non-Verbal Communication

You may be used to interactions in prison where you puff yourself up or assume a physical stance or posture that communicates a readiness for violence. It is important to be aware of the message this behavior sends to people on the outside.

As Pablo explains, in prison you learn to “telegraph assertiveness, to square up” when any kind of conflict occurs.

“ We are around aggression every day [in prison], and we unconsciously bring that aggression to our relationships on the outside. I found myself doing that to my family a few times, and I didn’t realize it was being taken as a sign of aggression. I was getting loud without even knowing it. Out here it looks different.”

Antonio also notes this tendency:

“ I wear all my deep feelings in my expression. People may think I’m angry when I’m not. That comes from being in prison. I’m loud because in jail, people tend to scream. Everyone has to speak over each other if they want to be heard.”

Pablo explains that loved ones often perceive these behaviors as violent and aggressive. “Most of the time we’re totally unaware of how people are perceiving us. We feel sometimes that we’re in a constant state of being judged.” Pablo recommends honest conversations with loved ones. Invite them to help you recognize when you are behaving in a way they feel is aggressive, and practice strategies to adjust your body language when this occurs.

Overcoming Conflict-Avoidant Behaviors

In prison, you may have resorted to isolation when dealing with conflict. You may have had the luxury of time and space to think through difficult issues before confronting them. On the outside, you may be expected to directly address issues with your loved ones rather than walking away. You may feel pressured to respond immediately when you’d rather take your time.

Pablo explains what happens when you retreat into yourself instead of addressing conflicts with loved ones.

“ When you retreat, it telegraphs to the other person that you don’t care. When you remain silent, people may think you’re brushing them off.”

It’s not a bad idea to take some time to think before talking through a problem. As Lee explains, “It’s OK to say, ‘I need time to think about this, I can’t give you an answer right away.’” But too often when people retreat, they never come back and address the issue. If you do put off a difficult conversation with a loved one because you need this space, commit to returning to it and addressing the issue at a later date.

Forming New Connections

Tony mentions how emotional distance makes it difficult to form new friendships. About prison life, he says: “You spend so much time keeping people at arm’s distance. You never let anybody get close. [When you go into prison] you’re so young, you’re so vibrant, it’s so easy to have friends, to have relationships, to have people that are close to you. But when you come home, you’ve gotten so used to keeping people at a distance that you just continue to do it. It’s hard to make new friends.”

Keke describes not wanting to be in a relationship with someone until he feels ready.

“ I’ve been out two years now and I’m still at a point that I don’t want to be tied down because I feel like, I can’t answer for anybody else. I gotta get myself together instead of being in a relationship with someone. And I know I don’t have myself 100% together. I’m trying to build a relationship with my children, trying to stay on the right path, trying to do the right thing, working every day and be committed to myself so I can keep myself from going back to prison. And I know I can’t be committed to that woman like that. [When I meet someone,] I let them know I’m not looking for a relationship, I’m looking for a friendship.”

One of the biggest challenges people face in forming new relationships is sharing their past. Heather notes that “The people that are worth having in your life accept you for who you are and for what’s happened.” She acknowledges that not everyone will be accepting.

Roberto talks about the challenge of getting to know people, while dealing with the stigma of incarceration:

“ How do I get to know people? How do you create a personal brand so that all the good things you offer are not eclipsed by the fact that you spent a significant amount of time in prison? How do you open a conversation with someone when you’re trying to remain private, and also take into account all of the negative stigma that’s attached to being incarcerated? You’re just meeting people and you don’t want to share too much about yourself. There’s so much negative stigma. You have to break through that wall. On the other hand, if you do, it’s still no guarantee that they are going to relate to you and understand what you’re going through.”

Keke prefers telling people right away about his past. “I tell them in the door,” he says.

“ I learned from my experience that if you lay your cards out in the open, you get a better understanding. Nowadays, people google so much. Both of you have to be honest with each other. So that’s what I do. I let them know right in the door. This is me. I’ve been to prison twice. I’m doing this, I’m doing that, trying to get myself together.”

Tony also prefers being open:

“ It’s a little weird, a little awkward, to just come out and say, hey, I just spent ten years in prison. But I’ve never been one to be shy. I’ve always been real open about what I went through because it lets other people know that, look, just because I was in there doesn’t mean I have to keep going back and forth, back and forth.”

Heather, on the other hand, is more reserved.

“ I don’t really mention [that I was in prison] to people. But, I guess it helps to have moved away to a different state, so really not that many people know me. They just know what they see of me now. They don’t know . . . I made mistakes in the past. And I’m kind of comfortable with it. So, if I was to meet a guy or something and start dating, I wouldn’t just throw all my dirty laundry out front. I’d get to know him. But if things were working out really good, I’d tell him all about it, and if he didn’t accept it, then he probably wouldn’t be the guy for me anyway.”

Tony concludes, “When you meet somebody, if it scares them that you’ve been to prison, then you know what? That’s not the person that you need to be with.”

Confronting Fears and Having Hope

Some people fear that family or friends won’t want to rebuild relationships with them when they are released. However, there are people who are willing to work to re-establish relationships. Heather has a brother who was released from prison, and she describes her feelings about him.

“ My brother was locked up for years and years and [even though] I didn’t write to him, I still loved him. I guess that helps a lot, knowing that.”

Tony mentions that spending time in prison can make individuals afraid that “nobody can love us.” But there is a danger to being fearful, according to Tony.

“ We’re scared, so we do one of two things. We give up or we get angry. Both of those are not what we need to do. Instead of letting our fears make us give up, or letting our fears make us angry and lash out, we need to face our fears, we need to realize that it is a fear that we have, and we need to struggle past that fear. . . You have to let go of that fear and be willing to give, be willing to forgive.”

Keke recommends being realistic.

“ Set realistic goals in everything you do, from relationships to coming home, getting a job. Don’t come out trying to feed nobody no dream and definitely don’t feed yourself a dream. Be true to yourself. Just give yourself a try doing something right. . . . You know you got good women out here that are willing to listen and take a chance in you, to help you build yourself up, but it’s all on you if you’re willing to go.”

Heather also recommends being realistic and having hope.

“ When you’re locked up, you have all this time to sit and think. You have ideas of how you want things to go, and then you get out and, of course, those are just ideas. . . . Take care of yourself and everything else will fall into place. . . . You can’t stress out over everything that you have no control over. Don’t give up hope. There’s always hope. And love overcomes a lot of stuff.”

Domestic Abuse

Relationships are complicated. They can be great in some ways, challenging in others. No relationship is perfect, but with patience and care, many can become more supportive and loving. Sometimes, however, it's best to get out of a relationship, especially if there is abuse involved. Abuse comes in many different forms, including:

- Verbal abuse (threats, name-calling, intimidation)
- Physical abuse (pushing, slapping, choking, destroying property)
- Controlling behavior (preventing you from seeing people, going places, or spending money)
- Emotional abuse (making you feel like you are worthless)
- Sexual abuse (unwanted sexual activity, often using force)

If you are in an abusive relationship, seek help. Making the decision to leave is difficult and may involve some risk. It takes courage to leave, especially if you fear for your own safety or the safety of your children, or if you depend on the other person for financial support.

You may want to begin this process by calling the Illinois Domestic Violence hotline: 1-877-863-6338 or 1-877-TO END DV. This confidential 24-hour hotline provides support, information, and referrals. This free service can put you in touch with resources in your area. Even if you are not ready to leave the relationship, the hotline can help you get through challenging times and help you take the next step. The Illinois Department of Human Services website also has a list of domestic violence agencies where you can go for help: www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=31886

Finally, we have listed transitional housing and emergency shelter options in our Housing Directory on page 142. Many of these options serve individuals who are seeking shelter after leaving an abusive relationship. In our Health Directory on page 180, we have listed a few counseling resources available to people who are facing domestic abuse.



Connecting with Your Community

Connecting with others is challenging for many people after release from prison. Separation from family and friends may result in feelings of loneliness and isolation, especially if the people you were close to before you went to prison are no longer around. Getting involved in your community and forming new friendships may help you begin to heal.

Getting involved and connecting with others may involve working to make a difference in your community through politics, organizing, and volunteering. Civic engagement means exercising your civic rights and duties and becoming involved in your community and the political system. This may include writing letters to elected officials, campaigning, voting (see page 107), participating in government events, talking to people in your community, and volunteering.

Community Organizing and Advocacy

Community organizing is about community members joining together and engaging in organized activities to advocate for their needs and rights. Communities can be defined through geographical boundaries or shared characteristics. Community organizing can take many forms including door-to-door interactions, public speeches, organizing community meetings, gathering systematic information about the community needs, sharing information to educate the public, developing community leadership, and organizing fundraisers.

Community organizing is an effective tool for making your voice heard and creating significant positive change. You would be surprised by what you can do when you join together with others to hold your

representatives accountable and to make sure your community's voice is being heard.

There are many organizations that do community organizing online and on the ground. Now that you are out of prison, you can contribute to these efforts in valuable ways. People with a history of incarceration often do not have a chance to develop or implement the laws that affect them, so it is important for them to become more involved in politics and their communities. For instance, EJP alumni have run, volunteered with, coordinated, and been employed by groups including:

- CeaseFire IL (ceasefirechicago.org)
- Community Renewal Society, FORCE Project (Fighting To Overcome Records & Create Equality) <https://www.communityrenewalsociety.org/>
- Community Support Advisory Council (regular monthly meetings to support the parole process) www.illinois.gov/idoc/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx
- Edovo (Education Over Obstacles) edovo.com
- Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform <http://www.icjia.org/>

Get involved in advocacy work. If we want to change the process, we have to lead the process.

– Marlon C.



- Give up the Streets (GUTS)- <https://www.facebook.com/GiveUpTheStreets/>
- Ex-Cons for Community and Social Change (ECCSC)- <https://www.eccsc.org/>

You can contact these groups and many others to find out how you can get involved in your community. See the Advocacy Resources on page 163 for more ideas.

Getting Involved in Your Community

Religious Organizations—Churches, synagogues, or other religious communities can help you find meaning, purpose, and fellowship. Many religious organizations have classes, support groups, and volunteer opportunities. Don't be discouraged if it takes a while for you to find the place that feels right for you.

Libraries—Public libraries are not just quiet places to borrow books and movies. Libraries organize events and classes, too. They have book clubs, social gatherings, and concerts. Many also have a space where people can post information about community events, group meetings, and even job openings. Visit your local library's website or stop by in person to find out what your library has to offer.

You always have to see the silver lining in the clouds, no matter how murky they are. I think that's the main advice that I could give to someone. Just don't give up. Because it's hard. Don't make no mistake about it.



– **Anonymous**

Reentry Programs—If you are living in a town with a reentry program, consider volunteering your time there. Even if you didn't use this program when you were getting out, you have experience and understanding that could benefit people in that situation. See what the program needs and let them know you are happy to help. With some luck, you may even be able to turn your volunteer work into a paid position there or somewhere else.

City and County Park Districts and Forest

Preserves—Your town or city probably has a park district, and its website will include information about the parks in your area. Take time to visit these parks and spend time in nature. Many park districts also offer sports programs and leagues, as well as other recreational programs. Some counties also have forest preserves, and their websites will also list parks and recreational activities available in your county.

Events and Activities—In many large and mid-sized cities you can get free weekly alternative papers. They usually have good concert and local events & activities listings. The same information should be on the paper's website. Community center or community agency websites often list classes and events held at the community center, and may list things going on in and around your city. A simple Google search can also help you find events in your area.

Serving Your Community

Volunteer work gives you the chance to make social connections, focus on solving problems, and see yourself as a vital part of your community. Volunteering helps you build fulfilling relationships and has proven health benefits. Creating new social connections can prevent depression and reduce feelings of isolation. Watching how your efforts make your community better can give you a sense of pride and fulfillment.

If you are currently out of work, volunteering can also help you acquire new skills to add to your resume so that you can have a more successful job search. You may also meet new people who can help you network and find new job opportunities. Volunteering expands your life in ways that may surprise you. You may discover new abilities or find new interests by offering your time and energy.

Senior living centers and nursing homes, humane societies, homeless shelters, food banks, and local churches are often looking for volunteers. Call or visit them to ask how you can help out. You can also do a Google search for volunteer opportunities in your community.

Don't give up. Do what you can to promote change. Take the time out to try to mentor some of these young people that are out here in the hopes that, one day, we can bring about changes. Instead of wondering when somebody else is gonna do something about it, I need to remember that I'm somebody and try to do what I can.

– Anonymous



SECTION FOUR:
Directories

4

We have listed a number of different programs, services, and businesses throughout this guide as resources for people leaving prison, people out of prison, and their families. We don't endorse any of these organizations. We also don't guarantee that these resources will be helpful (although we certainly hope they are).



1. Housing

This housing directory contains a sample of housing options available throughout Illinois, organized geographically. For more complete listings or to find housing outside of Illinois, see the directories at the bottom of this page. If you live in Chicago, we recommend that you look for housing using the Chicago Central Referral System, Chicago Coordinated Entry System, or by dialing 311 to find a shelter (see below).

DEFINITIONS

Transitional Housing: Sometimes called Halfway Houses, transitional housing is meant to help residents transition to independent living. Most are low cost (no more than 1/3 of income), though some are free. Typical stay: 6-24 months.

Emergency Shelter: Short-term housing for homeless. Stay usually no more than 3 months. Usually free.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Housing for individuals who, because of age, disability, substance abuse, mental illness, or chronic homelessness, are unable to live independently without care and support.

Subsidized/Affordable Housing: Housing for low-income individuals that is subsidized by the government. People usually are required to pay 1/3 of their income towards rent. Some cities or organizations offer housing vouchers or help with rent and utilities.

Recovery Housing: Sometimes called sober living homes, these homes offer help for people struggling with substance use.

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
NATIONWIDE	Homeless Shelter Directory		homelessshelterdirectory.org/					Emergency
NATIONWIDE	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)		(877) 411-WARM (9276) https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/HomeWeatherization/CommunityActionAgencies	Income eligible	Find a Community Action Agency to get services			Offers energy utility bill assistance
NATIONWIDE	Shelter listing directory		shelterlistings.org					Emergency and transitional housing
NATIONWIDE	Sober Living Homes — Intervention America		http://soberliving.interventionamerica.org/					Recovery
NATIONWIDE	Substance Abuse Rehab Centers Directory		http://substanceabusecenter.com/					Recovery
NATIONWIDE	Transitional Housing directory		transitionalhousing.org					Transitional
STATEWIDE	Lutheran Social Services of Illinois	Multiple locations throughout Illinois	(847) 635-4600 lssi.org/services/affordable-housing.php	Seniors and people with disabilities				Permanent, supportive, subsidized
CHICAGO	Alexian Brothers Housing	Multiple locations	https://www.amitahealth.org/alexian-brothers-housing/ (773) 327-9921	Men, Women, people with disabilities, people with HIV No people on sex offender registry	Use Chicago Central Referral System to apply, wait list	30-60 days		Permanent supportive
CHICAGO	A Safe Haven	2750 W Roosevelt Rd, Chicago, IL 60608	(773) 435-8300 asafehaven.org	Homeless men, women, families. Supportive housing: seniors, low income individuals No record of violent, arson, or sex crimes		Transitional housing: average stay 4 months	Meals, health care, laundry, computer lab, case management, substance abuse treatment	Transitional, permanent supportive housing, recovery
CHICAGO	Ashunti residential management	4944 W Huron St, Chicago, IL 60644	(773) 379-6981					Recovery
CHICAGO	Breakthrough Urban Ministries for men	402 N St. Louis Ave, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 346-1785 breakthrough.org	Men with mental illness or chronic addictions No people on sex offender registry	Referral process required, wait time 3-4 weeks	120 days	Drug rehab, employment training, food, case management	Permanent supportive

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
CHICAGO	Breakthrough Urban Ministries for women	3330 W Carroll Ave, Chicago, IL, 60624	(773) 722-1144 breakthrough.org	Women with mental illness or chronic addictions No people on sex offender registry	Referral process required, wait time 3-4 weeks	120 days	Drug rehab, employment training, food, case management	Permanent supportive
CHICAGO	Bridgehaus	516 N Ogden Ave Suite #156, Chicago, IL 60642 Multiple Locations	(773) 235-4287 https://bridgehaus.com/					Recovery
CHICAGO	Brighter, Behavior, Choices Inc.	6525 S Campbell Ave, Chicago, IL 60629	(773) 434-5526 https://bbchoicesinc.wixsite.com/women	Women No people on violent offender or sex offender registry	Referral required	12 months	financial education, job training, case management, and workshops.	Recovery
CHICAGO	Catholic Charities	Multiple locations Greater Chicago Region	(312) 655-7700 catholiccharities.net	Seniors for subsidized housing, everyone else—rent and utilities assistance				Permanent supportive, subsidized
CHICAGO	Center of Concern	1665 Elk Blvd, Des Plaines, IL 60016	(847) 823-0453 https://centerofconcern.org/	Housing Support				
CHICAGO	Chicago City Services Number		311					
CHICAGO	Chicago Coordinated Entry System		csh.org/chicagoce					Emergency, transitional, permanent supportive
CHICAGO	Chicago House	925 N Clybourn, Chicago, IL 60614; Multiple locations	(773) 248-5200 chicagohouse.org	Men, Women, LGBTQ	Must fill out an application, found on website		Employment services, medical linkage and retention services, HIV prevention services, legal services.	Transitional
CHICAGO	Concerned Citizens Inc/Mothers House	321 N Mason Ave, Chicago, IL 60644	(773) 287-8393					Recovery
CHICAGO	Cornerstone Community Outreach	5614 N Clifton, Chicago, IL 60640	(773) 271-8163 ccollife.org	Families, single men or women with children, individuals No people on sex offender registry	Referral needed	Can stay until needs are met	Case management, food, classes, mental health counseling	Transitional

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
CHICAGO	Deborah's Place	2822 W Jackson Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612 Multiple Locations	(773) 722-5080	Women, especially those with disabilities No people on sex offender registry	Use Chicago's Coordinated Entry System (CES). Must have referral	120 days	help finding stable housing, employment, family reunification, health services.	
CHICAGO	Elite Houses of Sober Living	1236 W 72nd Pl, Chicago, IL 60636	http://www.elitehousesofsoberliving.com/ (773) 994-8353					Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Featherfist	2255 East 75th St, Chicago, IL 60649	(773) 721-7088 featherfist.org	Veterans receive preference	Walk-ins welcome, Chicago Central Referral System, wait time 60-90 days		Case management, employment help, computer training,	
CHICAGO	Franciscan Outreach	1645 W LeMoine St, Chicago, IL 60622	(773) 278-6724 franoutreach.org/housing/	Men, women		120 days	Life skills, job training program, case management	Transitional, subsidized
CHICAGO	Fresh Start Sober Living House	2310 W Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 60618	afreshstartsoberliving.com/					Recovery
CHICAGO	Habilitative Systems Inc.	415 S Kilpatrick, Chicago, IL 60644 Multiple locations	(773) 261-2252 habilitative.org/index.php/hsilocations	Different housing options for women, veterans, disabled, seniors, men, people with mental illness			drug rehab, counseling	Transitional, permanent supportive
CHICAGO	Hand-n-hand	4207 W Carroll Ave # 100, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 722-1312					Transitional
CHICAGO	Haymarket Center	932 W Washington Chicago, IL 60607	(312) 226-7984 ext. 480 hcenter.org	Men, women	Contact them for a clinical, medical assessment	90 day to 6 months	12 step program, employment help, life skills	Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Healthcare Alternative Systems Inc	2755 W Armitage Ave, Chicago, IL 60647	hascares.org/program/transitional-housing					Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Health and Human Services		211					Subsidized
CHICAGO	Heartland Alliance	208 S LaSalle Street, Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60604	https://www.heartlandalliance.org/heartland-housing/	Men and women, especially those with HIV/AIDS, substance use	Call manager to apply.	Varies by program	case management, educational support groups, transportation assistance, and referrals to substance use treatment	

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
CHICAGO	Henry's Sober Living House	8032 S Ingleside Ave, Chicago, IL 60619	(773) 752-1300 http://henryshouse.org/	Men and women Mentoring for parolees Substance use recovery				Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Hope House	3551 W. Roosevelt Rd, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 521-8442		Waiting list		Employment readiness, counseling, family reunification,	Transitional
CHICAGO	Inner Voice Chicago	212 W Van Buren St Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60607	https://www.ivchi.org/	Men and Veterans				Transitional
CHICAGO	L.A.M. House	6739 S Green, Chicago, IL 60621	(773) 616-1108					Transitional
CHICAGO	Lawndale Community Church	3827 W Ogden Ave, Chicago, Illinois 60623	(773) 762-6389 lawndalechurch.org/hope-house.html	Men and women Must be drug & alcohol free No people on sex offender registry	Walk-ins welcome. Must commit to 6 months without working, no cell phone		Help with ID's, two meals a day.	Transitional
CHICAGO	Leslie's Place	1014 N Hamlin, Chicago IL	(773) 565-4603	Women leaving prison	No walk-ins. Waiting list		Meals, employment and computer training, job placement, and substance use treatment.	Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Lincoln Park Community Shelter	600 W Fullerton Parkway, Chicago, IL 6061	lpcsonline.org	Men, women No People on sex offender or violent offender registries must be 10 years post release, no residential bulgaries convictions, no class x felonies	No walk ins. Application process, waiting list--may have to wait a few months to get in	As long as needed	Education, financial literacy, and community engagement.	Transitional
CHICAGO	Olive Branch Mission	6310 S Claremont Ave, Chicago, Illinois 60628	(773) 476-6200 obmission.org	Men and women No people on sex offender registry	No referral needed	Come as often as needed		Emergency
CHICAGO	Oxford House	Multiple locations throughout Illinois	oxfordhouse.org (800) 689-6411					Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Pacific Garden Mission	1458 S Canal St, Chicago, IL 60607	(312) 492-9410 pam.org	Men and women No people on sex offender registry or on electronic monitoring	Walk-ins welcome.	Varies from 30 days to 1 year	GED and career help, medical services, food, addiction recovery, and clothing.	Emergency, transitional

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
CHICAGO	Revive Center for Housing and Healing	1668 W Ogden Ave, Chicago, IL 60612 Multiple locations	revivecenter.org (312) 997-2222	homeless, disabled individuals and families				Permanent supportive, subsidized
CHICAGO	Safer Foundation	571 W Jackson, Chicago, IL 60661	(312) 913-5796 saferfoundation.org	Formerly incarcerated individuals No people on sex offender registry	Long waiting list for focus apartments		Employment help, drug and alcohol addiction services	Transitional
CHICAGO	St. Leonard's House	2100 and 2110 W Warren Blvd	(312) 738-1414 slministries.org/slh/	Men No people on sex offender registry	Complete an application. Waiting list around 6 months.	6 months	Life skills, counseling, employment, education, recreation	Transitional
CHICAGO	The Salvation Army-Harbor Light Center of Chicago	Multiple locations	https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/metro/ (773) 725-1100	Different housing options for different groups of people	Complete assessment, wait list, supportive housing--must find employment and pay fees	4 weeks for the intensive rehabilitation, up to 2 years of supportive housing	Drug rehab	Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	The Salvation Army-Evangeline Booth Lodge	800 W Lawrence Ave	(773) 433-5710 centralusa.salvationarmy.org/metro/boothlodge	Families only		Average stay 63 days	Food, case management, computer lab, religious programming	Emergency
CHICAGO	The Salvation Army-Booth Manor	1500 W Madison St, Chicago, IL 60607-1801	(312) 243-1271 centralusa.salvationarmy.org/metro/booth-manor-senior-residences	Low income seniors				Permanent supportive, subsidized
CHICAGO	Way Back Inn Halfway House	3821 N Harlem Ave, Chicago, IL 60634 Multiple locations	thewaybackinn.org (708) 345-9422					Transitional, recovery
CHICAGO	Willis House of Refuge	942 N Waller Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	willishouseofrefuge.org	Men				Transitional
CHICAGO	Women's Treatment Center	140 N Ashland Ave, Chicago, IL 60607	http://www.womenstreatmentcenter.org/	Women				Transitional
CHICAGO	YMCA of Metro Chicago	Multiple locations in Chicago	(312) 932-1200 ymcachicago.org/programs/housing/	Low income individuals, seniors			Case management, support groups, employment help, medical and mental health care, food	Subsidized

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
NORTH COOK Evanston	Connections for the Homeless	2121 Dewey Ave, Evanston, IL, 60201	connect2home.org	Men No people on sex offender registry	Referral required		Assistance finding permanent housing, social services	Emergency
NORTH COOK North/Northwest Suburbs of Chicago	Wings	Multiple locations Mailing address: P.O. Box 95615 Palatine, IL 60095	(847) 519-7820	Victims of domestic abuse or homeless or disabled				Emergency, transitional
NORTH COOK Evanston/North Shore	YMCA — Bridges	1215 Church St, Evanston, IL 60201	https://www.ywca-ens.org/	Women and children who are victims of domestic abuse No people on sex offender registry	Referral required from domestic violence shelter			Emergency
WEST COOK Oak Park	Bridge to Freedom	P.O. Box 3807, Oak Park, IL 60303	(773) 888-7435 (773) 287-2627 bridge2freedom.org	Men and women leaving prison	No walk-ins, apply by mail at least 1 year prior to release	2 years	Job readiness, mentoring	Transitional
WEST COOK West Suburbs of Chicago	Housing Forward	6634 W Roosevelt Road, 2nd Flr, Oak Park, IL 60304 Multiple locations	(888) 338-1744 housingforward.org	Men and women Some shelters do not accept people on sex offender registry	Call for screening		Food, case management	Emergency, permanent supportive
COOK COUNTY	Center for Changing Lives	1955 N St. Louis, Chicago 60647	(773) 342-6210 www.cclconnect.org	All			Free employment services, job readiness, financial literacy (credit & debt assistance), computer classes, job referrals, financial assessment, housing search assistance.	

