

# MOVING FORWARD



*A second chance to work together*

*Volunteers of America Oregon*

In Multnomah County, Oregon, some individuals who have been arrested are presented with a unique opportunity to positively shift the direction of their lives. Instead of serving years in prison, some people may qualify and opt for sentencing in the **Justice Reinvestment Program (JRP)** - a second chance to stay in our community. To help people with a JRP sentence get back on track and overcome the enormous obstacles in their lives, **Moving Forward** coordinates a supportive team with a comprehensive menu of housing, mentors, employment, family and treatment services provided in concert with parole and probation services. Surrounding people with healthy connections promotes better decision-making, resulting in drug and crime-free lives. **Moving Forward** increases public safety locally and cost effectively, and reduces statewide prison use, the most expensive option for our wallets, our families and our future.



Volunteers of America Oregon | Multnomah County Department of Community Justice

Bridges to Change | SE Works | Human Solutions | Central City Concern

Multnomah County District Attorney | Worksystems Inc

Gang Impacted Family Team | Center for Family Success



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**Volunteers of America Oregon** has been an active partner in the implementation of the **Multnomah County Justice Reinvestment Program or MCJRP**. The MCJRP establishes a process to assess offenders and provide a continuum of community-based sanctions, services and programs that are designed to decrease the utilization of DOC institutions while protecting public safety and holding offenders accountable.

**History.** VOA Oregon has a rich history of effectively working with offender populations and beginning with our residential treatment services in the 1980's. We are a leader in reentry services, providing both pre-release and post-release transitional services since 2004 in our Community Partners Reinvestment program, and we have expertise in diversion programs working alongside Judges and District Attorneys in our therapeutic Drug Courts.

**Justice Reinvestment Programs.** Through 3194 funding, VOA coordinates a team of providers offering a comprehensive menu of housing, mentors, employment, family and treatment services provided in concert with parole and probation services. Nationally, research supports this holistic approach, and Oregon is viewed as a leader in this multidisciplinary programming to achieve statistically significant reductions in recidivism and increases in positive outcomes such as employment, sobriety and self-supporting families.

**Who we serve.** Since 3194 passed, VOA has already provided reentry and transitional services to:

- Over **115 individuals** releasing from the Department of Corrections on **Short Term Transitional Leave**;
- Another **125 individuals** who were diverted from state prison and placed in VOA's continuum of Residential and Outpatient treatment through a **Multnomah County Justice Reinvestment Program**
  - 40 Residential VOA's Men's Residential Center or Women's Residential Center
  - 85 Outpatient VOA's *Moving Forward Program*

**Successes.** Our newest outpatient program **Moving Forward** - designed for MCJRP population - is modeled after the successful **Reentry Enhancement Coordination (REC)** program. A Preliminary Evaluation of REC by the Criminal Justice Commission demonstrated (2011):

<b>Recidivism:</b>	REC participants had a 43% reduction in recidivism compared to control group
<b>Employment:</b>	74% of REC participants achieved employment within 90 days of release from prison
<b>Housing:</b>	84% had independent housing 90 days after release from prison

**Mentors.** The most measurable impact is seen by linking evidence-based treatment with wrap-around supports and **professional mentors** who help people create healthy connections and promote better decision-making. For example, our Community Partners Reinvestment (CPR) reentry program added culturally-appropriate mentors who model their own success leaving gangs, crime, drugs and prison which resulted in a surge of the average days engaged in CPR's post-release services (2012):

- **274% increase** for African-American, Hispanic and Native American participants
- **34.4% increase** for White participants