

The Reentry Checklist

This list is created with the understanding that there are many things that an inmate could be doing to prepare for release and reintegration into society, but that this does not always happen. For additional resources, please refer to the online Tarrant County Reentry Resource Directory and the Reentry Needs Profile available on that website.

DISCLAIMER: Reentry of inmates into society is a broad and complex subject, with many variables. This list is a starting point and is not meant to cover every type of situation, including mental illness, geriatric needs, chronic illness, institutionalization, addiction, severe family problems, generational poverty, etc.

ASSUMPTIONS: As an inmate now reentering society from prison or jail, you have a desire to be rehabilitated, not return to prison, and to become a contributing member of society. If you are on probation, you should work with your probation officer on most of this.

Needs Within the First 72-Hours

- Clothing to wear out of the facility
- Transportation away from the facility
- Trip to the bank to cash the check the facility gave the inmate
- Set aside a time to sit down and discuss needs using the Reentry Needs Profile
- Determine, based on the amount of money available, and where you will spend the night on the first night.
 - \$0-\$50: family member or homeless shelter
 - \$50-\$300: cheap motel, pay for one week if at all possible
 - \$300 and up: various options
- Go to the department store or supermarket (Walmart, etc.) and get basic hygiene items (underwear, socks, toothpaste, etc.). If needed, get a small suitcase, backpack, or gym bag.
- If it is winter time, find a warm coat (try a thrift store) and possibly a warm hat and gloves
- Contact any possible family members
- Investigate the possibility of an inexpensive cell phone and make sure you know how to add/dial contacts
- Contact any possible church affiliation or other faith-based contacts you might have. Attend the first church service available.
- Get a supply of basic groceries
- Make sure you have a good Bible (Many churches and faith-based organizations will give you one)

- If you are a Sex Offender, make sure you register with local law enforcement within the required time limit.
- If you have a chronic need for medication, you should exit the system with a 30-day supply. If not, contact the County Health Department (817-321-4700; www.tarrantcounty.com/ehealth) to determine what options are available.

Week 1

- Gather all identification documents and determine what is needed:
 - Birth Certificate
 - State Picture ID
 - Social Security Card
 - Proof of Citizenship
 - Veteran's ID
 - Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB card)
 - Eventually, Driver's License
- Develop a plan for getting necessary documents as soon as possible (Note: there can be costs associated with getting some of these)
- Look at the various court costs, fines, and fees that may have been charged to the reentrant and make a plan for going to the courthouse to address these
- Look at the back Child Support payments that may have been accrued by you and make a plan for going to the Attorney General's office (800-687-8226 Tollfree; (972) 339-3100 for Dallas/Tarrant County, www.texasattorneygeneral.gov)
- Analyze the status of your driver's license, and if needed, make a plan for paying any restitution costs, fines, etc.
- Work with Texas Health and Human Services to acquire Food Stamps (SNAP program) as soon as possible; 817-321-8000, can apply online at www.yourtexasbenefits.com
- Call 2-1-1 for help with various social services, as needed
- Use the online Tarrant County Reentry Resource Directory to locate services, as needed

Week 2

- Begin the process of searching for employment with a basic skills assessment and a needs assessment
- Use the document "A Roadmap to Employment in Texas" as a starting point (located under *More Info* section of the Tarrant County Reentry Resource Directory website)

- Use the “Felon-Friendly Companies in the DFW Area” list to begin your search (located on the website under *More Info*)
- If bus transportation is available, purchase a bus pass (7-day, etc.). You will need some type of transportation in order to search for a job.
- If housing is becoming an issue, contact Tarrant County Housing Assistance Office for housing alternatives (817-531-7640, www.tarrantcounty.com/ehousing)
- Become involved in one or more community-based or faith-based support groups to start building a healthy circle of potential friends
- In between social services appointments and job searching, earn some spending money by finding odd jobs such as raking leaves, washing windows, working at a local car wash (part time) or working through local “day labor” staffing companies