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
COOK COUNTY	Christian Community Health Center	9718 S Halsted, Chicago, IL 60628	(773) 233-4100 https://cchc-online.org/				Coronavirus testing & phone consultation; primary care health; OB/GYN; Pediatrics; Mobile Health Van; On-site pharmacy; Dental & Oral Health Care; HIV/AIDS testing & care; Behavioral/Mental Health; Substance Abuse Treatment; Domestic Violence Intervention; Housing & Shelter Services; Case Management	
NORTHEAST Aurora	Constitution House	401 N Constitution Drive, Aurora, IL 60506 Multiple locations	mercyhousing.org/find-housing	Seniors	Call for appointment			Subsidized
NORTHEAST Aurora	Hesed House	680 S River St, Aurora, IL 60506	(630) 897-2156 hesedhouse.org	Men, women, children No people on child sex offender registry	Walk-ins welcome		Food, laundry, medical and legal assistance, employment training, assistance finding permanent housing, case management, substance use counseling	Emergency, transitional
NORTHEAST Aurora	Wayside Cross Ministries	215 E New York St, Aurora, IL 60505-3491	(630) 892-4239 waysidecross.org	Men and women No people on sex offender registry who are on parole or probation, no psych medicines, no cell phones during stay	No referral process. Walk-ins welcome	7-18 months	Food, clothing, laundry, support services	Emergency
NORTHEAST Dupage County	DuPage P.A.D.S.	601 W Liberty, Wheaton, IL 60187 Multiple locations	(630) 682-3846 dupagepads.org	Men and women No people on violent offender or sex offender registries	Walk-ins welcome		Food, laundry, case management, life skills, referrals to other support services	Emergency

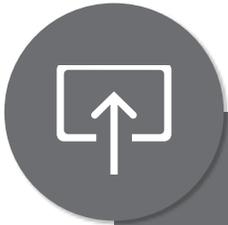
Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
NORTHEAST Joliet	Morning Star Mission—180 Club	350 E Washington St, Joliet, IL 60433-1150	(815) 722-5780 morningstarmission.org	Men No people on sex offender registry		6 months	Religious programming, Computer, exercise, and substance use classes, transportation help.	Recovery
NORTHEAST Joliet	Morning Star Mission—Women and Family Recovery Center	350 E Washington St, Joliet, IL 60433-1150	(815) 722-5780 morningstarmission.org	Women and children No people on sex offender registry			Food, clothing, case management, classes, and support groups.	Emergency
NORTHEAST Kane County, St. Charles	Lazarus House	214 Walnut St, St. Charles, IL 60174	(630) 587-2144 lazarushouse.net	Men and women	Walk-ins welcome for emergency shelter; interview needed for transitional housing		Case management, employment and education assistance, life skills, food, laundry	Emergency, transitional
NORTHEAST Waukegan/ Lake County	Eddie Washington Center	422 S Ave, Waukegan, IL 60085	(847) 244-0805 waukegantownship.com/174/Eddie-Washington-Center	Men			Case management, finance skills, employment help	Transitional
NORTHEAST Waukegan/ Lake County	Staben house	3000 Grand Ave, Waukegan, IL 60085	(847) 244-9944 waukegantownship.com/176/Staben-House	Women with children			Case management, finance skills, employment help	Transitional
NORTHWEST McHenry County	Home of the Sparrow	4209 W Shamrock Ln, Unit B, McHenry, IL 60050	(815) 271-5444 hosparrow.org	Women who are homeless or at risk for homelessness who live in McHenry County Criminal history evaluated on a case-by-case basis, must be 30 days sober with mental health concerns treated		Average stay is 4.5 months	Case management, employment and education assistance, life skills, advocacy	Transitional
NORTHWEST Rockford, IL and surrounding areas	Carpenter's Place	Multiple locations Office: 1149 Railroad Ave, Rockford, IL 61104	carpentersplace.org	Men and women, special programs for veterans, people with mental illness, disabilities No people on child sex offender registry. Parole and electronic monitoring OK		Up to 2 years		Transitional, permanent supportive, substance use

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
NORTHWEST Rockford	Salvation Army: Women's Restorative Justice Program	3201 Gilbert Ave, Rockford, IL	(815) 713-3179 centralusa.salvationarmy.org/rockford/womens-restorative-justice-program/		Waiting list is currently closed	Up to 2 years	Food, case management	Transitional
NORTHWEST Rockford	Shelter Care Ministries	412 N Church St, Rockford, IL 61103	(815) 964-5520 shelter-care.org	Emergency and transitional housing: families and individuals; permanent housing: families with head of household who is a veteran or who has disabilities	Emergency housing: 6 months; transitional housing: up to 24 months			Emergency, transitional, permanent supportive
NORTHWEST Rockford	Zion Development Corporation	Multiple locations	(815) 964-8280 ziondevelopment.org	Men and women	Application required, wait list			Subsidized
NORTHWEST Sterling, IL	Twin Cities PADS homeless shelter	111 Wahl Rd, Sterling, IL 61081	twincitiespads.org	Men and women			Referrals to other programs	Emergency
EAST CENTRAL Bloomington	Home Sweet Home Mission	301 E Oakland Ave, Bloomington IL, 61701	hshministries.org	Men and women No people on violent offender registry	Interview and application required	Up to a year	Food, clothing, case-management.	Emergency
EAST CENTRAL Bloomington	Salvation Army Safe Harbor Shelter	611 W Washington St, Bloomington, IL 61701	https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/bloomington/	Men and women No people on sex offender registry	Referral needed	Up to 8 weeks	Food, clothing, case-management.	Emergency
EAST CENTRAL Champaign	Ann's House	P. O. Box 8853 Champaign, Illinois	(217) 390-2813	Women			Employment help	Transitional
EAST CENTRAL Champaign and Rantoul	Rosecrance	801 N Walnut St, Champaign, IL 61820 Multiple locations	rosecrance.org (844) 711-5106	Men and women, some housing for mental illness diagnosis		Varies	Case management, counseling	Transitional, subsidized
EAST CENTRAL Danville	Danville Rescue Mission	2822 W Jackson Blvd, Chicago, IL	(217) 446-7223 dirm3150.wixsite.com/danvillerescue	Men and women, veterans receive preference	Referral needed	4-6 months	Support services, religious programming	Recovery
EAST CENTRAL Decatur	Dove Shelter	302 S Union, Decatur, IL 62522	doveinc.org	Emergency shelter for adults and children experiencing domestic abuse				Emergency
EAST CENTRAL Rantoul	Jesus Is the Way Ministries	P.O. BOX 98 Rantoul IL 61866	jesusisthewayprisonministries.org				Employment help	Transitional

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
WEST CENTRAL Galesburg	Galesburg Rescue Million	435 E Third St, Galesburg, IL 61401	galesburgrescuemission.org	Women			Food, clothing	Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Macomb, IL	Samaritan Well	Women's shelter: 1306 Maple Ave, Macomb, IL; Men's shelter: 212 West Jackson Macomb, IL	(309) 837-3357 samaritanwellinc.org	Homeless men, women, children	Must call		Education, employment, life skill assistance	Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Pekin	Salvation Army Shelter and Transitional Housing	235 Derby Street, Pekin, IL	(309) 478-7878 salvationarmypekin.org	Single men, women, families				Emergency, transitional
WEST CENTRAL Peoria	Southside Mission New Promise Women's Shelter	1127 S Laramie, Peoria, IL 61605	(309) 676-4604 southsidemission.org/new-promise-center/	Women and children				Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Peoria	Esther House	6847 N Allen Rd, Peoria, IL 61614	https://www.peoriarescue.org/womens-recovery-program (309) 689-0915	Women, especially those who have recently been incarcerated No Electronic Monitoring, no violent offenses no child-based offenses	No waiting list, but application takes up to 6 weeks.	Required to stay 10-12 months, can stay longer		Transitional
WEST CENTRAL Peoria	One Body One Purpose	2524 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr, Peoria, IL 61604	(309) 242-9785	Women leaving prison				Transitional
WEST CENTRAL Peoria	Peoria Rescue Ministries	601 SW Adams, Peoria, IL 61602	(309) 676-6416 peoriarescue.org	Single men No people on sex offender registry currently on parole or probation; can parole directly	No waiting list.	30 days initially, can be extended	Recovery and employment help	Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Peoria	Salvation Army Family Shelter	417 NE Adams St, Peoria, IL	(309) 655-7272 peoriasalvationarmy.org	Women or men with children				Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Springfield	Inner City Mission	714 N 7th St, Springfield, IL	(217) 525-3940 innercitymission.net	Men, women, children			Employment help, life skills, clothing	Emergency, transitional

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
WEST CENTRAL Springfield	MERCY Communities Inc.	Multiple locations Office: 1344 North 5th St, Springfield, IL 62702	mercycommunities.org	Homeless women with children or at risk of homelessness; individuals and/or children with disabilities No felonies for past 3 years; no more than 3 children under 12	No waiting list	Up to 2 years		Transitional
WEST CENTRAL Springfield	Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center for men	221 N Eleventh St, Springfield, IL	(217) 528-7573	Men with substance use				Transitional, recovery
WEST CENTRAL Springfield	Salvation Army Emergency Shelter	221 N 11th St, Springfield, IL	(217) 525-2196 salvationarmyusa.org/usn/housing-and-homeless-services					Emergency
WEST CENTRAL Springfield	Sojourn Shelter and Services, Inc.	1800 Westchester Blvd, Springfield, IL 62704	(217) 726-5100 (office) (217) 726-5200 (24-hour hotline) sojournshelter.org/serv.htm	Women and children who are victims of domestic abuse No people on violent offender or sex offender registries, not a parole site				Emergency
SOUTHWEST Chester	Hospitality House of Chester	120 Ferry St, Chester IL, 62932	(618) 826-9810 hospitalityhouse.yolasite.com	Housing for people who are visiting incarcerated relatives				Nothing
SOUTHWEST Granite City	Alcohol Rehabilitation Community Home	1313 21st St, Granite City, Illinois	(618) 877-4987 archhouse.org/4701.html	Men with substance use No people on sex offender registry, must seek employment and pay 30% of salary		3-6 months	Drug rehab support	Recovery
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Call for Help	9400 Lebanon Road, East St. Louis, IL 62203	(618) 397-0968 callforhelpinc.org	Women and children				Transitional
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Catholic Charities Housing Resource Center	800 N Tucker Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63101	(314) 244-7106 archstl.org/stewardship/page/catholic-charities-housing-resource-center					Emergency, transitional, permanent supportive
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Catholic Charities St. Patrick Center	800 North Tucker, St. Louis, MO	ccstl.org (314) 367-5500	Homeless individuals and those at risk for homelessness				Emergency, transitional, permanent supportive

Region/City	Name	Address	Contact	People Served/ Restrictions	Wait Time/ Getting In	Length of Stay	Support Services	Kind of Housing
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Joseph Veterans Center	5020 State St, East St. Louis, IL 62205	thejosephcenter.org	24 months of housing, employment help, healthcare, and counseling for veterans				Transitional
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	New Life Evangelistic Center	Multiple locations in St. Louis and Missouri	(314) 421-3020 newlifeevangelisticcenter.org/about/	Men, women, children				Emergency
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Peter and Paul Community Services	Multiple locations; 2612 Wyoming St, St. Louis, MO 63118	(314) 588-7111 ppcsinc.org/	Special programs for people who are mentally ill, disabled, or have AIDS Restrictions vary by program; call for more info	Wait time varies	Up to 2 years		Emergency, transitional, permanent supportive
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Salvation Army: Homes of Hope	Multiple locations in St. Louis region	http://stlsalvationarmy.org/	Low to moderate income individuals and families who are currently homeless and are disabled.				Permanent, supportive
SOUTHWEST St. Louis	Salvation Army: Emergency Shelters and Subsidized Senior Living	Multiple locations in St. Louis region	http://stlsalvationarmy.org/	Men, women, seniors				Emergency
SOUTHEAST Carbondale, IL	Good Samaritan Housing	701 S Marion, Carbondale, IL	https://goodsamcarbondale.com/	Men, women, children			Life skills training, support services	Emergency, transitional
SOUTHEAST Marion	Prisoner Family Support	1005 Roberta Dr, Marion, IL 62959		Housing for people visiting incarcerated relatives				



2. Reentry Services

Includes organizations that work to help people leaving prison. Programs differ, but many offer help some of the following housing, job placement, job skills, education, planning, mentoring, mental health.

Region/City	Name	Address	Phone/Email	Web	Description	Restrictions
STATEWIDE	IDOC Bureau of Field Operations	1301 Concordia Court PO Box 19277 Springfield, IL 62794-9277	217-522-2666	https://www2.illinois.gov/doc/contactus/Pages/default.aspx	Supervises parolees and people on electronic monitoring. Placement and Resource Unit (PRU) provides programming for parolees, drug and mental health treatment programs, emergency housing, educational and vocational programs, and more.	
STATEWIDE	Safer Return	Online	Hotline: 773-265-0423	https://saferreturn.org/	State-wide reentry website where people can register for services and get connected with employment, housing, and health services. Connected to Safer Foundation.	
ONLINE	Inside Out Reentry Network (ION)	Online or 1006 Gillick St, Parkridge, IL 60068	(847) 823-3634	insideoutnetwork.net	Online service for connecting returning citizens to service providers. Create an online profile (or mail in your information) and service providers will be notified that you are leave 1 month before your projected release date.	
ONLINE	My Rebuilt Life	Online	(872) 210-4987	myrebuillife.com	Free online service for connecting returning citizens to employers. Create an online profile to join the site.	
ILLINOIS	Winners' Circles (sponsored by TASC) Online Support Group	Meets every Saturday from 7-8 pm	Zoom ID: 891-3295-6689 Zoom password: 486479	tasc.org	Peer led support group for people who are committed to their recovery from life struggles and past criminal involvement. Family members and friends are welcome.	
ILLINOIS	Safer Foundation	Multiple offices. Headquarters: 571 West Jackson Blvd. Chicago, IL 60661	Hotline: 773-265-0423; Counseling and wellness: 773-265-0423; Employment & training services: 312-922-2200	https://saferreturn.org/	Largest reentry organization in the state. They are a direct service provider for people with arrest and conviction records. They partner with businesses to secure private-sector employment for clients. They influence legislation and social policy through advocacy coalition building, and civic participation.	
CHICAGO	ALSO (Alliance of Local Service Organizations)	2401 W North Ave, Chicago, IL 60647		https://also-chicago.org/also_site/	Reentry services and legal services; various violence prevention programs	

Region/City	Name	Address	Phone/Email	Web	Description	Restrictions
CHICAGO	Breakthrough Urban Ministries	402 N St. Louis Ave, Chicago, IL 60624		https://www.breakthrough.org/	Noteworthy Programs: Behavioral Health, Breakthrough Clinic, Daytime Support Center (providing basic critical needs), Job Readiness, Spiritual Development, Permanent Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing	
CHICAGO	City of Chicago Community Reentry Support Center, Howard Area Community Center	7637 N Paulina St, Chicago, IL 60626	(773) 262-6622	howardarea.org/	Reentry services include education and training, mentoring and support groups, connection to counseling assistance, connection to housing and food assistance, employment assistance, family reunification and child support assistance, as well as information on sealing or expunging criminal records	Must be Chicago resident
CHICAGO	City of Chicago Community Reentry Support Center, Phalanx Family Services	837 West 119th St, Chicago, IL 60643	(773) 291-1086	phalanxreentryservices.org/	Reentry services include education and training, mentoring and support groups, connection to counseling assistance, connection to housing and food assistance, employment assistance, family reunification and child support assistance, as well as information on sealing or expunging criminal records	Must be Chicago resident
CHICAGO	City of Chicago Community Reentry Support Center, Teamwork Englewood	815 W. 63rd St, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60621	(773) 488 6600	https://www.teamworkenglewood.org/programs.html	Reentry services include education and training, mentoring and support groups, connection to counseling assistance, connection to housing and food assistance, employment assistance, family reunification and child support assistance, as well as information on sealing or expunging criminal records	Must be Chicago resident
CHICAGO	City of Chicago Community Reentry Support Center, Westside Health Authority	5816 W Division St, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 378 1878	healthauthority.org/initiatives/community-re-entry/	Reentry services include education and training, mentoring and support groups, connection to counseling assistance, connection to housing and food assistance, employment assistance, family reunification and child support assistance, as well as information on sealing or expunging criminal records	Must be Chicago resident
CHICAGO	Communities Partnering for Peace (C4P4)		(312) 986-4000	https://www.metrofamily.org/cp4p/	Integrated, comprehensive reentry program that includes victim assistance, outreach, case management, work force readiness, behavioral health, education placement, and legal aid.	
CHICAGO	CSAC North	Willie B. White Community Center 7648 N Paulina, Chicago IL 60626	(773) 262-3515	https://www2.illinois.gov/idoa/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx	IDOC program. "CSACs are community-based partnerships designed to work collaboratively with parole and other existing community resources to develop wraparound services for parolees, while assisting other groups with building community capacity to develop their own resources." (Advocacy)	

Region/City	Name	Address	Phone/Email	Web	Description	Restrictions
CHICAGO	CSAC South	AFC World Outreach Center: 7859 S Ashland, Chicago, IL 60620	(773) 651-6470	https://www2.illinois.gov/doc/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx	See above	
CHICAGO	CSAC West	Above & Beyond Family Recovery Center Annex Building: 2954 W Lake St, Chicago, IL 60612	(773) 786-0226	https://www2.illinois.gov/doc/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx	See above	
CHICAGO	CSAC (TDAC)	1542 W 79th St, Chicago, IL 60620	(773) 651-6470	https://www.targetarea.org/re-entry	Works to create relationships with reentering prisoners and their families	
CHICAGO	Daughter of Destiny Outreach, Inc.	1519 W. Warren Blvd., Chicago, IL 60607	(312) 256-5285	daughterofdestinyoutreach.org	Case-management, anger=management, addiction counseling, domestic violence education/workshops, spiritual support, recovery coaching, referrals, emergency shelter and meals	Women only
CHICAGO	Elijah Glenn Ward Family Foundation	6818 S Chappel Ave, Chicago, IL 60649	info@wardfound.org	wardfound.org	The Chicago P.R.I.D.E. program helps with college readiness, case management, and other community services. Program is 12-month description.	Contact before release.
CHICAGO	GEO Reentry Services	8007 S. Cottage Grove, Ste. A, Chicago, 60619, multiple locations	(773) 846-6260	georeentry.com	Job readiness and employment assistance, transitional housing, case management, educational services, clothing assistance, food assistance, transportation support, substance abuse counseling, and family reintegration	
CHICAGO	Green Reentry (Inner City Muslim Action Network)	2744 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60629	(773) 434-4626	https://www.imancentral.org/chicago/project-green-reentry/	Transitional housing, life skills training, and workforce development in the field of green construction.	
CHICAGO	Growing Home	825 W 69th, 2nd Floor, Chicago IL 60621	(773) 549-1336	growinghomeinc.org/about-us/	Community garden business. Works to help people find meaningful, sustaining careers, we train them in job skills, give them real work experience, and support them while they begin their careers by helping with job placement and life-planning.	
CHICAGO	Heartland Alliance, READI	208 S LaSalle St Ste. 1300, Chicago, IL 60604	(312) 660-1300	heartlandalliance.org	A network of community-based organizations on Chicago's South and West sides. Works to engage individuals connected to gun violence through an 18-month transitional job and cognitive behavioral therapy program.	
CHICAGO	IMAN (Inner-City Muslim Action Network)	2744 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60629		https://www.imancentral.org/	Noteworthy Programs: Heath Center, Green Re-enter (transitional housing for formerly incarcerated men)	
CHICAGO	INVC (Institute for Nonviolence Chicago)	819 N Leamington Ave, Chicago, IL 60651		https://www.nonviolencechicago.org/	Programs: Outreach and Conflict Mediation, Case Management, Victim Services, Nonviolence Training, Community Organizing	

Region/City	Name	Address	Phone/Email	Web	Description	Restrictions
CHICAGO	Michael Barlow Center (St. Leonard's House)	2100 W Warren Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612	(312) 738-1414	slministries.org/mbc-about/	Education classes, training, job placement services for men and women. Adult high school and one-on-one tutoring available, as well as skills training in building maintenance and culinary skills.	
CHICAGO	National Alliance for the Empowerment of the Formerly Incarcerated	Sankofa Cultural Arts & Business Center 5820 W Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 593-2540	https://naefmentor.wixsite.com/naefi	Hosts reentry services and support groups	
CHICAGO	New Life Centers	2657 S Lawndale Ave, Chicago, IL 60623		https://newlifecenters.org/	Programs for Juvenile offenders; Most programs seem to be for youth	
CHICAGO	Precious Blood Ministries	5114 S Elizabeth St, Chicago, IL 60609 P.O. BOX 09379 (For mailing only)	(773) 952 6643	pbmr.org	Outreach and case management for returning citizens	
CHICAGO	Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation	5114 S Elizabeth St, Chicago, IL 60609		https://www.pbmr.org/	Notable Programs: Education, Workforce Development, Job Readiness, Social Enterprise Program, Restorative Initiatives	
CHICAGO	Reentry Employment Service Program		(312) 793-1597	https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/Re-Entry_Employment_Service_Program.aspx	Job readiness workshops, employment assistance, workshops offered across the state	
CHICAGO	Reentry Resource Center (Teamwork Englewood)	815 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60621	(773) 488-6600	https://www.teamworkenglewood.org/programs.html	Connects clients to service providers and other agencies for counseling on housing, employment substance abuse, mental health, and sealing or expunging records	
CHICAGO	Reentry Services for Returning Citizens (Lutheran Social Services of Illinois)	1001 E Touhy Ave. #50, Des Plaines, IL 60018	(847) 635 4600	https://www.lssi.org/prisoner-family-ministry/pfm-reentry-services-returning-citizens.php	Offers information and referral services, employment skills help, Green Reentry Opportunities (working in community gardens), and other supportive services from local churches.	
CHICAGO	Returning Sisters	2317 E 71st St, Chicago, IL 60649	(773) 341-1606	http://cwapchicago.org/returning-sisters/	Provides individual therapy, recovery coaching and HIV testing and counseling services as well as individualized linkage to community resources.	Only serves women
CHICAGO	Roosevelt University Life Skills Re-entry Program	Roosevelt University Gage Building at 18 S Michigan Ave	(312) 281-3370	enlewoodportal.org/directory/3978	Life skills instruction, case management services, employment help, education advice, bus vouchers. (8:30am to 4:30pm)	Requires appointment
CHICAGO	Sweet Beginnings	3726 W Flournoy St # 28, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 638-1825	https://www.nlen.org/sweetbeginnings	Offers full-time transitional jobs to citizens returning from incarceration in a green industry—the production and sales of all-natural skin care products	
CHICAGO	Target Area Development Corporation	1542 W. 79th St, Chicago, IL 60620		https://www.targetarea.org/	Reentry program	

Region/City	Name	Address	Phone/Email	Web	Description	Restrictions
CHICAGO	Transforming Reentry Services (Men and Women in Prison Ministries)	10 W 35th St, 9th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60616	(312) 328-9610	https://transformingreentry.org	Case management, support groups, family and parenting support services, telephone counseling and referrals	
CHICAGO	Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities	700 S. Clinton St, Chicago, IL 60607	(855) 827-2444	www2.tasc.org/	An IDOC program. You are eligible for service for up to one year post-release, after being connected through your parole officer	
CHICAGO	UCAN	3605 W Fillmore St, Chicago, IL 60624		https://www.ucanichicago.org/	Programs: Preventing Violence, Healing Trauma, Building Strong Families, Educating and Empowering Youth	
CHICAGO	Winners' Circles (sponsored by TASC)	Contact for services and locations (locations vary)	1 (855) 827-2444	tasc.org	Support for recovery from substance abuse and mental health conditions, especially for those who have gone through the carceral system.	
WEST COOK Brookfield	7-70 Reentry Services	9146 Lincoln Ave, Brookfield, IL 60513	(708) 680-7075	https://www.770reentryservices.org	A faith-based non-profit that offers mentoring, employment, counseling, and case management services	
NORTHEAST Joliet	Agape Missions	840 Plainfield Road, Joliet, IL 60435	(815) 723-1548	agapemissionsnfp.org	Case management, counseling, record expungement, ID, and employment services	
EAST CENTRAL Champaign	First Followers	Bethel AME Church 401 E Park St, Champaign, IL 61820	FirstFollowersCU@gmail.com	firstfollowersreentry.com/	Drop-in center for peer mentoring, employment assistance, advocacy for people with felony convictions, family reunification, and service referrals. No religious affiliation (Offers a free local reentry guide)	
EAST CENTRAL Champaign	Rosecrance	1801 Fox Drive, Champaign, IL 61820	(877) 684 5275	rosecrance.org/	Offers reentry case management and help with finding employment (Offers a free local reentry guide)	
EAST CENTRAL Champaign	U-Turn		(217-552-1177 eloris.annshouse@mail.com.		Women's reentry support group	Women only
EAST CENTRAL Urbana	Hope Center	1802 N Lincoln Ave, Urbana, IL 61801	(217) 607-5654	https://www.hopecenter.us	Works with returning citizens, providing one-on-one coaching, a food pantry, medical resources, and other support	
SOUTHEAST Marion	CSAC Marion	Zion United Church of Christ: 930 W Cherry St, Marion, IL 62959	(618) 997-5190	https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx	IDOC program. ^CSACs are community-based partnerships designed to work collaboratively with parole and other existing community resources to develop wraparound services for parolees, while assisting other groups with building community capacity to develop their own resources."	
SOUTHWEST East St. Louis	CSAC Metro East	First Assembly of God Church: 9 Jerome Ln, Cahokia, IL 62206	(618) 337-6907	https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/communityresources/Pages/CSAC.aspx	See above.	



3. Food

Includes food banks and food pantries across Illinois. See our online reentry guide at www.reentryillinois.net for a full list of resources.

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
ONLINE			Feeding America			feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank/	Database of food banks in the US
AUSTIN		Chicago	Circle Urban Ministries	118 N. Central Ave., Chicago, 60644	(773) 921-1446	circleurban.org	Multi-service agency that includes a food pantry, employment services, and homelessness help.
AUSTIN		South Barrington	Willow Creek Care Center	67 E. Algonquin Rd., South Barrington, IL 60010	(224) 512-1240	willowcreekcarecenter.org	Numerous services include employment help, a computer lab, food assistance, legal aid, and eye care.
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Breakthrough Urban Ministries	3330 W Carroll Ave	(773) 722-0179	breakthrough.org	Mon-Sat 9am-8pm
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Care For Friends	530 W Fullerton pkwy	(773) 932-1010	careforfriends.org	Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 10:30am-1pm
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Food Pantry	6525 N Clark st	(773) 761-6688		Sat, Noon -2pm
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Franciscan Outreach Association	Multiple: 717B W 18th St, Chicago, IL 60616 (Administrative Office) / 10 S Kedzie Ave, Chicago, IL 60612 / 200 S Sacramento Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612	(773) 278-6724	franoutreach.org	
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Greater Chicago Food Depository	4100 W Ann Lurie Place, Chicago, IL 60632	(773) 247-3663	chicagosfoodbank.org	They can help direct you to food pantries and mobile programs. They also provide job training in the food industry and help with applying for food benefits like SNAP. They have special programs for children, older adults, and veterans.

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	St. James Catholic Church	2907 S Wabash	(312) 842-1919		
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Champaign	Salvation Army Pantry	2212 N Market St	(217) 373-7825		Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri 9am-4pm, Tue 9am-5pm
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Rantoul	Stone Creek Food Pantry	3105 N Maplewood Dr			Last Tue 6pm-8pm
EAST CENTRAL	Coles	Mattoon	Mattoon Area Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS) - Soup Kitchen	2017 Broadway Ave			Mon-Thur 11am - 1pm for Lunch; Mon-Fri 7-9pm for Dinner
EAST CENTRAL	Kankakee	Kankakee	Salvation Army- Kankakee	148 N Harrison Ave	(815) 933-8421	sakankakee.org	Soup kitchen Mon-Fri noon-1pm; Food give-away Mon-Fri 1:30pm-2:30pm; Emergency food boxes to those who qualify
EAST CENTRAL	McLean	Bloomington	St. Vincent DePaul Society	First floor of the Parish Center	(309) 829-9611		Mon 9-noon, 1-4pm
EAST CENTRAL	Vermillion	Danville	The Salvation Army Danville Corps	855 E Fairchild St	(217) 442-5911		Tue, Fri 1:30-3:30pm
NORTHEAST	DeKalb	Sandwich	Cornerstone Church	17347 Pratt Rd	(815) 786-6300	cornerstoneofsandwich.com	1st and 3rd Tue 12pm
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Addison	Addison Township Pantry	50 E Oak St	(630) 530-8161 ext.120	addisontownship.com	Thu 9am-11am
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Batavia	Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry	100 Flinn St	(630) 879-3784	holycross-batavia.org	Tue 1-3pm; Fri 10am-noon; Mon 6:30-7:30pm; 1st Thu 6:30-7:30pm
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Glendale Heights	Muslim Society Inc.	1785 Bloomingdale Rd	(630) 653-7872	muslimsocietyinc.org	Sat 2-4pm (on call for emergencies)
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Lombard	Christ The King-St. Vincent DePaul	1501 S Main St	(630) 629-1717	ctklombard.org	Mon noon-2pm
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Naperville	Loaves and Fishes Community Pantry	1871 High Grove Ln	(630) 355-3663	loaves-fishes.org	Mon-Thu 9am-5pm; Fri 9am-noon
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Villa Park	Disciples Food Pantry	1336 S Villa Ave	(630) 833-7262	ccyponline.net	Wed 9:30-11:30am; 3rd Sat 9:30-11:30am
NORTHEAST	DuPage	West Chicago	Wayne Township Pantry	27 W 031 North Ave	(630) 231-7140	waynetwp-il.org/assistance/food	Wed 10am-2pm
NORTHEAST	Grundy	Morris	We Care of Grundy County	530 Bedford Rd	(815) 942-6389	wecareofgrundy.com	Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 8:30-11:15am, 1-3pm; Thu open until 5pm
NORTHEAST	Kane	Aurora	Village Baptist Church Pantry	515 S Frontenac St	(630) 851-4120	ybcaurora.org	2nd & 4th Fri 9:30-noon
NORTHEAST	Kane	Elgin	Salvation Army-Elgin	316 Douglas St	(847) 741-2304		Fri 1-3pm
NORTHEAST	Kendall	Oswego	Harvest Baptist Food Pantry	5315 Douglas Rd	(630) 554-3858	harvestnewbeginnings.com	4th Fri 1:30-2:30pm
NORTHEAST	Lake	Grayslake	CARE Center Food Pantry	25270 W Highway 60	(847) 201-2777	chapel.org/care	Wed, Sat 11am-1pm

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
NORTHEAST	Lake	Lake Villa	Lake Villa Township Food Pantry	37908 N Fairfield Rd	(847) 356-2116	lakevillatownship.org	Mon-Fri 8am-4pm
NORTHEAST	Lake	North Chicago	Emmanuel Faith Bible Food Pantry	1840 Lincoln St	(847) 473-4854		Thu 5:30-7:30pm
NORTHEAST	Lake	Round Lake Park	Avon Community Food Pantry-NFP	433 E Washington St	(847) 546-1446		Mon 1-4pm; Tue, Wed 9am-noon, 1-4pm; Thu 2-6pm; Fri 9am-noon; 3rd Sat 9am-noon
NORTHEAST	Lake	Waukegan	Community Christian Church of Lake County	1400 W Yorkhouse Rd	(847) 662-8887	ccclc.org	Tue 9am-12pm
NORTHEAST	Lake	Waukegan	The Urban Muslim Minority Alliance Center	221 Washington St	(847) 336-6136	ummcenters.org	Tue and Thur 12pm-5pm
NORTHEAST	Lake	Waukegan	Waukegan Baptist Bible Church	1500 Sunset Ave	(847) 336-8260	wbministries.org	2nd and 4th Saturdays 8am-10am
NORTHEAST	Lake	Zion	Christian Faith Fellowship	1727 27th St, Zion, IL 60099	(847) 731-0700	cfczion.org	Tues 11am-1pm
NORTHEAST	LaSalle	LaSalle	Illinois Valley Food Pantry	122 Wright St, LaSalle, IL 61301	(815) 224-3658	ivfoodpantry.com	Mon&Fri 9am-noon; Wed 3pm-6pm
NORTHEAST	Will	Braidwood	Community Care Center	112 S Center St	(630) 738-8863		8-11:50 am
NORTHEAST	Will	Joliet	Salvation Army Joliet Food Pantry	300 3rd Ave	(815) 726-4834		Mon noon-3pm
NORTHEAST	Will	Joliet	St. John the Baptist Food Pantry	404 N Hickory St, Joliet, IL 60435	(815) 727-4788	stjohnsjoliet.org	Mon 9am-noon
NORTHEAST	Will	Romeoville	DuPage Township	719 Parkwood Ave	(630) 759-1317	dupagetownship.com	Tue, Thu 11am-2pm
NORTHWEST	Bureau	Princeton	Bureau County Food Pantry	1019 N Main	(815) 875-6064	tcohelps.org	Mon, Wed, Fri 9am-11:30am
NORTHWEST	DeKalb	DeKalb	Salvation Army-DeKalb Area Food Pantry	830 Grove St	(815) 756-4308	salarmydekalb.org	Mon, Tue, Wed 9am-noon; Thu 9am-noon, 5-6:45pm
NORTHWEST	DeKalb	Sycamore	Sycamore United Methodist Church Food Pantry	160 Johnson Ave	(815) 895-9113	sycamoreumc.org	Mon noon-4pm; 2nd Mon noon-7pm
NORTHWEST	Henry	Cambridge	Cambridge Pantry	132 W Center St	(309) 937-2304		3rd Mon 9am-10am; preceding Sun 3pm-5pm
NORTHWEST	Henry	Kewanee	Kewanee Food Pantry	924 Rose	(309) 852-3577	kewaneefoodpantry.com	Tue 10am-2pm; Thu 3pm-6pm
NORTHWEST	Jo Daviess	Galena	United Churches of Galena	971 Gear St	(815) 777-1456		2nd & 4th Thu 12:30pm-4:30pm
NORTHWEST	Lee	Dixon	Community Food Pantry	2001 W 4th St	(815) 288-4848		Mon, Wed, Fri 1pm-3pm
NORTHWEST	Marshall	Henry	Henry Food Pantry	1301 Second St	(309) 364-2011		Sat 8am-10am
NORTHWEST	McHenry	Crystal Lake	Salvation Army-Crystal Lake	290 W Crystal Lake Ave	(815) 455-2769	salarmycul.org	Mon-Fri 8:30am-4pm
NORTHWEST	McHenry	Huntley	Faith Community Church Food Pantry	10547 Faiths Way	(224) 569-6501		Wed 4-6pm, closed all federal holidays

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NORTHWEST	McHenry	McHenry	St. Vincent DePaul Society at Holy Apostles	5211 Bull Valley Rd	(815) 385-5673	thechurchofholypostles.org	on call Mon-Fri 8:30am-5pm
NORTHWEST	McHenry	Spring Grove	Helping Hands Food Pantry	2502 Spring Ridge Dr	(815) 245-7345		Tue, Thu 3:30-6:30pm
NORTHWEST	McHenry	Woodstock	Woodstock Food Pantry	1033 Lake Ave	(815) 337-0375		Mon, Wed, Fri 9am-3pm
NORTHWEST	Ogle	Mount Morris	Loaves and Fish Food Pantry	409 W Brayton Rd	(815) 734-4573	loavesandfishmm.com	1st & 3rd Thu 4:30-7pm; 2nd & 4th Mon 2-4:30pm
NORTHWEST	Ogle	Stillman Valley	Bread of Life Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry	103 S Maple	(815) 645-8872	valleycov.org	2nd & 4th Tue 3-5pm
NORTHWEST	Rock Island	East Moline	Christ United Methodist	3801 7th St	(309) 755-2508		Mon-Fri 9am-noon
NORTHWEST	Rock Island	Moline	Bethany Baptist Church Food Pantry	700 35th Ave Place	(309) 764-3041	bethanymoline.com	4th Wed 10am-noon
NORTHWEST	Rock Island	Rock Island	Templo Elim	4300 7th Ave	(309) 788-2852		Mon 6pm-8:30pm; Fri 7pm-8:30pm; Sat noon-3pm
NORTHWEST	Stark	Toulon	Stark County Food Pantry	224 S Franklin St	(309) 286-6611		Mon, Tue 9am-noon
NORTHWEST	Stephenson	Freeport	Salvation Army Freeport Food Pantry	106 W Exchange St	(815) 235-7639		Tue, Thu 9-11am, 1-2pm
NORTHWEST	Whiteside	Morrison	Morrison Food Pantry	200 W Lincolnway, Morrison, IL 61270	(815) 772-4030	morrumc.org	Thu 7:45am-9:45am
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	Rockford	Gentle Shepherd Pantry	2905 Bildahl St	(815) 399-7283		Wed 8:30-10:30am
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	Rockford	Salvation Army- Rockford	416 S Madison St	(815) 972-1135	salamryrockford.org	(Schedule appt. Mon after 9am) Mon-Fri (by appt. Working families only) 9am-4pm; Wed (by appt. only) 4-6pm
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	Rockford	Soul's Harbor Church	2802 11th St	(815) 229-1922	soulsharborofrockford.com	1st & 3rd Mon 6:30pm-8pm
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	Rockford	United Brethren in Christ Church	2000 Kilburn Ave	(815) 968-9305		Soup kitchen. 3rd Sun anyone who attends 10:45am service can stay for free buffet
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	South Beloit	St. Peter's Church Food Pantry	620 Blackhawk Blvd	(815) 525-3400	st-peter-church.com	Wed 6pm-6:30pm
SOUTHEAST	Alexander	Tamms	Happy Helpers Pantry	430 3rd	(618) 747-2123		call for hours
SOUTHEAST	Clay	Flora	Clay County Ministerial Alliance	1101 Austin Ave			Mon 9am-11am
SOUTHEAST	Crawford	Robinson	(618) 562-1428	602 E Pine	(618) 544-3773		Mon & Thur 1pm-2pm
SOUTHEAST	Franklin	Benton	Benton West City Food Pantry	302 S Main St	(618) 927-6270		Mon-Thu 9am-2pm
SOUTHEAST	Franklin	Thompsonville	Community of Christ Church	3663 Chestnut St	(618) 627-2815	bcmissioncenter.wordpress.com/our-congregations/thompsonville-il/	3rd Sat 8-10am
SOUTHEAST	Jackson	Carbondale	Good Samaritan Food Pantry	701 S Marion St, Carbondale, IL 62901	(618) 457-5794	https://goodsamcarbondale.com	Mon, Fri 9am-1pm

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
SOUTHEAST	Jasper	Newton	Embaras River Basin Agency (ERBA), Newton - Food Pantry	904 W Jourdan	(618) 783-3987		Fri 1:30-3:30pm 2nd Thur 4-6pm
SOUTHEAST	Jasper	Newton	The Master's Hands Food Pantry	106 S Van Buren St	(618) 783-2955		Tue 9am-11:30am & 1-4:00pm; Distributes perishable food (produce, dairy) Mon-Fri 9am-11:30am
SOUTHEAST	Jefferson	Mount Vernon	Park Avenue Baptist Church-Food Pantry	900 Park Ave	(618) 242-1882	mvpabc.com	Mon, Wed, Fri 1-3pm
SOUTHEAST	Perry	Cutler	Reformed Presbyterian Church	321 S Ervin St			Sat 9am-noon
SOUTHEAST	Perry	Duquoin	Western Egyptian Eoc-Duquoin	317 S Washington St	(618) 542-4656		Tue, Thu 1-4pm
SOUTHEAST	Richland	Olney	The Master's Hands	1065 W Main St	(618) 392-0414		Mon 9am-11:30am, 1:30pm-3:45, Fri 10:15am-11:30am, 1:30-3:45pm, 3rd Sat 9am-11am
SOUTHEAST	Williamson	Johnston City	First United Methodist Church	400 W Broadway	(618) 983-5150		3rd thu
SOUTHEAST	Williamson	Marion	Salvation Army Marion	906 Tower Square Plaza	(618) 997-9355	salvationarmyusa.org	Tue, Wed, Thu 9-11am
SOUTHEAST	Williamson	Pittsburg	Pittsburg Food Pantry	203 W Pennsylvania Ave	(618) 922-4440		4th Sat 9-11am
SOUTHWEST	Christian	Kincaid	Midland Area Food Pantry	600 Tower Place	(217) 237-2342		1st Wed 5pm-7pm, all other Wed 1pm-4pm
SOUTHWEST	Clinton	Carlyle	Mathew 25 Ecumenical Food Pantry	1171 Livingston St, Carlyle, IL 62231	(618) 594-2225		Wed 9-11am
SOUTHWEST	Effingham	Effingham	Effingham Catholic Charities Food Pantry	1502 East Fayette Ave/U.S. Route 40 East	(217) 857-1458	https://cc.dio.org/locations/effingham/	Mon, Wed, Fri 9am-11:30am, 12:30pm-4pm
SOUTHWEST	Fayette	Vandalia	Vision Ministries Food Pantry	1803 Janette Dr	(618) 283-0700	fvc-vandalia.com	2nd and 4th Sat 9am-12pm
SOUTHWEST	Jersey	Jerseyville	Jersey Food Pantry	720 State Highway 16	(618) 498-3719		Mon, Wed, Fri 11-noon
SOUTHWEST	Macoupin	Carlinville	Carlinville Good Samaritan Ministries	525 W 2nd Street South	(217) 972-8099		Tue, Thu 9-11am; Wed 2-4pm
SOUTHWEST	Madison	Alton	Salvation Army-Alton	525 Alby St	(618) 465-7764	stackbover@usc.salvationarmy.org	Tue 9-11:30am; Fri 1-3pm
SOUTHWEST	Madison	Collinsville	Collinsville Food Pantry	201 E Church St	(618) 346-1861	http://collinsvillefoodpantry.org	Tue 9-11am, 4-6pm; Fri 9-11am
SOUTHWEST	Madison	Granite City	Salvation Army Granite City	3007 E 23rd St	(618) 451-7957	susanhuff@usc.salvationarmy.org	Thu 1-3:30pm
SOUTHWEST	Madison	Roxana	Tri-County Church	120 W 1st St	(618) 254-8150		3rd Sat 10am-noon
SOUTHWEST	Monroe	Columbia	St. Paul's Lutheran Church Food Pantry	227 Goodhaven St	(618) 281-4600		1st & 3rd Wed 1-3pm

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SOUTHWEST	Randolph	Red Bud	Human Service Center	10257 IL-3	(618) 282-6233		Mon-Fri 9am-4pm
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	East St. Louis	East St. Louis Township	6755 State St	(618) 874-3650	yjohnsonford@hotmail.com	Wed 1-3pm
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	East St. Louis	Lansdowne Community	5103 Bunkum Rd	(618) 874-7901	Dbaden@siue.edu	Tue, Wed 1-3pm; Thu 9-11am
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	East St. Louis	Salvation Army East St. Louis	616 N 16th St	(618) 874-3136	wandacarson@usc.salvationarmy.org	Tue 10am-noon
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	East St. Louis	St Mathews Baptist Food pantry	2908 Louisiana Blvd	(618) 874-6979	michella1965@att.net	Fri 9:30am-noon
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	Shiloh	Spring Valley Baptist Church	522 Maple St	(618) 632-6706	springvalleybaptistchurch.com	Thu 4-6pm; at basement of church Sat 10am-noon
WEST CENTRAL	Adams	Quincy	Salvation Army Quincy	501 Broadway	(217) 222-2087	salvationarmyquincy.org	Mon-Fri 9am-12pm
WEST CENTRAL	Brown	Versailles	Brown County Food Basket	211 N Chestnut	(217) 773-3668		3rd Fri 2pm-4:30pm
WEST CENTRAL	Cass	Virginia	Cass County Food Pantry	210 S Main	(217) 473-5638		4th Mon 8am-4:30pm
WEST CENTRAL	Hancock	Bowen	Southeastern Food Pantry	106 E 1st St	(217) 842-5815		1st & 4th Thu 7pm-8:30pm; 2nd Tue 1pm-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Hancock	Nauvoo	Nauvoo Food Pantry	34 N Page St	(217) 453-6648		1st of the month 11am-6pm
WEST CENTRAL	Henderson	Gladstone	Henderson County Health Department	208 W Elm	(309) 627-2812		Tue 1pm-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Henderson	Oquawka	Henderson County Food Cellar	3rd & Mercer	(309) 867-3181		Mon, Thu 9-11am, 1-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Knox	Abingdon	Abingdon Food Pantry	401 N Washington St	(309) 462-3444		Tue noon-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Knox	Galesburg	Galesburg Sivation Army Pantry	320 N Kellogg St	(309) 342-9168		Mon-Fri 10am-noon
WEST CENTRAL	Logan	Lincoln	Lincoln/Logan Food Pantry	125 N Logan	(217) 732-6644		Tues 9am-11am; Thurs 2pm-4pm; 2nd Wed 2pm-4pm
WEST CENTRAL	McDonough	Macomb	Salvation Army Pantry Macomb		(309-837-4824	usc.salvationarmy.org/macomb	Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-noon, 1-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	McDonough	Macomb	Western Illinois Regional Council	133 W Jackson St	(309) 837-3941	wirpc.org	Tue, Thu, Fri 9am-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Mercer	Aledo	Churches of Mercer County Food Pantry	1200 S College Ave	(309) 574-0187		Tue 5:30pm-7:30pm; Fri 8am-noon
WEST CENTRAL	Morgan	Jacksonville	Jacksonville Food Center	316 E State St	(217) 243-1122	jaxfoodcenter.org	Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Peoria	Midwest Food Bank	9005 N Industrial Rd	(309) 691-5270	peoria.midwestfoodbank.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Peoria	Peoria Area Foodbank	711 W McBean	(309) 671-3906	peoriafoodbank.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	First Presbyterian Church	331 S 7th St	(217) 528-4311	lincolnschurch.org	Mon, Tue, Thur 9am-12pm
WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	St. John's Breadline	430 N 5th St	(217) 528-6098		Mon and Thur 10am-2pm
WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	A Table of Life Ministries	2600 S 5th St	(217) 502-6817	tableoflifeministries.org	Last Sat. of month 4pm - 6pm
WEST CENTRAL	Tazewell	Creve Coeur	Creve Coeur Christian Church	101 S Thorncrest	(217) 720-5100	ccchristianchurch.com	1st and 3rd Tue, 1pm-3pm

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WEST CENTRAL	Warren	Monmouth	First Christian Church Food Pantry	514 N Sunnylace	(309) 734-9419	fccmonmouth.com	Mon 9am-11am; Thu 1pm-3pm
WEST CENTRAL	Warren	Roseville	Helping Hands of Roseville Food Pantry	265 W Penn ave Room 36	(309) 536-0229	https://www.helpinghandsofroseville.org	Mon 9am-noon; Thu 3pm-6pm
WEST CENTRAL	Adams	Quincy	Madonna House	405 S 12th St	(217) 224-7771	madonnahouse.net	Tue 1pm-3pm, Sat 10am-12pm
NORTH COOK	Cook	Arlington Heights	St Edna Catholic Church	2525 N Arlington Heights rd	(847) 398-3362 ext 315	stedna.org	During regular church hours
NORTH COOK	Cook	Des Plaines	Self Help Closet and Pantry of Des Plaines	600 E Algonquin Rd	(847) 375-1443		Tue 12:30-3pm; Sat 10am-noon
NORTH COOK	Cook	Evanston	WINGS Ministry- Faith Temple Church of God in Christ	1932 Dewey Ave	(847) 323-3808		Mon 4-6pm
NORTH COOK	Cook	Hanover Park	Hanover Township Pantry	7431 Astor Ave	(630) 540-9085	hanover-township.org	Mon-Fri 8:30am-4pm
NORTH COOK	Cook	Hoffman Estates	Schaumburg Township Food Pantry	1 Illinois Blvd	(847) 884-0030	schaumburgtownship.org	Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, appointment required
NORTH COOK	Cook	Schaumburg	Trinity Charities Inc. Food Pantry	927 Plum Grove Rd	(847) 264-4660	trinitycharitiesinc.com	Call for hours and details
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Chicago Heights	Respond Now of Chicago Heights Illinois	1439 Emerald Ave	(708) 755-4357	respondnow.org	Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-5pm (4pm check-in)
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Harvey	Bethel Human Resources Corp	15100 Page Ave	(708) 270-0229	bethelhumanresources.org	
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Robbins	WINGS MINISTRY- Pilgrim Valley MBC	13432 S Hamlin Ave	(708) 596-5636		Sun noon-2pm
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Tinley Park	Together We Cope	17010 Oak Park Ave	(708) 633-5040	togetherwecope.com	Mon-Wed 9am-3pm, Thur 2pm-7pm, Fri 9am-3pm
WEST COOK	Cook	Brookfield	Share Food Share Love Food Pantry	3801 Madison Ave	(630) 347-5390	sharefoodsharelove.com	Tue 7-9pm; Sat 10am-noon
WEST COOK	Cook	La Grange	La Grange Bible Church Food Pantry	850 S 7th Ave	(708) 354-2485	lagrangebible.org	Sat 11-11:45am
WEST COOK	Cook	Oak Park	Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry	848 Lake St	(708) 386-1324	oprffoodpantry.org	Sat 9am-noon; 1st Wed 7-8:30pm

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4. Employment & Training

These organizations host things like job training, help with long-term planning, education, and job placement. You may also want to look at the online job-finding resources.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
STATEWIDE		Legal Action Center			https://clearinghouse.ilac.org/illinois	Information about federal bonding program, tax credits, unemployment insurance, and more.
ONLINE		American Job Center Finder			careeronestop.org/localhelp/americanjobcenters/find-american-job-centers.aspx	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Education & Career Guide for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals			https://study.com/resources/formerly-incarcerated-education-career-guide	Provides helpful information about earning your degree and getting hired after incarceration
ONLINE		Illinois Job Link			illinois.joblink.com	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Illinois Work Net Online Resources			illinoisworknet.com/	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Jails to Jobs Website			jailstojobs.org/	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Jobs For Felons Hub Website			jobsforfelonshub.com/	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Jobs That Hire Felons Website			jobsthathirefelons.org/	Online job finding tool
ONLINE		Local Action Center: Employment Resources			https://clearinghouse.ilac.org/illinois	Information about tax credits, federal bonding, unemployment insurance and more.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Association House of Chicago	1116 North Kedzie Avenue, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 772-7170	https://www.associationhouse.org/	Financial careers center, technology center, income support services and more
CHICAGO	Chicago	Association House of Chicago	1116 N. Kedzie Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 772-8009 X1020	https://www.associationhouse.org	Behavioral health, workforce development, HIV health
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breaking Ground, Cleansweepers	3501 W Fillmore St, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 265-1370 info@breakingground.net		Employment training and employment doing landscaping, power washing, litter and snow removal
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breaking Ground, Staffing	3501 W Fillmore St, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 265-1370 info@breakingground.net	breakingground.net	Employment training and temporary employment placement

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breakthrough Employment Services	P.O. Box 47200, Chicago, IL 60647	(773) 722-1144 info@breakthrough.org	breakthrough.org/	Trauma-informed employment services
CHICAGO	Chicago	Bureau of Blind Services, Chicago	401 S Clinton St, Chicago, IL 60607	(800) 843-6154	dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29764	Employment help for the blind
CHICAGO	Chicago	Career Advancement Network, Inc	20 E. Jackson Suite 1000 Chicago, IL 60604	(312) 356-9159	http://www.careeradvancementnetwork.org/	Job training and workforce development. Integrates intensive therapy modalities with business driven job training and job placement for at-risk populations
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership	"69 W. Washington, Ste. 2860, Chicago, IL 60602 (Multiple locations)"	(312) 603-0200	www.workforceboard.org	Interview preparation, resume revision, job search assistance, career planning, customized staffing, coaching.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Urban League	4510 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, 60653	(773) 285-5800	www.theChicagoUrbanLeague.org	Workforce development, youth services, mentorship, employment training.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Women in Trades	2444 W. 16th St., Suite 3E, Chicago IL 60608	(312) 942-1444	www.chicago-women-in-trades.org	Eligibility varies; construction program for women, union apprenticeships; welding program with job placement assistance in manufacturing
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago's Community Kitchens	4100 W. Ann Laurie Pl., Chicago IL 60632	(773) 843-5414	chicagofoodbank.org/cck	Free 14-week job training program for adults in Cook county that prepares students for careers in food service; transportation assistance, daily meals, and ServSafe Food Protection Manager License provided; must have photo ID and pass a drug screening
CHICAGO	Chicago	City of Chicago Community Reentry Support Center, Howard Area Community Center	1623 W Howard St, Chicago, IL 60626	(773) 332-6772	cityofchicago.org	Reentry services for any formerly incarcerated Chicago citizen. Services include education and training, mentoring and support groups, connection to counseling assistance, connection to housing and food assistance, employment assistance, family reunification and child support assistance, information on sealing or expunging criminal records.
CHICAGO	Chicago	City Colleges of Chicago	Multiple: ccc.edu	Professor Alexander 708-697-8745 Jalexander27@ccc.edu	ccc.edu	Provides many opportunities including college education, vocational training, GED, ESL, career services
CHICAGO	Chicago	Community Assistance Program (CAP) 1	8455 S Cottage Grove, Chicago, IL 60619	(773) 568-1782	capsinc.org/#/CAP sINC.org/	Provides help with hiring for a fee. Only use if you alright with paying for help
CHICAGO	Chicago	Community Assistance Program (CAP) 2	1010 Dixie Hwy, Ste. 203, Chicago, IL 60411		capsinc.org/#/CAP sINC.org/	Provides help with hiring for a fee. Only use if you alright with paying for help
CHICAGO	Chicago	Community Assistance Program (CAP) 3	11717 S Halsted, Chicago, IL 60628		capsinc.org/#/CAP sINC.org/	Provides help with hiring for a fee. Only use if you alright with paying for help

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago	30 N. Racine, Ste. 230, Chicago 60607	(312) 994-1440	www.goodwillchicago.com	Conviction of 2+ years, no people on sex offender registry. Resource center for job search (phone, fax, internet, printer, copier, computer); employment skills training; retail services training
CHICAGO	Chicago	Greater W. Town Woodworker Training	500 N Sacramento Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612	(312) 563-9570	woodworking.gwtp.edu/applicants	Training for entry-level woodworking jobs, such as cabinet-maker, machine operator, mill worker, etc. Call to apply on release. Financial aid available to cover 100% of cost
CHICAGO	Chicago	Greater W. Town Woodworker Training	500 N Sacramento Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612	(312) 563-9028	sites.google.com/a/gwtp.edu/shipping-and-receiving-training-program/	Training for entry-level transportation, distribution, and logistics jobs. Call to apply on release. Financial aid available to cover 100% of cost
CHICAGO	Chicago	Green Reentry (Inner City Muslim Action Network)	2744 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60629	(773) 434-4626 matthew.ramadan@imacentral.org	https://www.imacentral.org/chicago/project-green-reentry/	Life skills training, workforce development in the field of green construction
CHICAGO	Chicago	Growing Home	825 W 69th, 2nd Floor, Chicago IL 60621	(773) 549-1336 info@growinghomeinc.org	growinghomeinc.org/about-us/	Community garden business. Help finding sustaining careers, job-training, life-planning
CHICAGO	Chicago	Heartland Alliance	208 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1300 Chicago, IL 60604	312-660-1300	www.heartlandalliance.org/	The Transitional Jobs – Re-Entry program places participants in subsidized employment for 20-30 hours per week at the minimum wage over a 3 to 6 month period.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Hope House	3551 W. Roosevelt Rd., Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 521-8442	Waiting list	Employment readiness, counseling, family reunification; transitional
CHICAGO	Chicago	Howard Area Community Center	7648 N Paulina St, Chicago, IL 60626	(773) 262-6622	howardarea.org/	Adult education classes, operates an Employment Resource Center that assists job-seekers
CHICAGO	Chicago	Illinois Welcoming Centers, Chicago North West	4145 W Armitage Ave, Chicago, IL 60639	(773) 276-0940		Offers many state, community, health, employment training, and educational services in one location.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Inspiration Corporation	4554 N Broadway Ste. 207, Chicago, IL 60640	(773) 878-0981 info@inspirationcorp.org	inspirationcorp.org/	Career services, employment preparation training, tuition subsidies, employer outreach, and job placement
CHICAGO	Chicago	Illinois Manufacturing Foundation	2101 S. Kedzie, 2nd Floor, Chicago 60623	(773) 277- 2343	www.imfjobtraining.org	Tuition payments out of pocket or through funding source; 18-55 years old; Violent or sex offender limits job availability but not excluded from program; technical training for skilled jobs & careers; high school diploma or GED required.

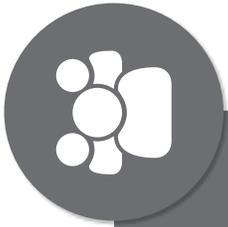
Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Jane Adams Employment	4432 N Ravenswood Ave, Chicago, IL 60640	(773) 728-9769	jane-addams.org	Manufacturing and welding job training and placement
CHICAGO	Chicago	JVS Chicago	Various locations (see website)	"(855) 463-6587 or email info@jvschicago.org"	jvschicago.org	Most services are free, some with nominal charge; some programs restrictive of criminal record. Job training, direct job placement, disability programs, computer training.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Matthew House	3722 S. Indiana Ave., Chicago 60653	(773) 536-6628	matthewhousechicago.org	Employment help, support service, day shelter
CHICAGO	Chicago	New Moms, Inc.	5317 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago IL 60651	(773) 252-3253	www.newmomsinc.org	Female only; must be pregnant or parenting, but custody not necessary. Age 24 or younger; Chicago residents of 60651 zip code only.
CHICAGO	Chicago	No Adults Left Behind (NALB)	7739 S. Halsted St., Chicago IL 60620	(773) 982-7204	www.noadultsleftbehind.org	Adults 19-45 or any age displaced worker; academic advancement, employment readiness and training, job placement assistance; valid high school diploma required.
CHICAGO	Chicago	North Lawndale Employment Network	906 S Homan Ave, Chicago, IL	(773) 638-1825	nlen.org/	Help with comprehensive employment searches, provides fax and photo-copy machines, and voicemail boxes
CHICAGO	Chicago	Phalanx Family Services	837 W. 119th Street Chicago, IL 60643	773-261-5100	www.phalanxgrpservices.org	Phalanx helps people with criminal records develop marketable skills job readiness classes. They provide job development, placement, and retention services to help secure and maintain employment.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Positive Pathways of Chicago	1605 N Keeler Ave, Chicago, IL 60639	(773) 543-5514 dean@filchicago.com		Manufacturing-based program that helps with relationship and employability skills of returning citizens to secure meaningful and career-based employment
CHICAGO	Chicago	Reentry Employment Service Program		(312) 793-1597	ides.illinois.gov	Job readiness workshops, employment assistance, workshops offered across the state
CHICAGO	Chicago	Safer Foundation	571 West Jackson Blvd, Chicago, IL 60661	Hotline: 773-265-0423	www.saferfoundation.org	Safer offers peer-center teaching that focuses on education, job training, social skills, and job placement support. It also offers specialized case management and post placement support for a full year following job placement.
CHICAGO	Chicago	St. Leonard's Ministries Michael Barlow Center	2120 West Warren Blvd Chicago, IL 60612	312-738-1414	www.slministries.org	Provides education, training, and job placement services for formerly incarcerated men and women.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	St. Sabina Employment	1210 W. 78th Pl, Chicago, IL 60620	(773) 783-3760	www.saintsabina.org	Free services; no violent offense; employment & job training
CHICAGO	Chicago	Sweet Beginnings	906 S Homan Ave, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 638-1825	nlen.org/employers/sweet-beginnings/	Offers full-time transitional jobs to citizens returning from incarceration in a green industry—the production and sales of all-natural skin care products
CHICAGO	Chicago	The Cara Program	237 S. Des Plaines, Chicago IL 60661	(312) 798-3300	www.thecaraprogram.org	Appt. only; must be referred and drug-free; no open cases or warrants; no convictions for violent offenses; attendance required. Transportation and business suit provided; life skills classes, job readiness training, permanent job placement, post-employment support, resume development.
COOK COUNTY/ CHICAGO METRO	Chicago	Sunshine Enterprises	503 E 61st St. Chicago, IL 60637	(312) 868-0040 x 203	www.sunshineenterprises.com	A nonprofit organization that focuses on equipping under-resourced entrepreneurs with the tools needed to grow their business and build their community. Free for anyone who has served in a state or federal prison in the last 15 years; including business mentoring and financial coaching.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Westside Health Authority Community Employment Center	5814-16 West Division Street Chicago, IL 60651	773-786-0226	https://healthauthority.org	Specializes in helping Chicago residents find pathways to employment and long-term career success while servicing the human resources needs of local businesses.
NORTH COOK	Arlington	Clearbrook Employment Training	1815 W Central Rd, Arlington, IL 60005	(847) 870-7711	clearbrook.org	Specialized and community-based training for individuals with disabilities
SOUTH COOK	Ford Heights	Cornerstone Community Development	943 E Lincoln Highway, Ford Heights, IL 60411	(708) 758-2565	cornerstone-cdc.org	Vocational training, life skills training, recovering coaching, spiritual counseling, peer counseling, employment coaching, transportation
WEST COOK	Addison	Symbol Training Institute	1413 Jeffrey Dr., Addison, IL 60101	(847) 673-6500	www.symboltraining.edu	Some cost (dependent on course and duration of training); 18+, aptitude for light physical work; Hands-on CNC (computer numerical control) training; small shop and lecture classes; certifications; job placement assistance

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
WEST COOK	Chicago, Lisle	Community Assistance Program (CAPs)	"(Multiple locations) Chicago Program Office: 11717 Halstead St., Chicago IL 60628"	"(Multiple contact phone numbers) (773) 568-1782"	www.capsinc.org	Free assistance for adults 18+; must have photo ID; IDOC referral needed, talk to parole officer for referral. Job readiness training, evaluation and temp job placement with possibility for permanent hire.
WEST COOK	Melrose Park	Illinois Welcoming Centers, Melrose Park	1115 N 23rd St, Melrose Park, IL 60160	(708) 345-3632		Offers many state, community, health, employment training, and educational services in one location.
WEST COOK	North Riverside	Illinois Welcoming Centers, North Riverside	7222 W Cermak Rd, Ste. 501, North Riverside, IL 60546	(708) 442-8640		Offers many state, community, health, employment training, and educational services in one location.
NORTHEAST	Aurora	Illinois Welcoming Centers, Aurora	550 Second St, Aurora, IL 47001	(630) 844-2550		Offers many state, community, health, employment training, and educational services
NORTHEAST	DeKalb	Illinois Worknet Center	650B N Peace Rd, DeKalb, IL 60115	(815) 901-0177, ext. 240		On-site job placement, job search assistance, career exploration
NORTHEAST	Joliet	Centerstone Reentry	840 Plainfield Rd (Rt 30), Joliet, IL 60435	(815) 723-1548	agapemissionsnfp.org/	Employment help, ID assistance, and case management
NORTHEAST	Joliet	Cornerstone, HIV Services	840 Plainfield Rd (Rt 30), Joliet, IL 60435	(815) 723-1548	agapemissionsnfp.org/	Housing, referrals to doctors and lawyers, transportation to appointments, medication management and budgeting help
NORTHEAST	New Lenox	Trinity Employment Services	301 Veterans Parkway, New Lenox, IL 60451	(815) 485-6197	trinity-services.org/	Employment help for people with disabilities
NORTHEAST	Oswego	Ink 180	27 Stonehill RD, Unit D, Oswego, IL 60543	(630) 554-1404 chris@ink180.com	ink180.com/contact-us/	Creates new tattoos out of problematic ones, serves people leaving prison
NORTHWEST	Rockford	Olson Employment Center	3206 North Central Ave, Rockford, IL 61101	(815) 964-9275	b-olsoncenterofhope.org	Comprehensive training and support for people with disabilities who choose community employment as their vocational goal. Offers basic job-seeking and interviewing skills classes as well as individualized on-site training activities
EAST CENTRAL	Danville	Goodwill Career Center, Danville	904 N Gilbert St, Danville, IL 61832	(217) 503-0456 Janice.Coleman@lgi.org		Help with job-placement
EAST CENTRAL	Decatur	Illinois Worknet Center	757 W Pershing Rd, Decatur, IL 62526	(217) 875-8751		Support with interviewing, resume writing, job search techniques
EAST CENTRAL	Normal	Goodwill Career Center, Bloomington/Normal	302 Landmark Dr, Normal, IL 61761	(217) 220-9445 Ursula.Loercher@lgi.org		Help with job-placement

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
EAST CENTRAL	Urbana	Urbana Adult Education Center	1211 N Race St, Urbana, IL 61802	(217) 384-3530	urbanaadulteducation.org/	Free GED, CNA, English, and college courses. Available en Español
WEST CENTRAL	Jacksonville	Goodwill Career Center, Jacksonville	1809 W Morton Ave, Jacksonville, IL 62650	(217) 303-9532 Tiffany.Vanmeter@lgi.org		Help with job-placement
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	PeoriaCorps	456 Fulton St, Suite 420B, Peoria, IL 61602	(309) 494-8561	http://www.peoriacorp.org/public-works/peoriacorps/	24-week employment training program for construction trades, conservation and related fields
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Southside Mission Culinary Arts School	1127 S Laramie, Peoria, IL 61605	(309) 676-4604	southsidemission.org/ministries/culinary-arts-training-school/	Free religious-inspired culinary job training classes. Call to register
WEST CENTRAL	Quincy	Goodwill Career Center, Quincy	3904 Broadway, Quincy, IL 62305	(217) 720-5272 Lisbeth.Lefler@lgi.org		Help with job-placement
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Bureau of Blind Services, Springfield	100 S Grand Ave, Springfield, IL 62704	(800) 843-6154	dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=32305	Specialized vocational rehabilitation services, a short-term residential program for adults who are newly blind or visually impaired
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Fishes and Loaves Outreach	3519 Sheffield Road, Springfield, IL 62703	(217) 529-3333	fishesnloaves.org	Parenting and relationship classes, help with literacy, life skill classes, parenting classes, job skills workshops, relationship counseling, referral services
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Goodwill Career Center, Springfield	1220 Outer Park Dr, Springfield, IL 62704	(217) 789-0400 ext 127 Donna.Davantis@lgi.org		Help with job-placement
SOUTHWEST	East St. Louis	Call For Help, Inc.	9400 Lebanon Rd, East St. Louis, IL 62203	(618) 397-0968 ext.109	callforhelpinc.org	Employment support, peer support and mentoring for people with mental illnesses
SOUTHWEST	Granite City	AARP Senior Employment Program	3307 Wabash Ave Ste. #6, Granite City, IL 62040	(618) 876-5258	https://www.aarp.org/aarp-foundation/our-work/income/scsep/	Job seekers are placed in a wide variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities like day care centers, senior centers, schools and hospitals. Must be 55+
SOUTHWEST	Litchfield	Goodwill Career Center, Litchfield	1403 Ferdon St, Unit 4, Litchfield, IL 62056	(217) 503-6075 Rick.Brown@lgi.org		Help with job-placement
SOUTHWEST	Effingham	Illinois Worknet Center	2311 Hoffman Dr, Effingham, IL 62401	(217) 342-4382		Support with interviewing, resume writing, job search techniques
SOUTHWEST	Saint Louis, MO	MERS Goodwill, Education and Literacy	1727 Locust St, St. Louis, MO 63103	(314) 241-3464	mersgoodwill.org	GED and ESL classes are offered throughout the school year Monday-Thursday. GED classes are offered 9 a.m.-12 p.m. and ESL classes are offered 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
SOUTHWEST	Saint Louis, MO	MERS Goodwill, Employment	1727 Locust St, St. Louis, MO 63103	(314) 241-3464	mersgoodwill.org	Employment help for people with disabilities
NORTH COOK	South Barrington	Willow Creek Care Center	67 E. Algonquin Rd., South Barrington, IL 60010	(224) 512-1240	willowcreekcarecenter.org	Numerous services include employment help, a computer lab, food assistance, legal aid, and eye care.
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Southtown Construction Training Center BONE L.L.C.	1122 S. Grand Ave E. Springfield, IL 62703	217-679-5632	southtownconstruction-bone.com	Serves low-income and formerly incarcerated people by creating various opportunities for training and employment within the construction industry



5. Family & Relationship Support

The following organizations support individuals and families by offering child care supplies, information for children with disabilities, benefit information, and parenting information.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
NATIONWIDE		Domestic Abuse Hotline		(800) 799-7233	https://www.thehotline.org/	24-hour domestic abuse hotline
NATIONWIDE	New Haven, CT	National Diaper Network	155 E St, Ste 101, New Haven, CT 06511	(203) 821-7348	nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/members	Visit their website to see what organizations near you provide free diapers
NATIONWIDE		National Suicide Prevention Hotline		(800) 273-8255	https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/	24-hour mental health crisis help for friends and loved ones
STATEWIDE	(Serves all Illinois) Frankfort	Family to Family Health Services	(Service by phone) 20901 S La Grange Rd, Frankfort, IL 60423	(815) 464-8247	Familyvoicesillinois.org	Resource for a range of childcare information for children with disabilities or special needs
STATEWIDE	(Serves all Illinois)	Intact Family Services/ Prisoner and Family Ministry	1001 E Touhy Ave #50, Des Plaines, IL 60018	(847) 635-4600	www.issi.org/services-prisoner-family.php	Provides free transportation to children whose mothers are incarcerated, also records an incarcerated parent reading and transports the record to their child. Offers case management services for DCFS proceedings
STATEWIDE	(Serves all Illinois)	Statewide Christian Transportation		(773) 440-8737	statewidechristiantransportation.com/about-us/	Provides transportation to all prisons in Illinois for a fee. Call to schedule
CHICAGO	Chicago	Allen's Family Counseling Center	226 W. Ontario St. Suite 400 C	(312) 912-7008	https://www.afccchicago.com	Family counseling, addiction rehabilitation, DUI services
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breakthrough FamilyPlex	3219 W Carroll Ave, Chicago, IL 60624	(872) 444-8200	breakthrough.org	Helps access legal aid, food stamps, housing and employment information, and financial management. Offers GED certification, family workshops, and youth programming
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breakthrough Men's Center	402 N St. Louis Ave, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 346-1785	breakthrough.org	Helps access legal aid, food stamps, housing and employment information, and financial management. Offers GED certification, family workshops, and youth programming
CHICAGO	Chicago	Breakthrough Women's Center	3330 W Carroll Ave, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 722-0179	breakthrough.org	Helps access legal aid, food stamps, housing and employment information, and financial management. Offers GED certification, family workshops, and youth programming

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Books to Women in Prison	4511 N Hermitage Ave, Chicago, IL 60640	chicagobwp@gmail.com	chicagobwp.org	Mails free books to women in prison
CHICAGO	Chicago	Community Support Advisory Council (TDAC)	1542 W 79th St, Chicago, IL 60620	(773) 651-6470	https://www.targetarea.org/re-entry	Works to create relationships with reentering prisoners and their families
CHICAGO	Chicago	Fathers, Families in Transition	120 W Madison St, Ste. 1414, Chicago, IL 60602	(312) 658-0166	Fathersfamiliesintransition.org	Lifestyle coaching, spiritual encouragement, mentoring, fatherhood and parenting education, referrals and other life enhancing support seminars for custodial, non-custodial fathers, youth, women, family members
CHICAGO	Chicago	Grant a Wish, Baby	1136 E 93rd St, Chicago, IL 60619	(773) 977-8126	grantawishinchicago.org	Helps families provide for their infants and toddlers up to the age of 5 years old
CHICAGO	Chicago	Hope House	3551 W. Roosevelt Rd., Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 521-8442		Waiting List - Counseling & family reunification
CHICAGO	Chicago	The Market	3509 W 111th St, Chicago, IL 60655	(708) 346-9070	southsidepregnancy.info	Offers baby and maternity items, diapers, and strollers. Also provides parenting classes
CHICAGO	Chicago	Men & Women in Prison Ministries Universal House of Refuge Center, Inc.	700 E Oakwood Blvd, Chicago, IL 60653	(708) 339-2400	mwipm.com	Support group and education for families and formerly incarcerated people. Meets first Thursday of every month
CHICAGO	Chicago	Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation	5114 S Elizabeth St, Chicago, IL 60609 P.O. BOX 09379 (For mailing only)	(773) 952-6643	pbmr.org	Support group for mothers of the incarcerated
SOUTH COOK	Oak Lawn	Southside Pregnancy Center	9115 Cicero Ave, Oak Lawn, IL 60453	(708) 346-9070	southsidepregnancy.info	Offers baby and maternity items, diapers, and strollers. Also provides parenting classes
NORTHEAST	Des Plaines	Prisoner and Family Ministry	1001 E Touhy Ave, Ste. 50, Des Plaines, IL 60018	(618) 997-9076		Provides transportation for children to visit their incarcerated mothers, a children's storybook program, and overnight hospitality in conjunction with local groups
NORTHEAST	Joliet	Birtright of Joliet	310 N Hammes Ave, Ste. LL7, Joliet, IL 60435	(815) 725-3411	birtright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations
NORTHEAST	Lombard	Outreach House	24 W Ash St, Lombard, IL 60148	(630) 693-0185	theoutreachhouse.org/#whoweare	Family financial assistance, also provides basic care items for children 0-3 years old
NORTHEAST	Round Lake Park	Mano a Mano Family Resource Center	6 E Main St, Round Lake Park, IL 60073	English: (847) 201-1521 Spanish: (847) 201-1521	manoamanofamilyresourcecenter.org	Programs for immigrants and their families: citizenship assistance, community school for parents, referrals, kindergarten readiness, community garden, health education, employment connection

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
NORTHWEST	Woodstock	Jail Brakers	P.O. Box 404, Woodstock, IL 60098	(224) 422-7431	treeoflifeuu.org/serve/jail-brakers/	Support for children and families impacted by incarceration. Offers individual and family support group, gas cards for family visits, and community presentations and events.
EAST CENTRAL	Bloomington	Birthright of Bloomington	505 N Center, Ste. 1, Bloomington, IL 61701	(309) 829-5430	birthright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Birthright of Champaign	Huntington Towers 201 W Springfield Ave, Ste. 206, Champaign, IL 61820	(217) 351-7744	birthright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations
EAST CENTRAL	Decatur	Baby TALK Early Head Start	710 W Macon St, Decatur, IL 62522	(217) 422-9930		Serves pregnant women and parents with children from birth to three, with early education, family services, and some health services
EAST CENTRAL	Decatur	Kid's Connection	1811 S. Taylor Rd, Decatur, IL 62521	(217) 330-6454	maconresources.org	After school and summer care for children 5-18 in Macon County
EAST CENTRAL	Decatur	iGrow	1221 E Condit St, Decatur, IL 62521	(217) 423-6988, ext. 1140	igrowmaconcounty.org	Connects expectant moms with at-home visitor based programs
EAST CENTRAL	Rantoul	Community Service Center, Rantoul	520 E. Wabash Ave, Rantoul, IL 61866	(217) 893-1530	csrantoul.org/contact-us	Prescription assistance, help connecting to Illinois welfare programs, help with childrens' toys
EAST CENTRAL	Urbana	Hope Center	1802 N Lincoln Ave, Urbana, IL 61801	(217) 384-3070 (217) 607-5654	https://www.hopecenter.us/	Community care program offering meetings to help individuals improve life situations. Food pantry on Wednesdays
EAST CENTRAL	Urbana	Childcare Resources Services	905 S Goodwin Ave, Urbana, IL 61801	(800) 325-5516	ccrs.illinois.edu	Provides referrals for childcare, nurseries, in-home care providers, summer activity programs, and more
EAST CENTRAL	Watseka	Arc of Illinois	700 E Elm St, Watsseka, IL 60970	(815) 432-5288	familyvoicesillinois.org	Resource for childcare information for children with disabilities or special needs
WEST CENTRAL	Macomb	Birthright of Macomb	303 N Clay St (Lutheran Student Center), Macomb, IL 61455		birthright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Family to Family Education, NAMI	218 West Lawrence Ave, Springfield, IL 62704	(217) 522-1403	namillinois.org	Free, 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illnesses
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Fishes and Loaves Outreach	2937 Stanton St, Ste. A, Springfield, IL 62703	(217) 529-3333	fishesnloaves.org	Parenting and relationship classes, help with literacy, life skill classes, parenting classes, job skills workshops, relationship counseling, referral services
WEST CENTRAL	Quincy	Birthright of Quincy	1200 Broadway, L.L. Ste. A, Quincy, IL 62301		birthright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Description
SOUTHEAST	Marion	Prisoner Family Support	P.O. Box 123, Marion, IL 62959	(618) 997-1227 (618) 997-1227 155		Provides overnight lodging at a discount and local transportation for visitors to the federal prison in Marion. Also provides support group for families and children of prisoners and publishes a newsletter
SOUTHEAST	Olney	Birthright of Macomb	1707 E Main St, Ste #7, Olney, IL 62450		birthright.org	Help with maternity care, baby supplies, and referrals to a range of other organizations
SOUTHWEST	Effingham	Catholic Charities Crisis Assistance	1502 E Fayette Ave, Effingham, IL 62401	(217) 857-1458	cc.dio.org/locations/effingham	Guidance with vouchers, rent and utility assistance, case management, referrals
SOUTHWEST	St. Louis, MO	Epworth's Family Support Network	7520 Natural Bridge Rd, St. Louis, MO 63121	(314) 222-4877	epworth.org/programs/family-support-network-fsn	Weekly in-home counseling services, parenting skill-building and support, help for children with behavioral problems
SOUTHWEST	St. Louis, MO	Giving is a Family Tradition (GIFT)	P.O. Box 39313, St. Louis, MO 63139	(314) 472-3392	https://www.givingisafamilytradition.org/contact-us	Provides gas cards, metro tickets, parking passes and other transportation assistance for families with hospitalized babies
SOUTHWEST	St. Louis, MO	Nurses for Newborns	7259 Lansdowne Ave, Ste. 100, St. Louis, MO 63119	(314) 544-3433	nfnf.org	Provides a range of help with parenting for children 0-2 years old, including baby supplies
SOUTHWEST	University City, MO	Epworth's Family Support Network	6816 Washington Ave, University City, MO 63130	(314) 727-6294	epworth.org/programs/family-support-network-fsn	Weekly in-home counseling services, parenting skill-building and support, help for children with behavioral problems
SOUTHWEST	Webster Groves, MO	Epworth's Family Support Network	110 N Elm Ave, Webster Groves, MO 63119	(314) 918-3301	epworth.org/programs/family-support-network-fsn	Weekly in-home counseling services, parenting skill-building and support, help for children with behavioral problems



6. Health Resources

These health resources include healthcare for children, dental needs, women's health, primary care, STI testing, as well as free and sliding scale clinics. Please see our online directory at reentryillinois.net for the full, long list.

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
NATIONWIDE			AIDS Info Hotline		(800) 448-0440		Confidential answers to questions about HIV/AIDS treatment and clinical trials
NATIONWIDE			Alcohol and Drug Referral Helpline		(800) 662-4357		
NATIONWIDE			Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 Guide			https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html	Facts about COVID-19: how to protect yourself, what to do if you are sick
NATIONWIDE			Domestic Violence Helpline		(877) 863-6338		
NATIONWIDE			Find a health center		(800) 843-6154	https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/	Find local health centers for COVID19 screening, testing, telehealth, and other primary health care services.
NATIONWIDE			Healthcare Marketplace			healthcare.gov	Apply for insurance through the Healthcare Marketplace
NATIONWIDE			National Suicide Prevention Helpline		(800) 273-8255		
ILLINOIS			Application for Benefits Eligibility			abe.illinois.gov	Apply for Medicaid/Medicare
ILLINOIS			DHS Customer Helpline				Questions about case status, benefits, services, eligibility
ILLINOIS			DHS Public Health Program Map		(800) 843-6154	http://app.idph.state.il.us/cecwweb/	Find a variety of public health programs (e.g., women's health, HIV/AIDS, asthma, etc.)
ILLINOIS			Illinois Department of Public Health			https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGpM_pvMJKs#action=share	Resources/info about COVID-19 in Cook County
NORTHERN ILLINOIS/CHICAGO/SUBURBS			COVID19 Telehealth line		(866) 443-2584	http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/media-publications/daily-press-briefings	Free telemedicine care for COVID-19 treatment

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	ACCESS Ashland Family Health Center	5159 S Ashland Ave	(773) 434-9216	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screenings, sliding scale
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	ACCESS Humboldt Park Family Health Center	3202 W North Ave	(773) 489-6333	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, women, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screenings, sliding scale
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	ACCESS Southwest Family Health Center	4839 W 47th St	(773) 735-2345	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, mental health, women, sliding scale
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	ACCESS Westside Family Health Center	3752 W 16th St	(773) 762-2435	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, women, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screenings, sliding scale
CHICAGO	Cook		AHA Heart Healthy Resources			cookcountypublichealth.org	Heart health during COVID-19
	Cook	Chicago	AIDS Foundation of Chicago	200 W. Monroe St. Suite 1150, Chicago, IL 60606	(312) 922-2322	http://www.aidschicago.org	Housing assistance, case management, treatment referrals, HIV testing, health insurance assistance
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Brothers Health Collective	2150 S Canalport Suite 5B1	(312) 808-1044		Free sexual health testing, AIDS Drugs Assistance Program, serving Black gay and bisexual men
CHICAGO			Chicago COVID website			https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Findex.html	Chicago's coronavirus response center, with resources and the latest updates
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Women's Health Center	1025 W Sunnyside Ave	(773) 935-6126	chicagowomenshealthcenter.org	Primary, women, trans, fertility, mental health, sliding scale
CHICAGO	Cook		Cook County Dept of Public Health				How to protect yourself, what to do if you are sick, latest updates, etc.
CHICAGO			NowPow			https://nowpow.com/	List of resources in Chicago related to health, wellness, self-care
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Planned Parenthood Loop Health Center	18 S Michigan Ave	(312) 592-6700	plannedparenthood.org	Reproductive health
ENGLEWOOD	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	641 W. 63rd Street, Chicago, IL 60621	(312) 747-7496	https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/supp_info/behavioral-health/mental_health_centers.html	Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD
GREATER GRAND	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	4314 S. Cottage Grover, Chicago, IL 60632	(312) 747-0036		Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
GREAT LAWN	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	4150 W. 55th St. Chicago, IL 60632	(312) 747-1020		Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD
LAWDALE	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	1201 S. Campbell St., Chicago IL 60608	(312) 746-5905		Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD
NORTH RIVER	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	5801 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60646	(312) 744-1906		Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD
ROSELAND	Cook	Chicago	Chicago Mental Health Clinics	200 E. 115th St., Chicago, IL 60628	(312) 747-7320		Adults with serious mental health illness, substance abuse issues, PTSD
VARIOUS LOCATIONS	Cook	Chicago	Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C4)	2542 W. North Ave.; 4740 N. Clark Ave.; 2525 W. Peterson; 5710 N. Broadway; 12940 S. Western (773) 769-0205	(773) 769-0205	www.c4chicago.org	Crisis services; case management; medication monitoring; counseling; therapy; parenting classes; vocational rehabilitation. Spanish services available. Must have insurance. No walk-ins.
	Cook	Chicago	Association House of Chicago	1116 N. Kedzie Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 772-8009 X1020	https://www.associationhouse.org	Behavioral health, workforce development, HIV health
	Cook	Chicago	Christian Community Health Center	9718 S. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60628	(773) 233-4100	www.cchc-online.org	Coronavirus testing & phone consultation; primary care health; OB/GYN; Pediatrics; Mobile Health Van; On-site pharmacy; Dental & Oral Health Care; HIV/AIDS testing & care; Behavioral/Mental Health; Substance Abuse Treatment; Domestic Violence Intervention; Housing & Shelter Services; Case Management
	Cook	Chicago	Hartgrove Behavioral Health Systems	5730 W. Roosevelt Rd., Chicago, IL 60644	(773) 413-1700	hartgrovehospital.com	Inpatient Services; Trauma Program; Outpatient Service. Financial assistance available, most insurance accepted.
	Cook	Chicago	Lawndale Chirstian Health Center	3219 W. Carroll, Chicago, IL 60624	(872) 588-3000	www.lawndale.org	COVID-19 testing; health services; women's and prenatal care; vision care; HIV care; dental care; specialty care; social & spiritual care. Accepts insurance, sliding scale.
EAST CENTRAL	Livingston	Pontiac	Livingston County Health Department	310 E Torrence Ave	(815) 844-7174	lchd.us	
EAST CENTRAL	Macon	Decatur	Macon County Health Department	1221 E Condit St	(217) 423-6988	maconcountyhealth.org	

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EAST CENTRAL	McLean	Normal	Community Health Care Clinic - Normal	902 Franklin Ave	(309) 888-5531	chchealth.org	Free clinic for residents of McLean County, application required
EAST CENTRAL	Shelby	Shelbyville	Shelby County Health Department	1700 W South 3rd St	(217) 774-9555	shelbyhealth.net	
EAST CENTRAL	Vermillion	Tilton	Vermillion County Rape Crisis Center	1630 Georgetown Rd	(866) 617-3224	vcrapetcrisis.org	Counseling, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, 24 hour crisis line
EAST CENTRAL	Moultrie	Sullivan	Moultrie County Health Department	202 W Main St	(217) 728-4114	moultriecountyil.com	
SOUTH/EAST/CENTRAL		Carbondale, East St. Louis, Quincy, Springfield	COVID19 Telehealth line		(833) 673-5669	https://www.heart.org/en/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-resources	Free telemedicine care for COVID-19 treatment
NORTHEAST	DeKalb	DeKalb	DeKalb County Health Department	2550 N Annie Glidden Rd	(815) 748-2467	dekalbcounty.org/health	
NORTHEAST	DuPage	Addison	ACCESS Addison Family Health Center	1111 W Lake St	(630) 628-1811	achn.net	Primary, mental health, sliding scale
NORTHEAST	Kane	Elgin	Greater Elgin Family Care Center - Summit Health Center	370 Summit St	(847) 608-1344	gefcc.org	Primary, women, physicals, free pregnancy tests, sliding scale
NORTHEAST	Kendall	Yorkville	Kendall County Health Department	811 John St	(630) 553-9100	kendallhealth.org	
NORTHEAST	Lake	Round Lake Beach	Mid Lakes Community Health Center	224 W Clarendon Dr	(847) 984-5100	lakecountyil.gov	Mental health, substance abuse treatment, health discount programs, STI prevention, WIC, sliding scale for medical services
NORTHEAST	Will	Joliet	Will County Health Department	501 Ella Ave	(815) 727-8480	willcountyilinois.com	
NORTHWEST	Boone	Belvidere	Boone County Health Department	1204 Logan Ave	(815) 544-2951	boonecountyil.org/department/health	
NORTHWEST	Bureau	Princeton	Bureau County Health Department	523 S Bureau Pkwy #A	(815) 872-5091	bchealthdepartment.org	
NORTHWEST	Cairroll	Mt. Carroll	Cairroll County Health Department	822 S Mill St	(815) 244-8855	ccphd.org	
NORTHWEST	DeKalb	DeKalb	Safe Passage		(815) 756-5228	safepassaged.org	Counseling, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, 24 hour crisis line
NORTHWEST	Henry	Kewanee	Henry/Stark County Health Department	4424 US Hwy 34	(309) 852-0197	henrystarkhealth.org	
NORTHWEST	Jo Daviess	Galena	Jo Daviess County Health Department	9483 US Hwy 20 W	(815) 777-0263	jodavieess.org/health	
NORTHWEST	LaSalle	Ottawa	LaSalle County Health Department	717 E Etna Rd	(815) 433-3366	lasallecounty.org	

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
NORTHWEST	Lee	Dixon	Lee County Health Department	309 S Galena Ave	(815) 284-3371	lchd.com	
NORTHWEST	Marshall	Lacon	Marshall County Health Department	319 6th St	(309) 246-8074	marshallcountyhealth.org	
NORTHWEST	McHenry	Woodstock	McHenry County Health Department	2200 N Seminary Ave	(815) 334-4500	co.mchenry.il.us	
NORTHWEST	Ogle	Oregon	Ogle County Health Department	907 Pines Rd	(815) 732-7330	odlecouny.org/departments/health-department	
NORTHWEST	Putnam	Hennepin	Putnam County Health Department	220 E High St #102	(815) 925-7326	bchealthdepartment.org	
NORTHWEST	Rock Island	Moline	Community Health Care Inc - Moline	1106 4th Ave	(563) 336-3000	chcga.org	Primary, sliding scale
NORTHWEST	Stark	Toulon	Great River Community Health Center	120 E Court St	(309) 286-7240	auntmarthas.org	Primary, pediatrics, mental health, dental, sliding scale
NORTHWEST	Stephenson	Freeport	Stephenson County Health Department	10 W Linden St	(815) 235-8271	co.stephenson.il.us/health	
NORTHWEST	Whiteside	Rock Falls	Whiteside County Health Department Community Clinic	1300 W 2nd St	(815) 626-2230	whitesidehealth.org	Primary, dental, family planning,
SOUTHEAST	Alexander	Cairo	Cairo Mega Clinic	13254 Kessler Rd	(618) 734-4400	chesi.org	Primary, dental, sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Clay	Flora	Clay County Health Department	601 E 12th St	(618) 662-4406	claycountyillinois.org/health-department	
SOUTHEAST	Crawford	Robinson	Crawford County Health Department	202 Bline Blvd	(618) 544-8798	cchd.net	
SOUTHEAST	Edwards	Albion	Albion Community Health Center	33 W Main	(618) 445-2287	crhpc.org	Primary, mental health, dental, sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Franklin	Sesser	Sesser Community Health Center	6294 State Hwy 154	(618) 625-6979	crhpc.org/sesser	Primary, pediatrics, mental health, dental, sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Gallatin	Ridgeway	Egyptian Public and Mental Health Department	112 E Main St	(618) 272-4691	egyptian.org	
SOUTHEAST	Hamilton	McLeansboro	Hamilton County Health Department	100 S Jackson St #5	(618) 643-3522	hchdil.com	
SOUTHEAST	Hardin	Elizabethtown	Hardin County Medical Clinic	IL Route 146, Bldg 2	(618) 285-6191	chesi.org	Primary, pediatrics, women, sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Jackson	Carbondale	Shawnee Health Service, Same Day	400 S Lewis Ln	(618) 519-9200	shawneehealth.com	No appointment, minor injury and illness, sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Jefferson	Mt. Vernon	Jefferson County Health Department	1 Doctors Park Rd	(618) 244-7134	jeffersoncountyillinois.com	

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SOUTHEAST	Massac	Metropolis	Massac County Health Department	1230 Commercial Park Rd	(618) 524-2657	southern7.org	
SOUTHEAST	Perry	Pinckneyville	Perry County Health Department	907 S Main St	(618) 357-5371	perryhealth.net	
SOUTHEAST	Pope	Golconda	Pope County Health Department	205 Main St	(618) 285-6215	southern7.org	
SOUTHEAST	Pulaski	Pulaski	Pulaski County Clinic	100 Market St #89	(618) 342-6767		Sliding scale
SOUTHEAST	Richland	Olney	Richland County Health Department	501 S Whittle Ave	(618) 392-6241	richlandcountyhealthoffice.org	
SOUTHEAST	Saline	Eldorado	Egyptian Health Department - Saline County	1412 US 34 N	(618) 273-3226	egyptian.org	Substance use treatment, mental health, WIC, immunization
SOUTHEAST	Union	Anna	Union County Health Department	260 Lick Creed Rd	(618) 833-8561	southern7.org	
SOUTHEAST	Wabash	Mt. Carmel	Wabash County Health Department	130 W 7th St	(618) 263-3873	wabashhealth.org	
SOUTHEAST	Wayne	Fairfield	Wayne County Health Department	405 N Basin Rd	(618) 842-5166	wchdl.com	
SOUTHEAST	White	Carmi	White County Health Department	1705 College Ave	(618) 382-7331	southern7.org	
SOUTHEAST	Williamson	Marion	Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department	8160 Express Dr	(618) 993-8111	biountyhealth.org	
SOUTHEAST	Lawrence	Lawrenceville	Lawrence County Health Department	11362 Country Club Rd	(618) 943-2609	lchealth.com	
SOUTHWEST	Bond	Greenville	Bond County Health Department	1520 S 4th St	(618) 664-1442	bchd.us	
SOUTHWEST	Calhoun	Hardin	Calhoun County Health Department	210 French St	(618) 576-2428	calhouncountyhealth.net	
SOUTHWEST	Christian	Taylorville	Christian County Health Department	902 W Springfield Rd	(217) 824-4113	christiancountyhealth.net	
SOUTHWEST	Clinton	Carlyle	Clinton County Health Department	930 Fairfax St #A	(618) 594-2723	clintoncountyhealth.com	
SOUTHWEST	Effingham	Effingham	Effingham County Health Department	901 W Virginia Ave	(217) 342-9237	effcohealth.org	
SOUTHWEST	Greene	Carrollton	Greene County Health Department	310 5th St	(217) 942-6961	greenecountyhealth.com	
SOUTHWEST	Macoupin	Carlinville	Macoupin County Health Department	805 N Broad St	(217) 854-3223	mcpnd.net	
SOUTHWEST	Madison	Wood River	Madison County Health Department	101 E Edwardsville Rd	(618) 692-8954	madisonchd.org	

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
SOUTHWEST	Marion	Centrallia	Marion County Health Department - Centrallia	1013 N Poplar	(618) 532-96518	marioncountyhealthdept.org	
SOUTHWEST	Monroe	Waterloo	Monroe County Health Department	901 Illinois Ave	(618) 939-3871	monroecountyhealth.org	
SOUTHWEST	Montgomery	Hillsboro	Montgomery County Health Department - Main Office	11191 Illinois Rt 185	(217) 532-2001	montgomeryco.com/health	
SOUTHWEST	Randolph	Chester	Randolph County Health Department	2515 State St	(618) 826-5007	idph.state.il.us/local/edwards	
SOUTHWEST	St. Clair	Centreville	Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation - Centreville	6000 Bond Ave	(618) 332-2740	sihf.org	Primary, mental health, dental, sliding scale
SOUTHWEST	Washington	Nashville	Washington County Health Department	177 S Washington St	(618) 327-3644	washingtonco.illinois.gov/health-department	
WEST CENTRAL	Adams	Quincy	Adams County Health Department	330 Vermont St	(217) 222-8440	co.adams.il.us/health	
WEST CENTRAL	Brown	Mt. Sterling	Brown County Health Department	120 E Main St	(217) 773-2714	browncountyhealth.com	
WEST CENTRAL	Cass	Virginia	Cass County Health Department	331 S Main St	(217) 452-3057	casscohealth.com	Primary, sliding scale
WEST CENTRAL	Henderson	Gladstone	Henderson County Health Department	208 Elm St	(309) 627-2812	hendcohealth.com	
WEST CENTRAL	Henderson	Stronghurst	Eagle View Community Health System - Stronghurst	101 S Division	(309) 924-1391	eagleviewhealth.org	Primary, dental, sliding scale
WEST CENTRAL	Knox	Galesburg	Knox County Health Department	1361 W Fremont St	(309) 344-2224	knoxcountyhealth.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Logan	Lincoln	Logan County Department of Public Health	109 3rd St	(217) 735-2317	lcdph.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Mason	Havana	Mason County Health Department	1002 E Laurel Ave	(309) 210-0110	masoncohealth.com	
WEST CENTRAL	McDonough	Macomb	McDonough County Health Department	505 E Jackson St	(309) 837-9951	mchdept.com	Breast/cervical cancer screening, immunization, tobacco cessation, WIC, breastfeeding counseling,

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WEST CENTRAL	Menard	Petersburg	Menard County Health Department	1120 N 4th St #A	(217) 632-7864	menardcountyil.com/departments/health-department	
WEST CENTRAL	Mercer	Aledo	Mercer County Health Department	305 NW 7th St	(309) 582-3759	mercercountyil.org/departments/health	
WEST CENTRAL	Morgan	Jacksonville	Morgan County Health Department	345 W State St	(217) 245-5111	morganhd.com	
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Peoria	Peoria County Health Department	2116 N Sheridan Rd	(309) 679-6000	peoriacounty.org/pcchd	
WEST CENTRAL	Pike	Pittsfield	Pike County Health Department	606 W Adams St	(217) 285-4407	pikecountyil.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	Sangamon County Health Department	2833 S Grand Ave	(217) 535-3100	scdph.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Schuyler	Rushville	Schuyler County Health Department	233 N Congress St	(217) 322-6775	schuylerhealth.com	
WEST CENTRAL	Scott	Winchester	Scott County Health Department	335 W Cherry St	(217) 742-8203		
WEST CENTRAL	Tazewell	Tremont	Tazewell County Health Department	21306 IL-9	(309) 925-5511	tazewellhealth.org	
WEST CENTRAL	Warren	Monmouth	Warren County Health Department	240 S Main St	(309) 734-1314	warrencohealth.com	
WEST CENTRAL		Champaign Urbana, Alton, Peoria, Monmouth, Ottawa, Bloomington, Pontiac	COVID19 Telehealth line		(218) 545-5100	https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home.html	Free telemedicine care for COVID-19 treatment
NORTH COOK	Cook	Arlington Heights	ACCESS Northwest Family Health Center	1120 N Arlington Heights Rd	(847) 342-1554	achn.net	Primary, mental health, sliding scale
NORTH COOK	Cook	Des Plaines	ACCESS Genesis Center for Health and Empowerment	1 N Broadway St	(847) 298-3150	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, mental health, women, sliding scale

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
NORTH COOK	Cook	Galena	Riverview Center	705 S Dodge	(888) 707-8155	riverviewcenter.org	Counseling, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, 24 hour crisis line
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Blue Island	ACCESS Blue Island Family Health Center	13000 Maple Ave	(708) 385-6100	achn.net	Primary, mental health, sliding scale
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Chicago Heights	ACCESS Family Health Society	152 W Lincoln Hwy	(708) 754-9687	achn.net	Primary, women, pediatrics, mental health, substance abuse treatment, HIV/Hepatitis C support, sliding scale
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Melrose Park	ACCESS Melrose Park Family Health Center	8321 W North Ave	(708) 681-2298	achn.net	Primary, pediatrics, women, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screening, sliding scale
SOUTH COOK	Cook	Summit	ACCESS Des Plaines Valley Health Center	7450 W 63rd St	(708) 458-0757	achn.net	Primary, women, pediatrics, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screenings, sliding scale
WEST COOK	Cook	Cicero	ACCESS Hawthorne Family Health Center	2307-09 S Cicero Ave	(708) 780-9777	achn.net	Primary, women, mental health, low cost breast/cervical screenings, sliding scale
MINDFULNESS GROUPS							
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Insight Chicago Meditation Community	Dorchester Art + Housing Collaborative Rebuild Foundation at 1456 E 70th St, Chicago, IL 60637 and 6515 S Ingleside Avenue, Unit 1, in Chicago. * More locations are available		https://www.insightchicago.org/	A Vispassana meditation group whose practices are based on mindfulness meditation as taught within the tradition of Theravada Buddhism. Offers sitting groups, meditation retreats, classes, and social events.
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	The Shambhala Chicago Meditation Center	37 N. Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60607	773-743-8147	https://chicago.shambhala.org/	Offers public meditation classes, mindfulness training workshops, and a wide range of teachings from the Shambhala Buddhist tradition. Weekly opportunities for free public meditation.
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Siddha Yoga Meditation Center (The Prison Project)	770 N Halsted St., Chicago, IL 60642 and 47 W Polk St., Chicago, IL 60605	312-738-2798	https://www.siddhayogachicago.org/index.cfm	Led by meditation masters from India, Siddha Yoga brings the philosophy and practices to incarcerated men and women in prison. Has locations available in Chicago to practice meditation after release.

Region	County	City	Name	Address	Phone	URL	Description
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Zen Buddhist Temple	1710 W. Cornelia Avenue Chicago, IL 60657	773-528-8685	https://www.zenbuddhisttemple.org/chicago	Offers public services and meditation courses, a community for fellowship and support, and a seminary training center. Services consist of meditation periods, chanting and a Dharma Talk. Memberships vary depending on one's desired commitment. A Visitor's program is also available for those who want to spend some time living in the temple to cultivate their practice.
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Champaign	Prairie Zen Center	515 S. Prospect, Champaign, IL 61820	217-355-8835	http://www.prairiezen.org/	Known to provide prison outreach services at correctional centers, this meditation center is available after release as well with weekly sittings, zazen/kinhin, dharma talk, periodic workshops, and meditation retreats a few times a year.
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Urbana	The Prairie Sangha of Urbana-Champaign	The Prairie Sangha, PO Box 222, Champaign, IL 61824		https://www.prairiesangha.org/about	The Prairie Sangha is a community of practitioners in the Theravada Buddhism tradition of Vipassana meditation. Now a peer-led community which offers instruction in meditation practice, evening programs of silent meditation, dharma talks, and day-long retreats.
EAST CENTRAL	McLean	Bloomington-Normal	Bloomington Normal Zen Group	Palms Together Yoga at 1717 R.T. Dunn Drive, Unit E, Bloomington, Illinois.	815-617-9360	https://bnzengroup.wordpress.com/	Provides a setting where interested people can practice Zen meditation and learn about Buddhism.
NORTHWEST	Winnebago	Pecatonica	Illinois Vipassana Meditation Center, Dhamma Pakasa	10076 Fish Hatchery Road, Pecatonica, IL 61063	815-489-0420	https://pakasa.dhamma.org/mobile/	Supportive atmosphere where one can learn the practices of Vipassana meditation through courses and open houses. 10-day course is very serious where applicants will be asked personal information about significant life events, past conditioning, traumas, etc in order to make the course experience most effective.
NORTHWEST	Peoria	Peoria	Peoria Insight Meditation Group	Thien Tam Temple, 839 W. Moss Avenue, Peoria, IL 61606	217-585-9550	https://www.facebook.com/Peoria-Insight-Meditation-287271211478339/	A Vipassana meditation group practicing mindfulness meditation in the tradition of Theravada Buddhism. Services include sitting groups, study and discussion, retreats, and online resources to assist in meditation practice.

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WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	Sangamon Zen Group (part of the Prairie Zen Center)	745 Woodside Rd, Springfield, IL 62711	217-553-4644	http://www.sangamonzen.org/szqdefault.html	Affiliated with the Prairie Zen Center, the Sangamon Zen Group practices Zen in the lineage of Ordinary Mind/White Plum/Soto. Anyone interested in silent meditation practice is welcome.
SOUTH	Jackson	Carbondale	Shawnee Dharma Group	Gaia House-Interfaith Center, 913 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale, IL 62901	618-549-7387	https://www.meditationonly.com/listing/shawnee-dharma-group/	
ST. LOUIS	St. Louis	St. Louis	Inside Dharma	9909 Manchester Rd #111, St. Louis, MO 63122	314-254-3243		Inside Dharma is a Buddhist based organization that offers support to prisoners through meditation services and to formerly incarcerated individuals through employment and access to resources to help them adjust to re-entry.
MENTAL HEALTH MINDFULNESS GROUPS							
ONLINE			Palouse Mindfulness	Online		https://palousemindfulness.com/index.html	Free
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	DePaul University	Ray Meyer Fitness & Rec. Center at 2235 N. Sheffield Ave. Chicago, IL 60614	773-325-7812	https://resources.depaul.edu/campus-recreation/wellness/Pages/Mindfulness.aspx	
CHICAGO	Cook	Chicago	Rush University Medical Center	1620 W. Harrison St., Chicago, IL 60612	312-942-0118	https://www.rush.edu/treatments/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-mbsr	
CHICAGOLAND	Cook	Evanston	Northwestern University, Religious & Spiritual Life	633 Clark St, Evanston, IL 60208		https://www.northwestern.edu/religious-life/explore-our-programs/mindfulness/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction.html	
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Urbana-Champaign	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	505 E Green St, Champaign, IL 61820	217-333-0041	https://mindfulness.illinois.edu/	
NORTHWEST	Whiteside	Rock Falls	Mindfulness Institute NW Illinois	P.O. Box 345, Rock Falls, Illinois 61071	815-499-1818	https://mindfulnessineverydayliving.com/	
WEST CENTRAL	Sangamon	Springfield	HSHS St. John's Hospital	800 E. Carpenter Street, Springfield, IL 62769		https://www.hshs.org/StJohns/Services/Mind-Body-Health	

MINDFULNESS APPS		Prices
Name	Description	
AURA	"Provides users with daily micro-meditations that last only 3 minutes apiece. Allows users to keep a gratitude journal, and track moods throughout the day."	Free for 3 minute meditations daily. Premium users pay \$12.99/month of \$7.92/month if they buy the full year in advance.
CALM	Brings users joy, peace, and a sense of clarity, increased focus and desire to stay consistent with the user's practice. For users wanting to experience better sleep, lower stress, and less anxiety.	Initial 7 days free with unguided sessions, some guided sessions and tracking features. A subscription costs \$12.99/month
HEADSPACE	"Provides users with spoken-word exercises that are designed to be used for around 10 minutes/day Teaches users how to incorporate meditation into their own lives"	Users can try before buying, the first two weeks are free. Subscriptions are \$12.99/month, \$69.99/year.
INSIGHT TIMER	Meditations can be filtered by benefit, type of practice, and origin. Because the library is so large, the app can be a little hard to navigate at first. Insight Timer has also curated Teachers of Color playlist and includes many other talks and meditations from experts.	Free, but can be upgraded to "Member Plus" with a subscription (\$60/year). The free version provides access to 100% of the meditation library and meditation timer.
MINDFULNESS COACH	Was developed to help veterans, service members, and others learn how to practice mindfulness. The app provides a gradual, self-guided training program designed to help you understand and adopt a simple mindfulness practice. Offers a library of information about mindfulness, mindfulness exercises, goal-setting and tracking, a mindfulness mastery assessment to help you track your progress over time, reminders, and access to other support and crisis resources.	Free
UCLA MINDFUL	This app offers beginner meditations in both English and Spanish, wellness meditations for people suffering from challenging health conditions, informative videos on the science of mindfulness and how to get started, and weekly podcasts on different meditation themes.	Free



7. Voting and Advocacy Resources

These groups practice different kinds of advocacy relating to reentry; helping community members, working to change laws relating to convictions, and researching reentry and the criminal justice system. You may wish to learn more or get involved with them.

Region	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
NATIONWIDE		Ballot Ready			https://www.ballotready.org/	Information on candidates for election, positions up for election, sample ballots, etc.
NATIONWIDE		Election Protection		(866) OUR-VOTE	https://866ourvote.org/	Voter assistance and advocacy; toll-free hotline on election day
NATIONWIDE		Legal Action Center			https://clearinghouse.lac.org/illinois	Information about criminal record repository, federal bonding program, tax credits, legal assistance, local service providers, and more.
NATIONWIDE	Claremont, CA	Prison Library Project	586 W First St, Claremont, CA 91711	(909) 626-3066	prisonlibraryproject.org	Mails free books to people in prison Support for children and families impacted by incarceration. Offers individual and family support group, gas cards for family visits, and community presentations and events.
NATIONWIDE	Madison WI	LGBT Books to Prisoners	1202 Williamson St #1, Madison, WI 53703	lgbtbookstoprisoners@gmail.com	lgbtbookstoprisoners.org	Mails free books to people in prison
NATIONWIDE	Minneapolis, MN	Women's Prison Book Projects	Boneshaker Books 2002 23rd Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55404	womensprisonbookproject@gmail.com	wppbp.org	Mails free books to women in prison
NATIONWIDE	New York, NY	NYC Books Through Bars	Bluestockings Bookstore, 172 Allen St, New York, NY 10002	btb@abcnrio.org	booksthroughbarsnyc.org	Mails free books to people in prison
NATIONWIDE	Providence, RI	Providence Books Through Bars	Paper Nautilus Books 19 S Angell St, Providence, RI 02906	(401) 521-5533	papernautilusbooks.com	Mails free books to people in prison
NATIONWIDE	San Francisco, CA	Prisoners' Literature Project	Bound Together Books, 1369 Haight St, San Francisco, CA 94117	(510) 437-0257 Prisonlit@gmail.com	https://www.prisonlit.org/	Mails free books to people in prison
NATIONWIDE	Seattle, WA	Books To Prisoners, Seattle	92 Pike St, Box A, Seattle, WA 98101	bookstoprisoners@live.com	bookstoprisoners.net	Mails free books to people in prison

Region	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
STATEWIDE	Statewide	CURE IL			cureil.org	Advocacy, research, policy work
STATEWIDE	Statewide	Decarcerate Illinois			nationinside.org/campaign/decarcerate-illinois	Advocacy and policy work
STATEWIDE	Statewide	Illinois Campaign for Phone Justice			nationinside.org/campaign/illinois-for-prison-phone-justice	Advocacy and policy work
ONLINE	Online	Illinois Institute for Community Law and Affairs			illinoisinstitute.net/idea-exchange	Advocacy, writing, policy work
ONLINE	Online	Illinois Institute for Law and Community Affairs			illinoisinstitute.net/idea-exchange	Advocacy, writing, policy work, conducts a letter writing campaign
ONLINE	Online	Illinois Prison Talk			illinoisprisonstalk.org	Advocacy, blogging, writing
COOK COUNTY		Chicago Board of Elections		(312) 269-7900		Conducts registration and elections for residents of Chicago; general info for city.
COOK COUNTY		Illinois State Board of Elections		(312) 814-6440		General election body for the state; general voting information
COOK COUNTY		Cook County Board of Elections		(312) 603-5656	www.cookcountyclerk.com/agency/elections	Conducts registration and elections for residents of Cook County; general info for county.
CHICAGO AND COOK COUNTY		Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights			https://www.clcrl.org/voting-rights	Voter advocacy and poll-watching on election day in Chicago, Ck County, and at CC jail.
CHICAGO AND COOK COUNTY		Chicago Votes			https://chicagovotes.com/cook-county-jail-votes/ and https://chicagovotes.com/	Voter advocacy, registration, and mobilization. Coordinates voting at Cook County jail
CHICAGO	Chicago	Accivus	6798 S South Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	(312) 766-7145	https://www.accivusinc.org/	A community health organization
CHICAGO	Chicago	ALSO (Alliance of Local Service Organizations)	2401 W North Ave, Chicago, IL 60647	(773) 235-5705	http://also-chicago.org/also_site/	Reentry services and legal services; various violence prevention programs
CHICAGO	Chicago	Communities Partnering for Peace (C4P4)		(312) 986-4000	https://www.metrofamily.org/cp4p/	Program to reduce violence and gang activity among individuals and communities. Rooted in nonviolence, trauma-informed care, hyper-local collaboration, and restorative justice practices.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Communities United	4749 N Kedzie Ave, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60625		communitiesunited.org	Advocacy, support for communities
CHICAGO	Chicago	Enlace	2756 S Harding, Chicago, IL 60623	(773) 943-7570	https://www.enlacechicago.org/	

Region	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Ex-Cons for Social and Community Change	6330 S King Dr, Chicago, Illinois	(708) 512-4140	facebook.com/pg/TyroneECCSC/about/?ref=page_internal	ECSCC works toward effective social services by linking communities to a wide range of programs, such as food programs for children, mentoring, sex ed, substance abuse, counseling, and family transportation to prisons
CHICAGO	Chicago	FORCE (Fighting to Overcome Records and Create Equality)	111 W Jackson Blvd, Ste. 820, Chicago, IL 60604	(312) 427-4830	communityrenewalsociety.org	Advocates for social and economic justice through training communities and individuals
CHICAGO	Chicago	Give Up the Streets (GUTS)			facebook.com/Give-Up-The-Streets-GUTS-142488223105688/	Mentors at-risk youth in Chicago, offering redirection, trauma counseling, and, community building
CHICAGO	Chicago	Heartland Alliance	208 S LaSalle St, Ste. 1300, Chicago, IL 60604	(312) 660-1300	heartlandalliance.org/nationalinitiatives/	Hosts health, housing, jobs and justice programs
CHICAGO	Chicago	IMAN (Inner-City Muslim Action Network)	2744 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60629	(773) 434- 4626	https://www.imancentral.org/	Noteworthy Programs: Heath Center, Green Re-enter (transitional housing for formerly incarcerated men)
CHICAGO	Chicago	INVC (Institute for Nonviolence Chicago)	819 N Leamington Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 417-8241	https://www.nonviolencechicago.org/	Programs: Outreach and Conflict Mediation, Case Management, Victim Services, Nonviolence Training, Community Organizing
CHICAGO	Chicago	John Howard Association of IL	P.O. Box 10042, Chicago, IL 60610-0042		thejha.org	Research, policywork, collaboration with community organizations
CHICAGO	Chicago	MacArthur Justice Center	375 E Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL 60611-3069	(312) 503-1271	macarthurjusticecenter.org	Civil rights law firm
CHICAGO	Chicago	National Alliance for the Empowerment of the Formerly Incarcerated	Sankofa Cultural Arts & Business Center: 5820 W Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL 60651	(773) 375-3084	naefmentor.wix.com/naefi	Leadership development, conflict resolution, reentry support groups, reentry coach, community projects, legal support
CHICAGO	Chicago	New Life Centers	2657 S Lawndale Ave, Chicago, IL 60623	(312) 736- 2466	https://newlifecenters.org/	Programs for Juvenile offenders; Most programs seem to be for youth
CHICAGO	Chicago	Organizing Neighborhoods for Equality (ONE) Northside	4648 N Racine, Chicago, IL 60640	(773) 769-3232	http://onenorthside.org/	Campaigns: Affordable housing, Education, Economic Justice, Mental Health Justice, Police Accountability

Region	City	Name	Address	Phone	Web	Description
CHICAGO	Chicago	Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation	5114 S Elizabeth St, Chicago, IL 60609	(773) 952-6643	https://www.pbmr.org/	Notable Programs: Education, Workforce Development, Job Readiness, Social Enterprise Program, Restorative Initiatives
CHICAGO	Chicago	Project H.O.O.D.	6330 S King Dr, Chicago, 60637	(773) 752-6055	https://www.projecthood.org/	Programs mostly for youth
CHICAGO	Chicago	Roseland Ceasefire	12639 S Ashland, Calumet, IL 60827	(773) 577-4533	https://www.facebook.com/roselandceasefirechicago/	Focus Areas: Health, Education, Immigration, Violence Prevention
CHICAGO	Chicago	Sistas of the Hood	P.O. Box 440044, Chicago, IL 60644	(773) 858-4453 sistasofthehood312@gmail.com	sistasofthehood.com/about-us	Employment help, case management support, and HIV assistance. Also does community support and advocacy
CHICAGO	Chicago	Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP)	2558 W 63rd St, Chicago, IL 60629	(773) 471-8208	http://swopchicago.org/	Notable Areas of Work: Education, Health, Leadership Development, Housing, Immigration
CHICAGO	Chicago	UCAN	3605 W Fillmore St, Chicago, IL 60624	(773) 558-0180	https://www.ucanchicago.org/	Programs: Preventing Violence, Healing Trauma, Building Strong Families, Educating and Empowering Youth
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Citizens with Conviction			facebook.com/CitizensWithConviction	Advocacy by community members
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	First Followers	401 E Park St, Champaign, IL 61820		firstfollowersreentry.com	Support for people leaving prison
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Ripple Effect	1001 S Wright St, Champaign, IL 61820	mstaylor217@gmail.com	www.educationjustice.net	Support group, advocacy
EAST CENTRAL	Urbana	Build Programs, Not Jails			nationinside.org/campaign/stop-jail	
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Illinois State Board of Elections		(217) 782-4141		General election body for the state; general voting information
NORTH COOK	Evanston	Juvenile Justice Initiative	518 Davis St, Evanston, IL 60201		ijustice.org	Research, policy work, collaboration with community organizations
NORTHEAST	Round Lake Park	Mano a Mano Family Resource Center	6 E Main St, Round Lake Park, IL 60073	English: (847) 201-1521 Spanish: (847) 201-1521	manoamanofamilyresourcecenter.org	Programs for immigrants and their families: citizenship assistance, community school for parents, referrals, kindergarten readiness, community garden, health education, employment connection
NORTHWEST	Woodstock	Jail Brakers	P.O. Box 404, Woodstock, IL 60098	(224) 422-7431	jailbrakers@gmail.com ; http://www.jail-brakers.org/	



8. Legal Services

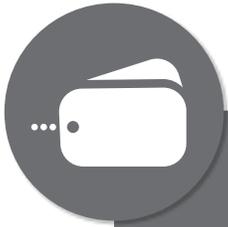
The following resources exist to help you with legal needs, such as challenges to discrimination in employment and housing, expungement/sealing, immigration, child custody and family law, and more. They are free or sliding scale.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes*
STATEWIDE		Criminal Record Repository	Illinois State Police, Bureau of Identification, Fee Processing Unit, 260 North Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432	815-740-5160	www.isp.state.il.us/crimhistory/viewinchircrrecs.cfm/	Can contact to obtain a copy of state rap sheet.
STATEWIDE	Across Illinois	Land of Lincoln Legal defense		(877) 342-7891	lincolnlegal.org	Housing law, family law, consumer law, home ownership, public benefits and health, education law, disability law, and senior citizen services representation
STATEWIDE	Across Illinois	Metropolitan Family Services, Legal Aid		(312) 986-4200	metrofamily.org	Domestic violence, elder abuse, housing, and consumer fraud
STATEWIDE	Across Illinois	National Immigrant Justice Center		(312) 660-1370	immigrantjustice.org	Provides a range of legal services to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
STATEWIDE		Office of the State Appellate Defender	400 W. Monroe, Suite 303 Springfield, IL 62705	312-814-5472	https://www.illinois.gov/osad	Provides legally-accurate and easy-to-understand information to the public about sealing, expungement and other forms of criminal records relief.
STATEWIDE	Across Illinois	Prairie State Legal Services		(815) 965-2134	pslegal.org/#pr15	Housing law, tax law, senior citizen services, education law, foreclosure, disability law, HIV/AIDS legal services, help for homeless
ONLINE		Illinois Legal Aid	Online only		www.illinoislegalaid.org/	Provides important legal information and referrals for residents of Illinois.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Access Living	115 W Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL 60654	(800) 613-8549	accessliving.org	Advocacy and representation for people with disabilities, including victims of discrimination
CHICAGO	Chicago	AIDS Legal Council of Chicago	17 N State St, Ste. 900 Chicago, IL 60602	(312) 427-8990	legalcouncil.org	Helps victims of HIV/AIDS discrimination, as well as insurance disputes, return-to-work questions, and confidentiality issues.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Ascend Justice	555 W Harrison, Ste. 1900, Chicago, IL 60607	(312) 325-9155	ascendjustice.org	Legal assistance for victims of domestic violence.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Bankruptcy Desk, Cook County Circuit Clerk	Richard J. Daley Center, 50 West Washington St Room 2600, Chicago, IL 60602			Answers to non-legal questions about filing bankruptcy. Monday-Friday 9:30-12:30

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes*
CHICAGO	Chicago	Cabrini Green Legal Aide	6 S Clark St Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60603	(312) 738-2452	cgla.net	Housing law, family law, and criminal defense representation. Help with criminal records, link clients to other social services in Chicago.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Cabrini Green Legal Aid	740 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60642	(312)738-2452	www.cgla.net	\$20 intake fee, no additional charges thereafter (as of 01/2019); Chicago residents only; maximum conviction and income restrictions; intake occasionally closed.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Center for Conflict Resolution	11 E Adams St #500, Chicago, IL 60603	(312) 922-6464	ccrchicago.org	Free mediation services
CHICAGO	Chicago	Center or Disability and Elder Law	205 W Randolph, Ste. 1610, Chicago, IL 60606	(312) 376-1880	cdelaw.org	Legal services to low-income seniors and/or persons with disabilities in Cook County
CHICAGO	Chicago	Centro Romero	6216 N Clark St, Chicago, IL 60660	(773) 508-5300	centroromero.org	Immigration help
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Coalition for the Homeless	70 E Lake St, Ste. 720, Chicago, IL 60601	(800) 940-1119	chicagohomeless.org	Legal representation, bilingual attorneys
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights	100 N La Salle St, Chicago, IL 60602	info@clccrul.org	clccrul.org/legal-help-pbw	Legal assistance for people buying homes or starting small businesses.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM).	740 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60642	(312) 738-2452	cgla.net	Supports incarcerated mother/caregivers of incarcerated children and caregivers of children whose mothers are incarcerated. Provides help for divorce, guardianship short-term guardianship, discharge of guardianship, custody, visitation, foster care, and adoption
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Legal Clinic	2938 E 91st St, Chicago, IL 60617	(773) 731-1762	clclaw.org	Low cost legal representation for a wide range of legal services
CHICAGO	Chicago	Chicago Volunteer Legal Services	33 N Dearborn, Ste. 400, Chicago, IL 60602	(312) 332-1624	cvls.org	Free legal representation for a wide range of services.
CHICAGO	Chicago	First Defense Legal Aid	5100 W Harrison St, Chicago, IL 60644	(773) 354-8581	first-defense.org	24-hour legal representation for people in custody of Chicago PD
CHICAGO	Chicago	Indo-American Center	6328 N California Ave, Chicago, IL 60659	(773) 973-4444	indoamerican.org	Help with immigration. Also provides legal services for people starting businesses or buying a house.
CHICAGO	Chicago	James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy	1123 Emerson Ave. Ste. 203, Evanston, IL 60201	(847)492-1410	www.moran-center.org	Free legal representation for Evanston residents 21 years old or younger; epungement and sealing services (for anyone).
CHICAGO	Chicago	Lambda Legal	65 E Wacker Place Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601-7425	(312) 663-4413	lambdalegal.org	Protects victims of sexual orientation discrimination.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Latinos Progresando	3047 W Cermak Rd, Chicago, IL 60623	(773) 542-7077	latinospro.org	Bilingual help with assessing legal problems generally. Free help with domestic violence and family law,
CHICAGO	Chicago	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	161 N Clark St Suite 4300, Chicago, IL 60601	(312) 649-4111	law-arts.org	Provides legal help for housing, employment, and immigration. Also provides business advice to artists/performers

* The majority of these resources are free

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes*
CHICAGO	Chicago	Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing	33 N LaSalle, Ste. 900, Chicago, IL 60602	(312) 347-7600	lcbh.org	Free legal help with housing.
CHICAGO	Chicago	Legal Access Fund (LAF)	120 S LaSalle, Ste. 900, Chicago, IL 60603	(312) 341-1070	lafchicago.org	Provides free legal services for non-criminal cases
CHICAGO	Chicago	Shriver Center on Poverty Law	67 E Madison St Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60603	(312) 263-3830	povertylaw.org	Works with community organizations, service providers, legislators, and other allies to pursue justice for low-income clients
CHICAGO	Chicago	Uptown People's Law Center	4413 N Sheridan, Chicago, IL 60640	(773) 769-1411	uplchicago.org	"Fighting for the rights of prisoners, tenants, & disabled people in Illinois."
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign/Normal	Immigration Project	505 W University Ave, Suite 214, Champaign, IL 61820	(309) 829-8703	immigrationproject.org	Naturalization, Green Card Renewal, Family Based petitions, Immigrant Survivors of Crime and Trauma, Removal Defense
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Vermilion County Bar Association Pro Bono Program	1817 S Neil St, Champaign, IL 61820	(217) 356-1351		Family, bankruptcy, divorce, and estate planning
NORTH COOK	Rolling Meadows/Chicago	Between Friends	2121 Euclid, Lower Level, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008			Help for people seeking orders of protection. (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
NORTH COOK	South Barrington	Willow Creek Care Center	67 E. Algonquin Rd., South Barrington, IL 60010	(224) 512-1240	willowcreekcarecenter.org	Numerous services include employment help, a computer lab, food assistance, legal aid, and eye care.
SOUTH COOK	Bridgeview	Cook County, Southwest Suburban Bar Association	10220 S 76th Ave, Bridgeview, IL 60453	(708) 371-4930		Landlord/tenant disputes, contract problems, small claims matters, wills, orders of protection, and expungement. (Meets Tuesdays only, 8 a.m. to noon)
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	State Appellate Defender Administrative Office	400 W Monroe, Ste. 202 (P.O. Box 5240), Springfield, IL 62605	(866) 787-1776	illinois.gov/osad/Expungement/Pages/default.aspx	Files criminal appeals for people who cannot afford it.

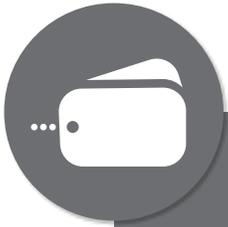


9. Latino Community & Immigration Resources

List of resources for immigrants, people who speak Spanish, and people facing deportation.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
CHICAGO	Chicago	Beyond Legal Aid		312-999-0056	https://www.beyondlegalaid.org/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Casa Michoacán		312-491-9317	https://fedecmiusa.org/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Catholic Charities		(312) 655-7725	catholiccharities.net	Domestic violence counseling and case management services-Confirm it's offered in Spanish, immigration and naturalization services as well as food pantries, home-delivered meals, counseling and financial assistance
CHICAGO	Chicago	Centro Romero		773-508-5300	https://centroromero.org/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Enlace Chicago		(773) 542-9241, (773) 823-1062	https://www.enlacechicago.org/immigration	"Free over-the-phone legal advice: Consultation and connection to local health care providers: 773-669-5490. Leave a message."
CHICAGO	Chicago	Esperanza Health Centers		773-584-6200	www.esperanzachicago.org	
CHICAGO	Chicago	General directory of resources for immigrants		N/A	https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/search?&state=IL&national=0&county=&legalArea=&legalService=&nonLegalService=&interestArea=&population=&legalNetwork=&language=&detentionFacility=&text=&zip=&interpreting=0&map=0&page=2	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Hispanic American Community Education and Services (HACES)		(847) 244-0300	https://www.haces.org/what-we-do/programs/immigrant-family-resource-program/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights		(312) 332-7360	https://www.icirr.org	

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
CHICAGO	Chicago	Instituto Chicago		(773) 890-0055	https://www.institutochicago.org/	
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	Rockford	La Voz Latina/YWCA		(815) 968-9681	https://www.ywcanwil.org/access-to-justice/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Mano a Mano		(847)-201-1521	https://mamfrc.org/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Mil Mujeres		(312) 219-2031	https://www.milmujeres.org/espanol	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Mujeres Latinas en Acción		(773) 890-0055	https://www.institutochicago.org/	
CHICAGO	Chicago	National Immigrant Justice Center		(312) 660-1370	https://immigrantjustice.org/espanol	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Northern Illinois Justice for our Neighbors-United Methodist		773-609-4401	https://nijfon.org	
CHICAGO	Chicago	Illinois Legal Aid		312-341-1070	https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/	
CENTRAL ILLINOIS	Bloomington, Normal, Champaign-Urbana	The Immigration Project		309.829.8703	https://www.immigrationproject.org/	



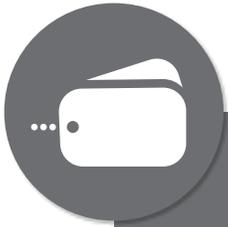
10. Veterans

Lists VA medical centers, veteran help centers, and Salvation Army veteran support centers that are free to use by veterans. You may want to see our Veterans section on pg 112 to advice on how to access these resources.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
NATIONWIDE		American Legion		(800) 433-3318	legion.org	Help with benefits, health, education, and employment
NATIONWIDE		Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs		(800) 393-0865	https://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx	To find an office, call 1-800-437-9824
NATIONWIDE		National Coalition for Homeless Veterans		(800) 838-4357	nchv.org	Help with a range of needs
NATIONWIDE		US Department of Veterans Affairs - Benefits		(800) 827-1000	va.gov	Assistance with accessing veteran benefits
NATIONWIDE		US Department of Veterans Affairs - Medical Centers		(877) 222-8387	va.gov	Veterans' health services
NATIONWIDE		Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services		(800) 827-1000	https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/296	Helps veterans with service-connected disabilities by providing job training and counseling to those who have an employment handicap.
COOK	Chicago	Chicago Vet Center	3348 W 87th St, Ste. 2, Chicago, IL 60652	(773) 962-3740	https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/facility.asp?ID=5046	Help with a range of needs
COOK	Chicago	Jesse Brown VA Medical Center	820 S Damen Ave, Chicago, IL 60612	(312) 569-8387	chicago.va.gov	Healthcare, as well as a PTSD program
COOK	Chicago	Leave No Vet Behind	19 S LaSalle St, Chicago, IL 60603	(312) 379-8652	leavenoveteranbehind.org/	Employment training, job placement, and debt relief for veterans
EAST CENTRAL	Bloomington	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	611 W Washington St, Bloomington, IL 61701	(309) 829-9476	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
EAST CENTRAL	Champaign	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	2122 N Market St, Champaign, IL 61824	(217) 373-7832	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
EAST CENTRAL	Danville	Danville VA Medical Center	1900 E Main St, Danville, IL 61832	(217) 554-3000	danville.va.gov	Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
EAST CENTRAL	Danville	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	855 E Fairchild St, Danville, IL 61832	(217) 442-5911	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
EAST CENTRAL	Decatur	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	229 W Main St, Decatur, IL 62523	(217) 428-4672	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
EAST CENTRAL	Mattoon	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	1300 Richmond Ave, Mattoon, IL 61938	(217) 234-3915	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
NORTH COOK	Evanston	Evanston Vet Center	1901 Howard St, Evanston, IL 60202	(847) 332-1019		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
NORTHEAST	Aurora	DuPage County Vet Center	750 Shoreline Dr 150, Aurora, IL 60504	(630) 585-1853		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
NORTHEAST	North Chicago	Lovell Federal Health Care Center	3001 Green Bay Rd, North Chicago, IL 60064	(847) 688-1900	lovel.fhcc.va.gov	Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
NORTHWEST	Moline	Quad Cities Vet Center	1539 46th Ave. #6, Moline, IL 61265	(309) 762-6955		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
NORTHWEST	Rockford	Rockford Vet Center	7015 Rote Rd Ste. 105, Rockford, IL 61107	(815) 395-1276		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
SOUTH COOK	Chicago Heights	Chicago Heights Vet Center	1010 Dixie Hwy, 2nd Floor Chicago Heights, IL 60411	(708) 754-8885		Substance abuse and mental health treatment
SOUTH COOK	Orland Park	Orland Park Vet Center	8654 W 159th St, Ste. 1, Orland Park, IL 60462	(708) 444-0561		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
SOUTHEAST	Marion	Marion VA Medical Center	2401 W Main St, Marion, IL 62959	(618) 997-5311	marion.va.gov	Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
SOUTHWEST	East St. Louis	East St. Louis Vet Center	1265 N 89th St, Ste. 5, East St. Louis, IL 62203	(618) 397-6602		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
WEST CENTRAL	Galesburg	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	501 N Kellogg St, Galesburg, IL 61401	(309) 342-9168	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Peoria Vet Center	8305 N Allen Road, Ste 1, Peoria, IL 61615	(309) 689-9708		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
WEST CENTRAL	Peoria	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	416 NE Jefferson St, Peoria, IL 61603	(309) 655-7272	saheartland.org	Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, emergency assistance
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veteran Families	3 W Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste 8, Springfield, IL 62701	(217) 720-5448 ronetta_buckner@USC.salvationarmy.org		Veterans assistance programs for housing, transportation, case management, and emergency assistance

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Springfield IL Vet Center	1227 S 9th St, Springfield, IL 62703	(217) 492-4955		Help with a range of needs
WEST CENTRAL	Springfield	Spring Street Veterans Renaissance	209 W Scarritt St, Springfield, IL 62702	(217) 528-0800		Transitional housing program and case management for veterans
WEST COOK	Forest Park	Oak Park Vet Center	1515 S Harlem, Forest Park, IL 60130	(708) 457-8805		Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program
WEST COOK	Hines	Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital	5000 S 5th St, Hines, IL 60141	(708) 202-8387	hines.va.gov	Offers compensated work therapy programs, PTSD program



11. Communications

Resources to access communication technologies, like cell phones and internet services, and to improve your technology literacy.

Region	City	Name	Address	Contact	Web	Notes
GLOBAL		Basic Computer Skills (GCF Global)			https://edu.acfglobal.org/en/basic-computer-skills/	A great resource to help you understand the basics of using a computer
GLOBAL		Gmail (GCF Global)			https://edu.acfglobal.org/en/gmail/	Get an introduction to gmail and how to send and respond to messages
GLOBAL		Microsoft (GCF Global)			https://edu.acfglobal.org/en/subjects/microsoft-office/	A great resource if you're new to Microsoft Office, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and more
GLOBAL		Online Safety (GCF Global)			https://edu.acfglobal.org/en/topics/online-safety/	Learn how to protect yourself, your computer, and your privacy online
NATIONWIDE		Lifeline			Lifelinesupport.org	Federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. Eligible customers will get up to \$9.25 toward their bill.
NATIONWIDE		Safelink Wireless			https://www.safelinkwireless.com/	A government supported program that provides a free cell phone and airtime each month for income-eligible customers (recipients of SNAP and Medicaid)
ILLINOIS		Library Technology			https://librarytechnology.org/libraries/public.pl?State=Illinois	List of libraries and phone numbers in Illinois. Libraries have free access to computers, Wi-fi, and most also have computer classes and assistance.
CHICAGO		Association House			https://www.associationhouse.org/home/services/workforce-development/	Technology center that offers beginner's computer courses, Microsoft training, and open lab
CHICAGO		Literacy Chicago			https://www.literacychicago.org/apply-and-enroll.html	Offers classes in digital literacy, adult literacy, GED, and ESL classes



12. Illinois County Clerks Offices

County clerks are locally elected officials who are responsible for maintaining the public records of their county.

County	City	Address	Address 2	Zip	Phone Number	Email/Website
ADAMS	Quincy	507 Vermont St	P.O. Box 1169	62301	(217) 277-2150	countyclerk@co.adams.il.us www.co.adams.il.us/county_clerk_vitalrecords.html
ALEXANDER	Cairo	2000 Washington Ave		62914	(618) 734-7000	acc@lazeretwireless.net
BOND	Greenville	203 W College		62246	(618) 664-0449	countyclerk@bondcountylil.com
BOONE	Belvidere	1212 Logan Ave	Suite 103	61008	(815) 544-3103	www.boonecountylil.org/department/clerk
BROWN	Mount Sterling	200 Court St	Room 6	62353	(217) 773-3421 (option 6)	ilham1009@hotmail.com
BUREAU	Princeton	700 S Main St	Suite 103	61356	(815) 875-2014	www.bureaucountyclerk.com/vitals.html
CALHOUN	Hardin	106 N County Road		62047	(618) 576-2351	calhouncoclk@frontiernet.net
CARROLL	Mount Carroll	301 N Main	P.O. Box 152	61053	(815) 244-0221	ccclerk3@carroll-county.net , www.carroll-county.net/
CASS	Virginia	P.O. Box 167		62691	(217) 452-7217 (option 4)	casselection@casscomm.com
CHAMPAIGN	Urbana	1776 E Washington St		61802	(217) 384-3720	mail@champaigncountyclerk.com
CHRISTIAN	Taylorville	101 S Main St	Suite 2	62568	(217) 824-4969	
CLARK	Marshall	501 Archer Ave		62441	(217) 826-8311	clerk@clarkcountylil.org
CLAY	Louisville	Courthouse, Room 106	P.O. Box 160	62858	(618) 665-3626	claycoclk@wabash.net
CLINTON	Caryle	850 Fairfax St	P.O. Box 308	62231	(618) 594-2464 (option 3)	
COLES	Charleston	651 Jackson Ave	Room 122	61920	(217) 348-0501	countyclerk@co.coles.il.us
COOK	Chicago	50 W Washington Concourse Level -25	P.O. Box 641070	60664-1070	(312) 603-7788	
CRAWFORD	Robinson	100 Douglas	P.O. Box 602	62454	(618) 546-1212	plycan@crawfordcountycentral.com
CUMBERLAND	Toledo	P.O. Box 146		62468	(217) 849-2631	clerk-recorder@cumberland.co.org
DEKALB	Sycamore	110 E Sycamore St		60178	(815) 895-7149	
DEWITT	Clinton	201 W Washington St	P.O. Box 439	61727	(217) 935-7780	dsmith@dewittcountylil.com
DOUGLAS	Tuscola	401 S Center	P.O. Box 467	61953	(217) 253-2411	clerk@douglascountylil.com
DUPAGE	Wheaton	421 N County Farm Road	P.O. Box 1028	60187	(630) 682-7035	
EDGAR	Paris	115 W Court St	Room J	61944	(217) 466-7433	eccr@edgarcounty-il.gov

County	City	Address	Address 2	Zip	Phone Number	Email/Website
EDWARDS	Albion	50 E Main St	Suite 12	62806	(618) 445-2115	
EFFINGHAM	Effingham	101 N Fourth St	Suite 201	62401	(217) 342-6535	countyclerk@co.effingham.il.us
FAYETTE	Vandalia	221 S Seventh St	P.O. Box 401	62471	(618) 283-5000	fayettecountyclerk@gmail.com
FORD	Paxton	200 W State St	Room 101	60957	(217) 379-2721	clerk@fordcountycourthouse.com
FRANKLIN	Benton	Courthouse		62812	(618) 438-3221	frcoclrk@franklincounty.il.org
FULTON	Lewistown	100 N Main		61542	(309) 547-3041 ext. 118	lmikulich@fultonco.org
GALLATIN	Shawneetown	P.O. Box 550		62984	(618) 269-3025	
GREENE	Carrollton	519 N Main St		62016	(217) 942-5443	grctyclk@hotmail.com
GRUNDY	Morris	111 E Washington St, Rom 12	P.O. Box 675	60450-0675	(815) 941-3222	jphillips@grundycyco.org
HAMILTON	McLeansboro	Courthouse		62859	(618) 643-2721	coclerk@hamiltonco.us
HANCOCK	Carthage	P.O. Box 39		62321	(217) 357-3911	
HARDIN	Elizabethtown	P.O. Box 187		62931	(618) 287-2251	hcdenton@shawnee_link.net
HENDERSON	Oquawka	P.O. Box 308		61469	(309) 867-2911	coclerk@mchsi.com
HENRY	Cambridge	307 W Center St		61238	(309) 937-3575 ext. 1	blink@henrycty.com
IROQUOIS	Watska	1001 E Grant St		60970	(815) 432-6960	
JACKSON	Murphysboro	1001 Walnut St		62966	(618) 687-7360	
JASPER	Newton	204 W Washington	Suite 2	62448	(618) 783-3124	
JEFFERSON	Mount Vernon	100 S 10th St	Room 105	62864	(618) 244-8020	jeffcoclark@jeffil.us
JERSEY	Jerseyville	200 N Lafayette, Suite 1	P.O. Box 216	62052	(618) 498-5571 ext. 115	countyclerk@jerseycounty-il.us
JO DAVIESS	Galena	330 N Bench St		61036	(815) 777-0161	countyclerk@jodavieess.org
JOHNSON	Vienna	400 Court Square	P.O. Box 96	62995	(618) 658-3611	
KANE	Geneva	719 S Batavia Ave	Building B	60134	(630) 232-5950	
KANKAKEE	Kankakee	189 E Court St		60901	(815) 937-2990	countyclerk@k3county.net
KENDALL	Yorkville	County Office Building	111 W Fox St	60560	(630) 553-4104	
KNOX	Galesburg	200 S Cherry St		61401	(309) 345-3815	serickson@co.knox.il.us
LAKE	Waukegan	18 N County St	Attn: Vital Records	60085	(847) 377-2411	vitalrecords@lakecountyil.gov
LASALLE	Ottawa	LaSalle County Government Center, Room 161	707 Etna Road	61350	(815) 434-8202	countyclerk@lasallecounty.org
LAWRENCE	Lawrenceville	1100 State St		62439	(618) 943-2346	
LEE	Dixon	112 E Second St	P.O. Box 329	61021	(815) 288-3309	
LIVINGSTON	Pontiac	County Courthouse	112 W Madison St	61764	(815) 844-2006	
LOGAN	Lincoln	Courthouse, Room 20	601 Broadway St	62656	(217) 732-4148	
MACON	Decatur	141 S Main St	Room 104	62523-1210	(217) 424-1305	
MACOUPIN	Carlinville	P.O. Box 107		62626	(217) 854-3214	pete.duncan@macoupincountyil.gov

County	City	Address	Address 2	Zip	Phone Number	Email/Website
MADISON	Edwardsville	157 N Main St, Suite 109	P.O. Box 218	62025	(618) 692-6290	
MARION	Salem	P.O. Box 637		62881	(618) 548-3400	jmarioncountyclerk@ussonet.net
MARSHALL	Lacon	122 N Prairie	P.O. Box 328	61540-0328	(309) 246-0328	
MASSON	Havana	P.O. Box 77		62644	(309) 543-6661	cclerk@gritis.net
MASSAC	Metropolis	P.O. Box 429		62960	(618) 524-5213	
MCDONOUGH	Macomb	#1 Courthouse Square		61455	(309) 833-2474	
MCHENRY	Woodstock	2200 N Seminary Ave		60098	(815) 334-4242	countyclerk@co.mchenry.il.us
MCLEAN	Bloomington	115 E Washington St, Room 102	P.O. Box 2400	61702-2400	(309) 888-5190	kathy.michael@mcleanco.il.gov
MENARD	Petersburg	P.O. Box 465		62675	(217) 632-2415	gtreseler@co.menard.il.us
MERCER	Aledo	100 SE Third St		61231	(309) 582-7021	
MONROE	Waterloo	100 S Main St		62298	(618) 939-8681 ext. 306	moclerk@htc.net
MONTGOMERY	Hillsboro	#1 Courthouse Square	P.O. Box 595	62049	(217) 532-9530	sandyleitheiser@hotmail.com
MORGAN	Jacksonville	300 W State St	P.O. Box 1387	62650	(217) 243-8581	
MOULTRIE	Sullivan	10 S Main St	Suite 6	61951	(217) 728-4389	ctyclerk@moultrie.com
OGLE	Oregon	105 S 5th St	Suite 104	61061	(815) 732-1110	
PEORIA	Peoria	324 Main St	Room 101	61602	(309) 672-6059	
PERRY	Pinckneyville	3764 State Rte 13/127	P.O. Box 438	62274	(618) 357-5116	
PIATT	Monticello	101 W Washington St	P.O. Box 558	61856	(217) 762-9487	countyclerk@piattcounty.org
PIKE	Pittsfield	121 E Washington St		62363	(217) 285-6812	donnieapps@adams.net
POPE	Golconda	400 Main St	P.O. Box 216	62938	(618) 683-4466	
PULASKI	Mound City	500 Illinois Ave	P.O. Box 118	62963	(618) 748-9360	juliesauerbrunn@yahoo.com
PUTNAM	Hennepin	120 N Fourth St		61327	(815) 925-7129	dankuhn@mchsi.com
RANDOLPH	Chester	#1 Taylor St	Room 202	62233	(618) 826-5000	
RICHLAND	Olney	103 W Main St		62450	(618) 392-3111	
ROCK ISLAND	Rock Island	1504 Third Ave		61201	(309) 786-4451	
SALINE	Harrisburg	10 E Poplar St		62946	(618) 253-8197	
SANGAMON	Springfield	200 S 9th St	Room 101	62701	(217) 753-6700	vitalrecords@co.sangamon.il.us
SCHUYLER	Rushville	102 S Congress	P.O. Box 200	62681	(217) 322-4734	clerk85@schuylercounty.org
SCOTT	Winchester	35 E Market St		62694	(217) 742-3178	scottcoclerk@frontier.com
SHELBY	Shelbyville	P.O. Box 230		62565	(217) 774-4421	
ST CLAIR	Belleville	10 Public Square		62220	(618) 277-6600	
STARK	Toulon	130 W Main St	P.O. Box 67	61483	(309) 286-5911	val@starkco.il.gov
STEPHENSON	Freeport	15 N Galena Ave	Suite 500	61032	(815) 235-8289	

County	City	Address	Address 2	Zip	Phone Number	Email/Website
TAZEWELL	Pekin	McKenzie Building 2nd Floor	Fourth and Court Streets	61554	(309) 477-2264	
UNION	Jonesboro	309 W Market St	Room 116	62952	(618) 833-5711	fbartruff@unioncountyil.gov
VERMILLION	Danville	Courthouse Annex	6 N Vermillion St	61832	(217) 554-1900	ccvital@vercounty.org
WABASH	Mount Carmel	401 Market St	P.O. Box 277	62863	(618) 262-4561	
WARREN	Monmouth	100 W Broadway		61462	(309) 734-8592	warrencountyclerk@yahoo.com
WASHINGTON	Nashville	101 E St. Louis St		62263	(618) 327-4800, ext. 300	wccclerk2@hotmail.com
WAYNE	Fairfield	P.O. Box 187		62837	(618) 842-5182	countyclerk@waynecountygovil.com
WHITE	Carmi	P.O. Box 339		62821	(618) 382-7211	
WHITESIDE	Morrison	200 E Knox St		61270	(815) 772-5189	
WILL	Joliet	302 N Chicago St		60432	(815) 740-4615	
WILLIAMSON	Marion	407 N Monroe St	Suite 119	62959	(618) 997-1301, ext. 100	
WINNEBAGO	Rockford	404 Elm St		61101	(815) 319-4250	
WOODFORD	Eureka	115 N Main	Suite 202	61530	(309) 467-2822	

SECTION Five:

Forms

5



Application for Illinois Birth Record

<p>Birth Certificate - Long Form Accepted for all legal use, passport and other governmental agencies (contains the most available information) \$15.00 first copy \$2.00 each additional copy Amount enclosed \$ _____ for _____ total copies</p>	<p>Birth Certificate - Short Form Basic birth record information, may not be accepted by all governmental agencies \$10.00 first copy \$2.00 each additional copy Amount enclosed \$ _____ for _____ total copies</p>
<p>Foreign Birth / Administrative Foreign Birth Record Birth record of adopted person born outside of the United States who were re-adopted in Illinois \$5.00 each copy Amount enclosed \$ _____ for _____ total copies</p>	<p>Genealogical Uncertified records for a birth 75 years and older (not for legal use) \$10.00 first copy \$2.00 each additional copy Amount enclosed \$ _____ for _____ total copies</p>

DO NOT SEND CASH — Make check or money order payable to ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (IDPH).

For records prior to 1916, contact the County Clerk in the County where the birth took place

BLANK SPACE FOR OFFICE USE		BIRTH CERTIFICATE NUMBER IF KNOWN (Not Required)	
FULL NAME ON BIRTH RECORD (First, Middle, Last) As listed on Birth Record			
DATE OF ILLINOIS BIRTH (Month, Day, Year)	PLACE OF ILLINOIS BIRTH (City and or County)	SEX	
MOTHER / CO-PARENT'S NAME (Maiden Name Before First Marriage Required) As listed on Birth Record			
FATHER / CO-PARENT'S NAME As listed on Birth Record			

NOTE: Birth Certificates are confidential records and copies can only be issued to a person entitled to receive them. The application must indicate the requestor's relationship to the person listed on the record and indicate the intended use of the document. For additional information please see reverse side or visit our website at www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/birth-death-other-records.

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REQUESTING COPIES:		REQUESTER RELATIONSHIP (Mother, Father, Legal Guardian etc.)		
REQUESTER ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
INTENDED USE	REQUESTER PHONE NUMBER	REQUESTER EMAIL ADDRESS		
MAIL TO ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT THAN ABOVE		CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
SIGNATURE REQUIRED			DATE	

IF THE BIRTH DID NOT OCCUR IN ILLINOIS YOU MUST CONTACT THE STATE WHERE THE BIRTH TOOK PLACE

<p>Complete Form IN FULL, Sign, Include Copy of Identification & Proper Fee MAIL TO: IDPH Vital Records, 925 E. Ridgely Avenue, Springfield, IL 62702-2737 For additional information - www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/birth-death-other-records</p>
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IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to process your request through this office we require identification to be provided

A photo copy of a NON-EXPIRED, GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION. Such as a Driver's License, Passport, FOID card, Active Duty Military ID, Veterans Administration Issued Photo Medical Card, or a Federally issued Tribal ID card. ALL identification MUST have a photo, identifying information such as name, date of birth and an issue and expiration date. If any information is contained on both sides of the ID, ensure a copy of both sides is made.

If your ID has expired and has an extension sticker, ensure a copy of the sticker is also made.

If your ID has expired LESS THAN 6 MONTHS, please include one additional document showing your name and current address created within the last 6 months. Examples include legal mail such as a bill or financial statement sent to your current legal address.

If your ID has expired MORE THAN 6 MONTHS or you DO NOT HAVE VALID ID, you will be required to submit TWO forms of documentation with your name and current legal address listed. Documentation in lieu of an ID must be dated within the last 6 months.

First Item – You must provide one or more of the following; Medical Card, Auto Insurance Card, Voter's Registration Card, Paycheck Stub with Imprinted FULL information, Bank, Financial, or a Credit Card Statement.

Second Item - You must provide a piece of current mail you have received showing your full name and current legal mailing address. Examples include current utility bill, phone bill or bill for services you have received. You may submit multiple pieces of mail however ensure they are from different Agencies or businesses.

If you are currently incarcerated in a State or Federal facility, you will need to submit a dated copy of your prison intake or offender summary sheet containing your photo, name, date of birth and facility information.

If you have been RELEASED from prison WITHIN THE LAST 6 MONTHS, you may provide a copy of your release papers along with a copy of your prison photo ID. Please note that the release papers MUST show an address that you have been released to that matches the address you are using with this office.

If you are a State, Federal Agency or a Hospital, you may submit a copy of your work photo ID badge. The badge MUST have a photo, name, name of the Agency and an issue and expiration date along with any supportive paperwork required for the request. If your work ID does not meet the requirements, a copy of your government issued photo ID, Drivers License or Passport must also be included.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE

ELIGIBILITY TO OBTAIN AN ILLINOIS BIRTH RECORD

Before a request for a copy of a birth record can be considered you must specify your eligibility to obtain it. ILCS410/535/25(4) states that copies of birth records may only be issued upon; The order of a court of competent jurisdiction; The specific written request by the person listed on the record if of legal age (18 or older) or by a parent or other legal representative* of the person to whom the record of birth relates; The specific written request by a Department of State, Municipal Corporation or the Federal Government

*77 Illinois AdmCode 500.10 refers to "Legal Representative" as either an attorney acting on behalf of a person named on the birth record; An agent authorized by power of attorney; A Court-appointed representative; An agent with written, notarized authorization from a person named on the birth record for the purpose of obtaining a copy for that person; Any other agent, approved by the State Registrar as a legal representative.

NOTE: Any person who, willfully and knowingly uses or attempts to use, or furnishes to another for use, for any purpose of deception, any certificate, record, report, certification or certified copy thereof so made, altered, amended, or mutilated; or, Any person who with the intention to deceive, willfully uses or attempts to use any certification or certified copy of a record of birth knowing that such certification or certified copy was issued upon a record that is false in whole or in part or that relates to the birth of another person is guilty of a Class 4 felony in the State of Illinois (ILCS 410/535/27 (f)).

Illinois Law (ILCS 410/535/25 (1)) requires advanced payment for the search of death record files.

Fees are subject to current Illinois Statute and administrative policy and may be non-refundable.



KAREN A. YARBROUGH | COOK COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

VITAL RECORDS DIVISION | P.O. BOX 641070, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60664-1070

Telephone: 312.603.7788 | Fax: 312.603.4899 | Web Address: cookcountyclerk.com

BIRTH RECORD REQUEST FORM

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY TO ENSURE ACCURATE FULFILLMENT OF YOUR REQUEST

Number of Copies (Above)

First Name (At Birth) Above

Middle Name (At Birth) Above

Last Name (At Birth) Above

Date of Birth (Include Month, Day & Year) Above

Place of Birth (City, Town or Village in Cook County) Above

First Name of Biological/Adopted Mother (At Birth) Above

Last Name (Maiden) of Biological/Adopted Mother (At Birth) Above

First Name of Biological/Adopted Father (At Birth) Above [Optional]

Last Name of Biological/Adopted Father (At Birth) Above [Optional]

SPECIAL NOTICE TO THE SUBMITTER OF THIS BIRTH RECORD REQUEST FORM

Pursuant to §410 ILCS 535/25(4)(b), "a certified copy of a birth record is ONLY available to persons with a direct and tangible interest in the record, such as one's self, parent, guardian or legal representative. Anyone who willfully and knowingly uses or attempts to use any certificate and/or certification for the purposes of deception is guilty of a Class 4 Felony, as outlined in §410 ILCS 535/27(c)(f), which is punishable by up to three years in prison.

First Name of Submitter Above

Last Name of Submitter Above

Mailing Address of the Submitter (Street Number & Name) Above

Mailing City, Town or Village of Submitter Above

Mailing State and Zip Code of Submitter Above

Submitter Phone Number Above

Submitter's Relationship to the Person/Birth Certificate Requested

Please indicate below how you would like to receive the requested Birth Certificate. If requesting the document be mailed please include 1) A Check or Money Order; 2) A Photocopy of YOUR Photo ID; and 3) A Self-Addressed Envelope.

I would like the requested Birth Certificate to be:

Mailed to me at the above address

Filled while I wait

Filled and ready when I return later

By submitting the above request for a Birth Certificate, I do hereby understand and acknowledge that I have a "direct and tangible interest" in the above record, and if and when received, I will NOT use that record for the purposes of willfully or knowingly deceiving anyone.

Signature of Submitter Above

Date This Form was Executed and Submitted Above

Please see the back of this form for further details



KAREN A. YARBROUGH | COOK COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

VITAL RECORDS DIVISION | P.O. BOX 641070, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60664-1070

Telephone: 312.603.7788 | Fax: 312.603.4899 | Web Address: cookcountyclerk.com

BIRTH RECORD REQUEST FORM INSTRUCTIONS

To obtain a copy of a birth record from the Cook County Clerk's Office, please read the following: Certified Copies of Birth Records cost \$15 for the **FIRST** copy, and \$4 for **EACH ADDITIONAL COPY** of the **SAME RECORD**. The cost is **NON-REFUNDABLE** if **NO RECORD IS FOUND**, and/or, a **CERTIFICATION THAT NO RECORD WAS FOUND** is issued.

THERE ARE 4 CONVENIENT & EASY WAYS TO OBTAIN A BIRTH RECORD

1. By Mail

Fill out this form and mail your request to:

Bureau of Vital Records
P.O. BOX 641070
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60664-1070

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN MAILING

- Complete form on the reverse side and include:
 - A Check or Money Order payable to Cook County Clerk
 - Temporary or Starter Checks are NOT ACCEPTED
 - Name on check MUST be the same person who is entitled and legally-authorized to the Birth Record
 - Photocopy of government-issued photo identification (ex. Driver's License, Passport, or State Issued ID)
 - A Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope

2. By Phone

Call our Vital Check Hotline at (866) 252-8974

Please note that a processing fee of \$12.45 MAY apply for phone orders.

3. By Visiting a Local Currency Exchange

Call (847) 759-8905 for Currency Exchange locations and hours.

Please note that a processing fee of \$5 applies to Currency Exchange orders.

4. By Visiting your Local Cook County Clerk's Office

50 W. Washington St. (Pedway Level, underneath the Daley Center) (Concourse Level - Rm 25)

Or visit one our FIVE Suburban Satellite Offices (which are located as follows):

Bridgeview	Markham	Maywood	Rolling Meadows	Skokie
Southwest Suburbs Bridgeview Courthouse 10220 S. 76th Ave, Room 238 Bridgeview, Illinois 60455	South Suburbs Markham Courthouse 16501 S. Kedzie, Room 238 Markham, Illinois 60426	West Suburbs Maywood Courthouse 1311 Maybrook Sq., Rm 104 Maywood, Illinois 60153	Northwest Suburbs Rolling Meadows Courthouse 2121 Euclid Ave., Room 238 Rolling Meadows, IL 60008	North Suburbs Skokie Courthouse 5600 W. Old Orchard Rm. 149 Skokie, Illinois 60077
☎ (708) 974-6150 (main)	☎ (708) 232-4150 (main)	☎ (708) 865-6010 (main)	☎ (847) 818-2850 (main)	☎ (847) 470-7233 (main)

Thank you for your interest in the requested Birth Record. We look forward to servicing your request as accurately and efficiently as possible. We greatly appreciate your business. **Cook County Clerk, Karen A. Yarbrough**

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Application for a Social Security Card

Form Approved
OMB No. 0600-0005

1	NAME TO BE SHOWN ON CARD	First	Full Middle Name	Last
	FULL NAME AT BIRTH IF OTHER THAN ABOVE	First	Full Middle Name	Last
	OTHER NAMES USED			

2 Social Security number previously assigned to the person listed in item 1

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3 **PLACE OF BIRTH**
(Do Not Abbreviate) City _____ State or Foreign Country _____

4 **DATE OF BIRTH** MM/DD/YYYY _____

Office Use Only FCI

5 **CITIZENSHIP**
(Check One)

U.S. Citizen Legal Alien Allowed To Work Legal Alien Not Allowed To Work (See Instructions On Page 3) Other (See Instructions On Page 3)

6 **ETHNICITY**
Are You Hispanic or Latino? (Your Response is Voluntary)
 Yes No

7 **RACE**
Select One or More (Your Response is Voluntary)

Native Hawaiian American Indian Other Pacific Islander
 Alaska Native Black/African American White
 Asian

8 **SEX**

Male Female

9 **A. PARENT/ MOTHER'S NAME AT HER BIRTH**

First	Full Middle Name	Last
-------	------------------	------

B. PARENT/ MOTHER'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (See instructions for 9B on Page 3)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Unknown

10 **A. PARENT/ FATHER'S NAME**

First	Full Middle Name	Last
-------	------------------	------

B. PARENT/ FATHER'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (See instructions for 10B on Page 3)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Unknown

11 Has the person listed in item 1 or anyone acting on his/her behalf ever filed for or received a Social Security number card before?

Yes (If "yes" answer questions 12-13) No Don't Know (If "don't know," skip to question 14.)

12 Name shown on the most recent Social Security card issued for the person listed in item 1

First	Full Middle Name	Last
-------	------------------	------

13 Enter any different date of birth if used on an earlier application for a card

MM/DD/YYYY _____

14 **TODAY'S DATE** MM/DD/YYYY _____

15 **DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER** Area Code _____ Number _____

16 **MAILING ADDRESS**
(Do Not Abbreviate)

Street Address, Apt. No., PO Box, Rural Route No. _____
City _____ State/Foreign Country _____ ZIP Code _____

I declare under penalty of perjury that I have examined all the information on this form, and on any accompanying statements or forms, and it is true and correct to the best to my knowledge.

17 **YOUR SIGNATURE** _____

18 **YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PERSON IN ITEM 1 IS:**
 Self Natural Or Adoptive Parent Legal Guardian Other Specify _____

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE (FOR SSA USE ONLY)

NPN	DOC	NTI	CAN	ITV
PBC	EVI	EVA	EVC	PRA
NWR	DNR	UNIT		

EVIDENCE SUBMITTED _____

SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EMPLOYEE(S) REVIEWING EVIDENCE AND/OR CONDUCTING INTERVIEW _____

DATE _____

DCL _____ DATE _____

Peter Smith
123 Main Street, Chicago, IL 60000
petersmith@gmail.com
312.555.5555

EXPERIENCE

University of Illinois 2011-2014

ESL Instructor

- Served as a volunteer ESL instructor in Danville, Illinois in order to provide a much needed ESL class within the community
- Developed and taught lesson plans and activities in a multi instructor class which utilized CLT (communicative language teaching) and TBLT (task based learning teaching)
- Shared instructor responsibilities with seven (7) other instructors in a class of 10-12 students twice a week for a total of six (6) hours a week with beginner intermediate proficiency level students
- Taught and assessed reading and writing for communicating effectively in personal and workplace settings
- Planed and delivered organized, creative, task-based lessons to meet curriculum proficiency goals
- Provided corrective language feedback on oral and written production
- Developed task-based writing activities for a cook book
- Served on curriculum and hiring committees

University of Illinois 2011-2014

Chicago/Community Anti-Violence Education (CAVE)

- Helped design and implement a peer driven anti-violence program that empowers incarcerated men through mentoring, education, and character building to return to their communities as peace makers.

Danville Correctional Center (Clinical Services) 2011-2014

Guest Speaker/Substance Abuse Instructor

- Designed and presented lessons relating to substance abuse prevention to students in substance abuse classes made available through a clinical services program at Danville Correctional Center

Danville Correctional Center (Clinical Services) 2010-2011

Peaceful Solutions Educator

- Designed and presented lessons focused on peaceful solutions for conflict resolution

EDUCATION:

- Governor State University (Bachelor’s Interdisciplinary Studies anticipated June 2016)
University Park, IL.
- CAAP Certification (Certified Associate’s Addiction Professional) Illinois Alcohol and Other
Drug Abuse
- Professional Certification Association Inc. 2012
- Substance Abuse Counselor Training Certificate 2012
- Associate’s Degree in General Education, Carl Sandberg College, Galesburg, IL. 2001
- Business Management Certificate; Carl Sandberg College, Galesburg, IL. 2000
- Cumulative GPA 3.52
 - 3.57 (University of Illinois)
 - 3.62 (Danville Area Community College)
 - 3.38 (Carl Sandburg College)
- Relevant courses:
 - Philosophy of Education (University of Illinois)
 - Social and Cultural Foundations of Education (University of Illinois)
 - Theories of Personality (Carl Sandburg College)
 - Psychology of Personality (Danville Area Community College)

SKILLS:

- Fluent in Spanish and English, and beginning proficiency in Italian
- Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint

500 Main Street
Anytown, IL 60606
555-555-5555
JohnJohnson@email.com

John Albert Johnson

WORK EXPERIENCE

Adult Learning Center, Our Town, IL

English Teacher. Coordinate community outreach efforts and administer institutional examinations.

February 2015 – Present

Friendly Temp Agency, Our Town, IL

Various assignments involving administrative and clerical roles.

March 2013 – December 2014

Illinois Central Community College, Decatur, IL

ESL Teacher, peer tutor.

August 2010 - January 2013

EDUCATION

Associates Degree, awarded 2011

Illinois Central Community College

Education course work:

- Advanced mathematics
- Linguistics for language teachers
- Political and historical perspectives in Education
- Sociology of Education and Philosophy of Education

Certificate, Peer Counseling

Illinois Central Community College

2012

Certificate, Horticulture

Northern Illinois Community College

2009

REFERENCES

Sharon Mendez, Coordinator
Adult Learning Center
1010 Central Street
Our Town, IL 60000
sharonmendez@email.com
555.555.5555

William Smith, Director
Friendly Temp Agency
40 North Ave.
Our Town, IL 66666
williamsmith@email.com
555.555.5555

JOHN SMITH

123 W. Main St. #5, Peoria, IL 61614
john.smith22@gmail.com | 300-600-1234

OBJECTIVE | My goal is to become associated with a company where I can utilize my skills and gain further experience while enhancing the company's productivity and reputation.

SKILLS & ABILITIES

Technical

- Familiarity with common commercial kitchen equipment and sanitation and cleaning processes
- Knowledge of special diet preparation (vegan, kosher, halal, etc.)
- Visual design for advertising commercial and private events

Communication

- Possess excellent conflict resolution skills and ability to work effectively with people from a wide range of backgrounds
- Published writer in both creative and academic venues
- Tutored adult learners one-on-one and in group settings in writing and math with high level of success

Organizational

- Efficiently catalogued and maintained collection for a small community library and created displays to communicate services and events to patrons
- Familiarity with inventory, ordering, and stocking processes
- Proven leadership as co-founder of a community theater troupe

EXPERIENCE | **TEACHING ASSISTANT, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION STATE OF ILLINOIS**
DECEMBER 2015-DECEMBER 2016

Tutored students in basic literacy and numeracy for the Test of Adult Basic Education, graded student work, kept confidential student records, and other duties as assigned

SPECIAL DIET COOK STATE OF ILLINOIS
APPROX. 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE 1997-2015

Operated commercial ovens, fryers, steam pots, and other equipment, prepared special diets according to religious or medical specifications, served meals in a high capacity cafeteria

EDUCATION**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA-CHAMPAIGN – 4.0 GPA**

- Upper-division courses in literature, communication, and theater

DANVILLE AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE – 4.0 GPA

- Earned over 60 credits in undergraduate coursework toward an Associate's degree

**VOLUNTEER
EXPERIENCE****EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT, RESOURCE ROOM WORKER UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA-CHAMPAIGN**

JULY 2012-MARCH 2014

Assisted students with library needs, assisted tutors with tech support, conducted basic library circulation work, kept rooms cleaned, stocked, and well-organized

**PUBLICATIONS
AND AWARDS**

"Rhetorical Listening" (essay). *Intertext*, 2014.

"Practicing Openness in Prison Education: A Collaborative Inquiry into Empathic Pedagogy and the Politics of Compassion in Writing Center Practice." Co-Authored paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Indianapolis, IN. March, 2014.

"Prison Writing" (essay). Prison Writing Networks, workshop at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Indianapolis, IN. March, 2014.

"(Untitled Poem)". *The Public I*, 13(3), 2013.

"Reflections on a Monday Mourning" (essay). *Winter Harvest*, Summer 2012.

Education Justice Project Creative Writing Award in Poetry, 2012

Martha Webber Creative Nonfiction Award, 2013

REFERENCES**MAGGIE JONES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-SPRINGFIELD**

2116 First St., Springfield, IL 62259
j.ones@gmail.com 616-228-1234

**FRED THOMAS, GENERAL MANAGER
HUDSUCKER FOUNDATION**

1732 Nebraska Ave Peoria, IL 61614
f.thomas@gmail.com 303-686-3287

**MIKE JENKINS, CONSTRUCTION WORKER LOCAL 722
FOUNTAINHEAD TOWER**

365 Rand Blvd. Chicago, IL 60181
Orwell.1984@gmail.com 310-788-7374

Jeff J. Jefferson
(555) 902-0704
jeffjefferson@yahoo.com

Brilliant communicator, possessing attention-demanding presence, leadership skills, and the ability to positively impact any situation

Education:	Chicago State University	Chicago, IL
	Psychology Major	Present
	Kennedy-King College	Chicago, IL
	Physical Education Major	2014
	University of Illinois – Education Justice Project	Urbana, IL
	Social Justice Major	2011
	Lake Land College	Mattoon, IL
	• <i>Associates in Science</i>	2006
	Psychology/Sociology Major	
	• <i>Small Business Management Certification</i>	2004

Accomplishments:	Leadership	
	Just Leadership USA	
	• <i>Emerging Leader for Returning Citizens</i>	2015
	National Council for Student Leadership	
	• <i>Certified Future Leader</i>	2014
	Kennedy-King College	
	• <i>SGA Vice-President/ Senator</i>	2013 – 2014
	• <i>Student Ambassador/ Dean’s List</i>	2013 – 2014
	• <i>Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society Inductee</i>	2014
	Author –	
• <i>Twice Published via the U of I Education Justice Project</i>		
<i>“Why Momma Cry” – Beyond the Pen</i>	2013	
<i>“Visiting Day” – Winter Harvest</i>	2012	
<i>Writing for Change Symposium</i>	2010	

Community:**Motivational Speaker/Social Justice/Community Activist**

- **University of Chicago** – *Prison Abolition Panel* – Panelist **2016**
- **Daily Illini of UIUC** – *Published Article: Education Justice Project Frees Incarcerated Minds* **2016**
- **F.O.R.C.E.** – *Legislation for Removal of Lifetime Employment Barriers Against Felons* – Advocate **2016**
- **Education Justice Project** – *EJP Expo* – Panelist **2016**
- **Community Renewal Society** – *Occupy Palm Sunday Protest Against Police Brutality* – Organizer & Activist **2016**
- **Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus Town Hall** – Activist **2016**
- **Chicago Town Hall** – *Advocated Against Committee Appointing Chicago Police Superintendent* – Activist **2016**
- **Lequan McDonald Protest** – *Interviewed by NBC Affiliate* **2015**
- **Stop Mass Incarceration Movement** – *Marched in Bud Billiken Parade to Protest Police Brutality* – Participant **2015**
- **Education Justice Project** – *Symposium on Higher Education in Prison University of Illinois* – Moderator **2014**
- **Education Justice Project** – *Reception: Hosted by the President of the University of Illinois* – Presenter **2014**
- **Education Justice Project** – *FACE Event* – Guest Speaker **2014**
- **Roosevelt University** – *Life Skills Re-Entry Program* – Guest Speaker and Volunteer **2011 – 2014**
- **Prison Justice Project** – *Forum on Social Justice* – Panelist **2013**
- **Life Builders United** – *Peace Keepers Back 2 School Rally* – Guest Speaker and Volunteer **2013**
- **Safer Foundation** – *Job Readiness Program* – Volunteer **2013**

MARY GREEN

123 First Street
City, ST 20202
100.200.3000
MaryGreen@gmail.com

September 10, 2012

Sally Jenkins
ABC Company
123 Main St.
City, ST 20202

Dear Ms. Jenkins,

I am writing to inquire about possible openings at ABC Company for a research assistant. I am interested in a senior level position offering the opportunity for travel and advanced research assignments.

As a professional administrative assistant with excellent research skills, I am eager to contribute my abilities and experience to ABC Company. Given my extensive training and background, I believe I can help ABC Company meet its goal of providing only the most accurate and timely information to its clients.

Please find enclosed my resume and a list of my references. Feel free to call me at 100.200.3000 to arrange a time to meet. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mary Green

**MEN WHO ARE AGE 18 THROUGH 25 ARE
REQUIRED TO REGISTER
and can do so online at:
www.sss.gov
or they can complete this form.**

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS FORM

- Read the Privacy Act Statement.
- Print your information in BLACK INK and CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY.

Block 1: Print your date of birth. Use a two-number designation for the month and day and use a four-number designation for the year.

Block 2: Place an X in the correct box.

Block 3: Provide your Social Security Number if you have one since it is mandatory to include this information. Leave this space blank if you do not yet have a social security number.

Block 4: Print your full name as outlined on the card. Include any suffix (such as Jr., or III), in the designated box, if applicable.

Block 5: Print your current mailing address as outlined on the card. Use the two-letter State abbreviation and enter your ZIP Code.

Block 6: Print your current electronic mailing address (email) as outlined on the card.

Block 7: Print today's date. Use a two-number designation for the month and day and use a four-number designation for the year.

Block 8: Provide your current phone number.

Block 9: Sign your name in the box.

Mail the completed form to:

Selective Service System
Registration Information Office
P.O. Box 94739
Palatine, IL 60094-4739

Selective Service will send you a Registration Acknowledgment in the mail. If you do not receive a Registration Acknowledgment within 90 days, it is your responsibility to contact the Selective Service at 847-688-6888.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

The Military Selective Service Act, Selective Service regulations, and the President's Proclamation on Registration require that you provide the indicated information, including your Social Security Number if you have one. The principal purpose of the requested information is to establish or verify your registration with the Selective Service System. This information may be furnished to other government agencies for the stated purposes on a selective basis. See Systems of Records SSS-9 <https://www.sss.gov/Portals/0/PDFs/Systems%20of%20Records%202011.pdf>

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - for review and processing of suspected violations of the Military Selective Service Act, or for perjury, and for defense of a civil action arising from administrative processing under such Act.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE & U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES - for collection and evaluation of data to determine a person's eligibility for entry/reentry into the United States and for U.S. citizenship.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE & U.S. COAST GUARD - for exchange of data concerning registration, classification, induction, and examination of registrants and for identification of prospects for recruiting.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR - to assist veterans in need of data concerning reemployment rights, and for determining eligibility for benefits under the Workforce Investment Act.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - to determine eligibility for student financial assistance.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT & U.S. POSTAL SERVICE - to determine eligibility for employment.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES - to determine a person's proper Social Security Number and for locating parents pursuant to the Child Support Enforcement Act.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS - to provide data which may constitute evidence and facilitate the enforcement of state and local law.

BUREAU OF CENSUS - for the purposes of planning or carrying out a census or survey or related activity pursuant to the provisions of Title 13.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE EMPLOYERS - for exchange of information with employers regarding a registrant who is a conscientious objector for the purpose of placement and supervision of performance of alternative service in lieu of induction into military service.

GENERAL PUBLIC - Registrant's name, Selective Service registration number, date of birth, and classification. (Military Selective Service Act, 50 U.S.C. 3806(h))

Failure to provide the required information may violate the Military Selective Service Act. Conviction for such a violation may result in imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine of not more than \$250,000.

Request for Status Information Letter

This is a fillable form. Please type in ALL CAPS before printing, or PRINT clearly using BLACK INK

Before you fill out and submit this form, please check to verify your registration status with the Selective Service System at <https://www.sss.gov>. If you cannot check or verify your registration online and you are not claiming an exemption, or if you have already received a Status Information Letter (SIL) from us in the past, please call (888) 655-1825.

Please check each item. You should only submit this form if the following are true:

- You have passed your 26th birthday
- You have verified that you are in fact "NOT REGISTERED"
- You were born after December 31, 1959
- You are claiming that you were exempt from the requirement to register
- You were born male or you are transgender (born female)
- You have not received a Status Information Letter from us in the past

YOU MUST PROVIDE AT LEAST ONE RESPONSE to each of the seven (7) Sections below. We cannot process your letter until we receive the required information and documents. Never send originals. KEEP A COPY of this form and any documents or correspondence you send to us.

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

Type or Print Clearly (ALL CAPS) – Must be Readable.

Full Legal Name: _____
First Name Middle Name Last Name(s)

List any other names used (Include multiple last names): _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Month / Day / Year

Current Mailing Address: _____

_____ City State Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

What is your reason for this SIL?

Financial Aid Citizenship Employment Security Clearance Other _____

List each City & State (Country if overseas) where you lived between your 18th and 26th birthdays.
Use a separate sheet if needed:

SECTION 2 - MILITARY

If you served in the U.S. military, attach your proof of military service, such as a copy of your DD Form 214, NGB Form 22, DD Form 4 (if still on active duty), etc. If you attended a service academy or military school, provide a letter from the school or a transcript showing the dates.

To obtain proof of military service (DD Form 214, Official Military Personnel File), visit this website [Proof of military service \(DD Form 214, Official Military Personnel file\)](#).

Have you ever served in the U.S. military or attended a military service academy/school?

Yes (Please Continue) No (SKIP to Section 3)

US Army US Navy US Marine Corps US Air Force US Coast Guard

List dates of active duty service: _____ to _____

List dates of reserve duty service: _____ to _____

Did you attend a military service academy?

The United States Military Academy (USMA)

The United States Naval Academy (USNA)

The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA)

The United States Coast Guard Academy (USCGA)

List dates of attendance: _____ to _____

Were you enrolled in an officer procurement program at a military school or university?

The Citadel

University of North Georgia

Norwich University

Virginia Military Institute

Texas A&M

University of Virginia Polytechnic and State University

List dates of attendance: _____ to _____

SECTION 3 - INCARCERATED / INSTITUTIONALIZED / HOSPITALIZED

Please attach proof if you were CONTINUOUSLY incarcerated, institutionalized, hospitalized, or home confined for the entire period from your 18th through 26th birthdays. If you were released, escaped, or otherwise out of custody for 30 days or more, you do not need to complete this form. Call us at (888) 655-1825.

Were you **CONTINUOUSLY** incarcerated, institutionalized, hospitalized, or home confined for the entire period of time between your 18th and 26th birthdays?

Yes (Please Continue) No (SKIP to Section 4)

Please indicate the type of confinement and provide start and release dates. (Attach separate sheet if necessary)

Institutionalized Incarcerated Hospitalized Home Confined

_____ to _____ _____ to _____ _____ to _____

_____ to _____ _____ to _____ _____ to _____

SECTION 4 - TRANSGENDER

The Military Selective Service Act, including the requirement to register, applies to all individuals who were designated male at birth. If you were born female and have transitioned to male, you must provide a copy of your female birth certificate (or medical documentation to show that a transition has taken place) and legal documentation to show any changes to your name.

My sex at birth was:

Male Female (I have or will transition to male)

SECTION 5 - US CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION STATUS

The Selective Service System does not share any information about an individual's immigration status with outside agencies such as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Are you a citizen of the United States by birth (born in the US, or overseas to qualifying US parents)?

Yes (SKIP to Section 6) No (Please continue)

Did you become a Naturalized Citizen more than 30 days before your 26th birthday?

Yes _____ (SKIP to Section 6) No (Please continue)
Naturalization Date

Did you become a Permanent Resident (Green Card Holder) more than 30 days before your 26th birthday?

Yes _____ (SKIP to Section 6) No (Please continue)
Resident Since Date

You must provide documentation to support your claim. Valid documentation includes the date of entry stamp in your passport or visa, I-94, or I-20 with date of entry stamp, or any other official document that was accepted, stamped, or signed by USCIS and clearly states your arrival date. If you submit the electronic version of the I-94, you must include the accompanying travel history. **Please note, your Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) cannot be used to document the date you arrived in the United States, even if the dates are the same.**

If you entered the United States illegally, undocumented, without inspection, or for any other reason you cannot show proof of your arrival date, you must provide documentation that shows you were living outside of the United States for each year between your 18th and 26th birthdays. This could include school records, employment records, rent and utility receipts, participation in a health insurance plan, tax returns, etc.

When did you first enter the United States and what was your immigration status?

Arrival Date USCIS Status

Was the above date **later than** 30-days before your 26th birthday?

Yes, I was **never** in the United States (at any time, in any status) **prior to** this date. (Skip to Section 6)
 No (Please continue)

Was the above arrival date **earlier than** your 18th birthday **AND** you left the country prior to your 18th birthday **AND** you did not return to the United States (at any time in any status) until **after** the date that was 30 days before your 26th birthday?

Yes, I was never in the United States (at any time, in any status) between my 18th birthday and 30 days before my 26th birthday.

Arrival Date USCIS Status

(Skip to Section 6)

No (Please continue)

For each period shown, you must provide documentation that shows you entered the United States as a valid non-immigrant and that you adhered to the terms of your visa. For example, if you entered the United States as an international student and remained in that status until your 26th birthday, you would need to provide documentation indicating that you were admitted on an F-1 visa, attended school full-time as required, and either left the country or changed status when required. Acceptable documents may include copies of your I-20s, visa, and transcripts, or a letter from the school stating the dates you attended there as a full time international student. If OPT is authorized, the copy of the I-20 must reflect this. If you were on an H-1 visa, you must provide documentation of your arrival/start date and a copy of the approved "Notice of Action", an official company letter showing your authorized dates of employment, or a W2 form showing you worked for the company that sponsored your visa.

The same applies for all non-immigrant statuses held. You must show your arrival/start date and documentation that shows you remained in good status for the entire period. If you left the country, send a copy of the date stamp showing your arrival back

into your country. If you remained in the US and requested a change of status, send a copy of the approved "Notice of Action" you received from USCIS.

You must include any times that you entered the United States illegally or without inspection, (no documentation is necessary). Likewise, you must list any times when you violated the terms of your visa, overstayed your visa, or for any other reason became an undocumented immigrant.

You should provide as much information as possible. We will use the information you send to determine your registration status. For a list of acceptable documents, please see our [List of acceptable documents](#).

Please list your immigration history showing all arrivals, departures and other changes in status, starting with the date of arrival that first put you in the United States between your 18th and 26th birthdays and continuing until you were past your 26th birthday. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

_____ Arrival / Start Date	_____ Good Until Date	_____ Departure / End Date	_____ USCIS Status
_____ Arrival / Start Date	_____ Good Until Date	_____ Departure / End Date	_____ USCIS Status
_____ Arrival / Start Date	_____ Good Until Date	_____ Departure / End Date	_____ USCIS Status

SECTION 6 - REASON FOR FAILURE TO REGISTER BEFORE AGE 26

Provide a written explanation for not registering with the Selective Service System. If you believe you did register, please provide a detailed explanation in the space provided below stating when, where, and how you registered. Include all addresses you may have used at that time.

SECTION 7 - YOUR SIGNATURE

Sign, date, and return this form to the address listed below with copies of ALL supporting documents showing proof of your claim. You may include any other supporting information you would like us to consider. **IMPORTANT:** Do not send original documents. The Selective Service System may not return original documents. You should retain a copy of all documents and correspondence submitted.

Signature

Month / Day / Year

**Selective Service System
ATTN: SIL
PO Box 94638
Palatine, IL 60094-4638**

HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Please print this form. This form cannot be submitted online. Please type all requested information on the form before printing. ATTACH A COPY of all supporting documentation (**DO NOT submit originals**), and mail them to the address provided.
- This form is for use only by men born after December 31, 1959, who are not registered and are now 26 years and older or transgender who were born females.
- This form is not a registration form. Submitting this form will not register you with the Selective Service System.
- We will issue a Status Information Letter based on the information you provide. KEEP the original copy in your permanent files for future reference.
- If you are denied a right, benefit, or privilege because you are not registered, submit a copy of your Status Information Letter from the Selective Service System, and a separate letter in which you explain, to the best of your ability, the reasons for your failure to register to the agency administering the right, benefit, or privilege. That agency, NOT the Selective Service System, will make the final determination regarding your eligibility. The Selective Service System does not approve, disapprove, or make any recommendations to determine your eligibility for any right, benefit, or privilege you are seeking.
- Immigrant men over the age of 31 who are seeking naturalization and who did not register are no longer required to provide a “status information letter” or documentation of their status from the Selective Service System to USCIS. If asked for a status information letter, these men may print a form letter concerning their request for a letter for use with USCIS from <http://www.sss.gov>.



(DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE)
 (VA DATE STAMP)

INFORMATION REGARDING APPORTIONMENT OF BENEFICIARY'S AWARD

INSTRUCTIONS: All or part of a veteran's disability award may be apportioned (paid) to the veteran's spouse, child, or dependent parent. A surviving spouse's award may also be apportioned for the veteran's child or children. Print all answers clearly. If an answer is "none" or "0," write that or line through the space provided. For additional space, attach a separate sheet, indicating the item number to which the answers apply. Make sure to write the veteran's name and VA claim number on any attachments to the form.

IMPORTANT: If you are certifying that you are married for the purpose of VA benefits, your marriage must be recognized by the place where you and/or your spouse resided at the time of marriage, or where you and/or your spouse resided when you filed your claim (or a later date when you became eligible for benefits) (38 U.S.C. § 103(c)). Additional guidance on when VA recognizes marriages is available at <http://www.va.gov/opa/marriage/>.

1. FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST NAME OF VETERAN		2. VA FILE NUMBER C/CSS-	
3A. FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM (If other than veteran)		3B. MAILING ADDRESS (Number and street or rural route, city or P.O., State and ZIP Code)	
3C. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code)		3D. E-MAIL ADDRESS (If applicable)	
Daytime	Evening		
4A. WHO ARE YOU REQUESTING AN APPORTIONMENT FOR? (List first, middle, and last names)		4B. WHAT IS HIS/HER RELATIONSHIP TO THE VETERAN?	
5A. HOW MUCH IS THE VETERAN OR VETERAN'S SURVIVING SPOUSE CONTRIBUTING TO THE PERSON(S) FOR WHOM AN APPORTIONMENT IS BEING CLAIMED? \$		5B. HOW OFTEN ARE THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE?	
6. IF THE SPOUSE IS CLAIMING AN APPORTIONMENT, IS HE/SHE LIVING WITH ANOTHER PERSON AND HOLDING HIMSELF/HERSELF OUT OPENLY TO THE PUBLIC AS THE SPOUSE OF THE OTHER PERSON? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO (If "Yes," provide an explanation) _____		7. HAS THE VETERAN'S CHILD(REN) BEEN LEGALLY ADOPTED BY ANOTHER PERSON? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

PART I - INCOME AND NET WORTH

Report all income and net worth. Report the gross amounts before you take out deductions for taxes, insurance, etc. If you do not receive income or net worth from a particular source, write "0" or "none" in the space provided. **Do not leave the space blank.** Note: If you are the veteran or surviving spouse, report only your income and net worth. If you are the claimant or are filing on behalf of the claimant(s), report all income and net worth for all persons for whom an apportionment is being claimed. If you are claiming an apportionment as the custodian of the veteran's child or children, report your income and net worth and the income and net worth of the child(ren).

MONTHLY INCOME

SOURCE	VETERAN OR SURVIVING SPOUSE	CUSTODIAN	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR
1A. GROSS WAGES FROM ALL EMPLOYMENT	\$	\$	\$	\$
1B. SOCIAL SECURITY				
1C. RETIREMENT OR ANNUITIES				
1D. SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) / PUBLIC ASSISTANCE				
1E. OTHER INCOME (Show source)				
1F. OTHER INCOME (Show source)				

NET WORTH

SOURCE	VETERAN OR SURVIVING SPOUSE	CUSTODIAN	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR
2A. CASH/NON-INTEREST-BEARING BANK ACCOUNTS	\$	\$	\$	\$
2B. INTEREST-BEARING BANK ACCOUNTS				
2C. IRAS, KEOGH PLANS, ETC.				
2D. STOCKS, BONDS, MUTUAL FUNDS, ETC.				
2E. REAL PROPERTY (Not your home)				
2F. ALL OTHER PROPERTY AND ASSETS				

PART II - MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

Show your monthly living expenses, including any monthly installment payments. If you do not have expenses from a particular source, write "0" or "none" in the space provided. Do not leave the space blank.

Note: If you are the veteran or surviving spouse, report only your expenses. If you are the claimant or are filing on behalf of the claimant(s), report expenses for all persons for whom an apportionment is being claimed. If you are claiming an apportionment as the custodian of the veteran's child or children, report your expenses and the expenses of the child(ren).

SOURCE	VETERAN OR SURVIVING SPOUSE	CUSTODIAN	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR	PERSON APPORTIONMENT IS CLAIMED FOR
1A. RENT OR HOUSE PAYMENT	\$	\$	\$	\$
1B. FOOD				
1C. UTILITIES (Water, gas, electricity)				
1D. TELEPHONE				
1E. CLOTHING				
1F. MEDICAL EXPENSES				
1G. SCHOOL EXPENSES				
1H. OTHER EXPENSES (Show source)				
1I. OTHER EXPENSES (Show source)				

PART III - CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE

I CERTIFY THAT the foregoing statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

1. SIGNATURE OF VETERAN OR CLAIMANT

2. DATE SIGNED

PENALTY - The law provides severe penalties which include fine or imprisonment or both, for the willful submission of any statement or evidence of a material fact, knowing it is false, or fraudulent acceptance of any payment to which you are not entitled.

PRIVACY ACT INFORMATION - The VA will not disclose information collected on this form to any source other than what has been authorized under the Privacy Act of 1974 or Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations 1.576 for routine uses (i.e., civil or criminal law enforcement, congressional communications, epidemiological or research studies, the collection of money owed to the United States, litigation in which the United States is a party or has an interest, the administration of VA programs and delivery of VA benefits, verification of identity and status, and personnel administration) as identified in the VA system of records, 58VA 21/22/28, Compensation, Pension, Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records - VA, published in the Federal Register. Your obligation to respond is required to obtain or retain benefits. The requested information is considered relevant and necessary to determine maximum benefits under the law. The responses you submit are considered confidential (38 U.S.C. 5701). Information submitted is subject to verification through computer matching programs with other agencies.

RESPONDENT BURDEN - We need this information to determine whether an apportionment of VA disability or death benefits may be made (38 U.S.C. 5307). Title 38, United States Code, allows us to ask for this information. We estimate that you will need an average of 30 minutes to review the instructions, find the information, and complete this form. VA cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed. You are not required to respond to a collection of information if this number is not displayed. Valid OMB control numbers can be located on the OMB Internet Page at www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. If desired, you can call 1-800-827-1000 to get information on where to send comments or suggestions about this form.



State of Illinois

Department of Human Rights

HOUSING/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION COMPLAINANT INFORMATION SHEET

(For IDHR Use Only) CONTROL NUMBER:

Instructions: Read this entire form and all the instructions carefully before completing. All questions should be answered. However, if you do not know the answer or if a question is not applicable, leave the question unanswered and fill out as much of the form as you can. Return the form in person, by mail or fax to IDHR's Chicago Office. You have one year from the date of the alleged discrimination to file a charge, but it's best to file as soon as possible. The form should be signed and dated below. Use additional sheets if necessary. THIS IS NOT A CHARGE. If IDHR accepts your claim, we will send you a charge form for signature.

Complainant Information:

Name of Aggrieved Person(s) or Organization: Telephone No.
Address: Apt. No. City, State, ZIP
County: Cell Phone No.: E-mail Address:

Who else can we call if we cannot reach you?

First Contact's Name: Daytime Phone:
Address, City, State, ZIP:
Second Contact's Name: Daytime Phone:
Address, City, State, ZIP:

1a. What happened to you? Check all that apply.

- Refused an opportunity to rent or buy housing or told housing was not available when it was. Discriminated against in broker's services.
Refused a request to accommodate policies or practices or modify housing because of a disability. Treated differently than others seeking housing.
Discriminated against in the terms or conditions of sale, rental occupancy, or in services or facilities. Denied a loan.
Discriminated against in financing of a home or commercial property. Intimidated/interfered/coerced in the exercise of my housing rights.
Other (explain)

1b. State briefly what happened. (Attach an additional page if necessary.)

2a. On what date did the last act of discrimination occur? 2b. Is the action on going? Yes No

Protected classes: It is a violation of the Illinois Human Rights Act to deny a person housing rights because of any of the following protected classes: race; color; religion; sex (including sexual harassment); pregnancy, national origin; familial status (families with children under 18); disability; aiding/abetting; willful interference and coercion; military status; unfavorable military discharge; retaliation; marital status; ancestry; age (40 and over); sexual orientation (including gender identity); and order of protection status.

3. Why do you believe you are being discriminated against? For example: were you denied housing because of your race? Were you denied a mortgage loan because of your religion? Or turned down for an apartment because you have children? Were you harassed because you assisted someone in obtaining their fair housing rights? Briefly explain why you think your housing rights were denied because of any of the protected classes listed above.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CIS-H. 12/9/2015

100 W Randolph St, 10th Floor, Attn: Housing Intake, Chicago, IL 60601; 312-814-6229; 866-740-3953 (TTY); INTERVIEWS MON.-THURS.
In Springfield: 222 South College, Room 101-A, Attn: Housing Intake, Springfield, IL 62704; 217-785-5100; 866-740-3953 (TTY)
www.illinois.gov/dhr TOLL FREE: 800-662-3942 CHICAGO FAX NO. 312-814-6251 SPRINGFIELD FAX NO. 217-785-5106

4a. Who do you believe discriminated against you?		
Name:		Phone No.:
Address, City, State, ZIP:		
4b. Mark the applicable box that describes the person named above:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Landlord <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Bank or Other Lender <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Agent <input type="checkbox"/> Broker Other:		
5a. What kind of house, rental unit or property was involved? Check the appropriate box(es):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Single family home <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment building of more than 4 units <input type="checkbox"/> Owner lives on the property <input type="checkbox"/> Public or assisted housing <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant land		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home park <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space Other (specify):		
Number of units on the property:		
5b. What is the address of the house, rental unit, or property?		
Address:		Apt. No.:
City, State, ZIP:		County:
Is the property still available? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
6. We need some information for statistical purposes:		
Sex:	Date of birth (age cases only):	National Origin (specify):
How did you learn of our office?		
7. Have you filed a charge with any other agency? If so, which agency?		

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND RELEASE		
I have read the provided "Notice to Complainant" and I understand that: 1) In the course of investigating my charge, IDHR will reveal my identity (including my name) and my personal information to named Respondent(s) in my charge to obtain facts and evidence regarding my charge; 2) I do not have to reveal my personal information to IDHR, but IDHR may close my charge if I refuse to reveal information needed to fully investigate my charge; 3) IDHR may be required by law, subpoena, court order, and/or FOIA request to disclose my charge and information in the Department's investigation file concerning my charge to persons outside of IDHR.		
If IDHR takes a charge based on the information provided, I consent for IDHR to disclose my identity and personal information as necessary to process and investigate my charge, and I release IDHR from any liability whatsoever concerning disclosure of my identity and any personal information I provided to IDHR or IDHR obtained in processing my charge.		
My signature below verifies the accuracy of the information provided herein and my consent and release as indicated above.		
Print Name _____	Signature _____	Date _____
NOTE: If there is certain personal information you would like withheld, please discuss your concern with an Intake supervisor.		

IDHR Notice of Accessibility

IDHR's programs are accessible to persons with disabilities in compliance with the ADA and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. IDHR provides sign language interpreters upon request. A person with a disability needing an accommodation to participate in IDHR programs should contact Susan Allen, the ADA Coordinator, at 217-785-5119, 217-785-5106 (fax), 866-740-3953 (TTY) or e-mail susan.allen@illinois.gov.

Notice to complainant on release of identity and personal information

The Illinois Human Rights Act ("Act"), 775 ILCS 5/1-101 *et seq.*, and Section 2520.330 of IDHR's Rules and Regulations, 56 Ill. Admin. Code, Ch. II, Section 2520.330, require a charge to contain certain information in such detail as to substantially apprise the parties of the time, place, and facts with respect to the alleged civil rights violation. Pursuant to the Department's Rules and Regulations (2 Ill. Admin Code, Ch. X, Section 926.210), anyone who submits information to IDHR in connection with a discrimination charge should take notice and be aware of the following:

- (a) All contents and files maintained by IDHR pertaining to charges shall be confidential and not subject to public disclosure. Relevant exceptions are: 1) the parties to a charge may inspect the file at any time subsequent to the written notice of substantial evidence, default, or dismissal, administrative closure, or approval of terms of settlement by the Human Rights Commission ("Commission"); 2) after the filing of a Complaint with the Commission or the institution of judicial proceedings involving a charge, the Director may release information pertaining to the charge if such information is requested of IDHR or if the Director finds such information newsworthy, useful in education or training, relevant to an issue before the General Assembly, or similarly appropriate for disclosure.
- (b) Authorized personnel within IDHR analyze information that IDHR collects. This information may include personal information. IDHR staff may need to reveal some of the personal information to individuals outside the office in order to verify facts related to the charge, or to discover new facts which will help IDHR to determine whether the law has been violated. IDHR may need to disclose to Respondent correspondence that IDHR receives from Complainant or other sources.
- (c) IDHR may release the identity and personal information of the parties pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request, a subpoena or a court order, and information submitted to or obtained by IDHR may also be revealed to persons outside of IDHR to enforce a Commission Order or a settlement agreement.
- (d) No person is required to file a charge with IDHR and reveal personal information to IDHR; however, if a person files a charge and IDHR cannot obtain the information needed to fully investigate the allegations in the charge, IDHR may close the case.

The Cooper v. Salazar injunction

IDHR is under a federal-court injunction that, among other things, orders IDHR:

"to cease permanently from relying on credibility determinations made without affording the rights of confrontation and cross-examination".

See, *Cooper v. Salazar*, #98 C 2930, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Order dated November 1, 2001, at p. 26, ¶1.

Meaning of the Cooper Injunction

The Department cannot assess the credibility of Complainant's testimony, the testimony of Complainant's witnesses or the testimony of Respondent's representatives or the witnesses of Respondent where there is conflicting testimony. In other words, if the determination of substantial evidence turns on issues of credibility, the Department should make a finding of substantial evidence so that a trier of fact may resolve those issues of credibility. This means that if a determination of lack of substantial evidence requires the Department to make a finding of fact as to conflicting evidence, the Department will make a finding of substantial evidence so that credibility may be resolved by the Human Rights Commission at a Public Hearing or in circuit court.

The Illinois Human Rights Act defines "substantial evidence" as:

"evidence which a reasonable mind accepts as sufficient to support a particular conclusion and which consists of more than a mere scintilla but may be somewhat less than a preponderance". Illinois Human Rights Act §7A-102(D)(2), codified at 775 ILCS 5/7A-102(D)(2).

The Meaning of Credibility

IDHR is an investigatory agency. IDHR's purpose is to gather all of the evidence from each of the parties as to whether Respondent may or may not have discriminated against the Complainant within the meaning of the Illinois Human Rights Act. IDHR's purpose is to review all of the evidence and make a determination based upon the law as to whether there is sufficient evidence of discrimination to file a complaint against the Respondent with the Illinois Human Rights Commission. IDHR will not make a finding that evidence submitted by a party is either believable or not believable. Thus, IDHR will not base its findings on the fact that one of the parties is not telling the truth or that one party's evidence is not believable. If the resolution of the charge of discrimination requires believing the evidence of one party over another party, IDHR will make a finding of Substantial Evidence and refer the matter to the Illinois Human Rights Commission so that a trier of fact may resolve the case.

Conflicting evidence exists when there are

1. Statements of a person with material first hand knowledge contradicted by statements of a different person with material first hand knowledge.
2. Business records contradicted by oral statements of a person with material first hand knowledge.
3. Business records of one person contradicted by business records of another person.

EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY RELIEF

Before the Illinois Prisoner Review Board

Advising the Honorable _____, Governor:

The undersigned petitioner prays for a pardon and expungement and in support thereof states as follows:

1. Required Information:

Full Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address: _____
Number Street Apt./Unit #

City State Zip Code

Telephone Number (include area code): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

State Prisoner Number (if applicable): _____

Name Convicted Under and any Aliases: _____

Have you ever served in the military? Yes No

If yes, please state your discharge status and date of discharge, and attach a copy of your DD-214.

Have you ever petitioned for clemency before? Yes No

If yes, please state the month and year your petition was considered.

Would you, the petitioner, like to request a public hearing? Yes No

2. Conviction(s) for Which Pardon is Sought:

For each conviction please provide the following information:

Offense: _____

Case Number: _____

Date of Arrest: _____

County of Conviction: _____

Plea Bench Trial Jury Trial

Sentencing Judge: _____

Date Sentenced: _____

Sentenced: _____
(Includes probation, any time served, an conditional discharge)

Time Served: _____

Date of Discharge: _____

If you appealed your conviction or sentence, provide the status of any pending appeals, including the date of decisions(s) by the Court:

Provide a complete and detailed account of the offense(s) for which you seek pardon. Provide your own version of the factual circumstances of the offense(s), including the date and location. *Add additional pages if necessary.*

3. Non-Conviction(s):

For each incident for which you were arrested, taken into custody, or charged by any law enforcement agency, except for traffic violations, provide the following information:

Case Number: _____

Offense Charged: _____

Date of Arrest: _____

County of Arrest: _____

Disposition: _____
(Includes SOL, nolle pros, nonsuit, section 10 or 410 probation, FNPC, supervision)

Date probation or supervision terminated (if applicable): _____

Attach a copy of your police record (rap sheet).

4. Personal Life History:

Write a detailed narrative biography that includes date and place of birth, educational and employment history, marital status, names and ages of children, substance abuse and mental health information, military record, charitable and community activities. You may also include information on degrees or diplomas earned or anticipated, awards of commendations at school or work, counseling or rehabilitation programs you have attended or completed, military awards, civil or occupational licenses or certifications, and life changing events. You may attach any documents that demonstrate or reflect your achievements.

5. Reason(s) for Seeking Clemency:

State your reasons for seeking a pardon, including opportunities that have been denied because of your criminal record.

6. Type of Clemency Desired:

- Commutation of Sentence
- Pardon
- Expungement (authorization to file in circuit court)
- Pardon and Expungement (authorization to file in circuit court)
- Pardon and Expungement (authorization to file in circuit court) with restoration of potential firearm privileges and the authority to apply for a Firearm Owners Identification Card (FOID) – (Within the petition, the petitioner must provide the reason(s) that he or she wishes to have firearm privileges.)

7. Supporting Documentation:

Attach materials that support the claims made in this petition. These may include DD-214, rap sheet, resume, letters of recommendation, diplomas, certifications, etc...

8. Certification and Personal Oath:

The following statement must be signed and sworn before a Notary Public:

I declare under penalty of perjury that all of the assertions made in this petition are complete, truthful and accurate.

Respectfully submitted this _____ day of _____, _____.
(Month) (Year)

(Signature of Petitioner)

Signed and sworn before me this _____ day of _____, _____.
(Month) (Year)

(Notary Public)

9. Hearing Information:

Petitioners may request a public hearing before the Prisoner Review Board. Personal presentations at the hearing are limited. Petitioner may appear with their supporters, but no more than four people may speak during a presentation.

Representatives of incarcerated petitioners may request to speak to the Board at a public hearing, but a personal appearance is not required for the processing of a petition for executive clemency. The Board will make a confidential recommendation for the Governor. ***Board recommendations to the Governor are confidential.***

10. Filing and Mailing the Petition:

1. Deliver or mail the **original petition**:

Illinois Prisoner Review Board
319 East Madison, Suite A
Springfield, IL 62701

Within the completed petition to the Prisoner Review Board, include proof that the current presiding judge and state's attorney's office were sent a copy of the petition. You may do this by affidavit with a notarized signature or by including a registered or certified mail receipt.

This form must be typewritten. The Prisoner Review Board needs original signatures and they need to be notarized. No faxes will be accepted.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
HOST SITE AGREEMENT

In the presence of the parole agent, please complete, read and initial all paragraphs that apply, and sign and date this form.

I, _____, voluntarily agree to allow
Host's Name
_____ to reside at my residence,
Offender's Name
located at _____
Host Address

Initials

- _____ I understand that this parolee or releasee may be monitored electronically while residing in my residence.
- _____ I understand that while this parolee or releasee is on electronic monitoring equipment, he or she is confined to my home except as approved by his or her assigned parole agent.
- _____ I will not permit unauthorized prescription drugs, marijuana, narcotics, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, firearms, ammunition, or explosive devices in my residence.
- _____ I understand that my residence is subject to search at any time by parole agents or designated Illinois Department of Corrections' staff and I explicitly consent thereto.
- _____ If the parolee or releasee is to be electronically monitored, I agree to immediately discontinue any special features on my telephone line, including call forwarding, three-way calling, call waiting, privacy manager, and any voice-mail or answering machine system. Such features are prohibited by the Illinois Department of Corrections. Such features shall not be installed on the phone line while the parolee or releasee resides in my residence.
- _____ I agree to permit parole agents and other designated staff of the Illinois Department of Corrections and/or monitoring vendor of the Department to have access to my residence to install, inspect, repair, or disconnect electronic monitoring equipment. I understand that the installation, repair, or removal of electronic monitoring equipment may result in the temporary interruption of telephone service at my residence. I further agree not to unplug, move, or tamper with the electronic monitoring equipment or allow anyone else to do so.
- _____ I understand that the parole agent will visit the parolee or releasee in my home. I agree to allow a parole agent or other designated Illinois Department of Corrections' staff to enter my residence at any time to conduct meetings with the parolee or releasee to verify compliance with his or her parole or mandatory supervised release conditions, and/or to conduct a search of the parolee or releasee or my residence.
- _____ I understand that I may withdraw my consent for the placement of the parolee or releasee in my residence at any time by notifying the Illinois Department of Corrections at 1-800-666-6744.
- _____ I agree to notify the Illinois Department of Corrections as soon as possible of any contemplated move from the address listed above. I understand that the Illinois Department of Corrections must approve the parolee or releasee's placement in any new residence.

The following **ONLY** applies to sex offender placements. *Parole Agent, check applicability:* Applicable Not Applicable

_____ I certify that this parolee or releasee will not have unsupervised access to any minor child (under 18 years of age) present in my residence. Minor children present in my residence will be closely supervised by me or by another adult designated by me. This parolee or releasee shall at no time act as caretaker or have unsupervised access to minor children in my residence.

Host's Signature

Date

Parole Agent's Signature and Number

Date

Distribution: Parole File; Host

DOC 0161 (Rev. 9/2002)
(Replaces DC 3473)



EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT
an initiative of Education at Illinois