



This newsletter shares information, policy and program updates and best practice information to 20 County Re-entry Task Forces and community stakeholders.

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- Dutchess
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- Nassau
- Niagara
- New York
- Oneida
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- Queens
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County Re-entry Task Force Services — Contract Renewal

As of June 15, 2022, all 20 County Re-entry Task Forces (CRTFs) were renewed for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. Contract renewal meetings were held during July, and we look forward to another great contract year ahead, from Oct 1, 2022- Sept 30, 2023.

Governor’s “Jails to Jobs” Program – Workforce Development Specialists Training

From March 21 to July 1, 2022, the Division of Criminal Justice Services delivered its 18th Workforce Development Specialist Training and its first class dedicated solely to New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) staff. Fourteen parole officers and six re-entry staff were selected for this 180-hour intensive training program, which involved live training sessions, quizzes, and exams, as well as the completion of practicum assignments as part of the required training hours. These professionals will join more than 400 certified specialists who are authorized to lead justice-involved individuals in employment readiness groups through the 20-hour **Ready, Set, Work!** Program. Workforce development specialists are certified to utilize specific competencies and related skills to assist individuals with criminal histories make informed decisions about jobs and career paths based on knowledge of their interests, skills/abilities, and values; educational and occupational opportunities; and the realities of the work world.

Soon to be Released -- County Re-Entry Task Force Orientation Video

DCJS is excited to announce that with the partnership of DOCCS, a video has been created to showcase the incredible work that is being done throughout the 20 CRTFs. Six individuals serve as “credible messengers” and provide testimony as to how the CRTF was able to help them succeed upon release from incarceration. This video will be utilized both inside of DOCCS correctional facilities and at community supervision area offices to provide valuable information and insight to those who may be struggling and in need of CRTF services.

Spotlight: Re-Entry Mentoring Program through Back to Basics Ministries – Erie County Re-Entry Task Force

During the May CRTF Bi-Monthly Meeting, Re-Entry Mentoring Program Director Pastor Charles H. Walker reported on the Re-Entry Mentoring Program and how hard members have been working to support the community. Pastor Walker provided the following:

“Once again, the Re-Entry Mentoring Program at Back to Basics Ministries is on the move, not missing a beat with linking returning citizen participants to numerous community initiatives, to the benefit of all involved. On Saturday, May 14, 2022, the massacre of 10 citizens, at the hands of a white supremacist gunman, took place at the Tops Market in Buffalo, N.Y., in a predominantly African-American neighborhood. Three individuals were injured as well. As a result, the supermarket closed, further restricting residents’ access to fresh produce and food in an area already designated a food desert. I ensured that participants in his program were involved in the next steps surrounding this situation. These steps included working with Buffalo City Mission, Mt. Hope Community Church, Lorigo’s Meating Place and WTB Associates to handout donated bags of groceries, deliver bags of groceries to elderly residents, and participation at two communitywide meetings attended by business executives, clergy members, educators, and former elected officials who sought input for best practices in healing a traumatized community. Input was also sought for addressing other important issues such as education and economic investment and development.”

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For more information on any of the topics mentioned within, to report any difficulties you may have experienced receiving this email, or if you have any information you would like included in the next issue, please contact [Melinda Vick](#).

Past issues of *New York Re-Entry Today* are available on the [DCJS website](#). Bookmark the link!

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“I couldn’t be prouder of these guys! Their willingness to leave their respective comfort zones and step into forums with limited familiarity is to be commended. It truly demonstrates their commitment to being a part of solutions that will uplift the community.”

~ Re-Entry Mentoring Program Director Pastor Charles H. Walker



Client Success Story: The Erie CRTF is located at Spectrum Health and Human Services and recently worked with an individual who successfully completed services through the CRTF. Mr. Obdulio Avellanet said: “The Erie County Re-entry program helped me to become independent in the community. I was able to successfully complete **Ready, Set, Work!**, which was where I obtained job readiness skills and valuable information. Re-entry also helped me with resources, such as transportation, so I was able to get to my appointments and programs. My case manager, Erin, was very helpful, as she helped me obtain items needed, such as clothing and food. She also helped to link me with needed services and other helpful community resources.”

Grow with Google:

Formerly incarcerated and justice-involved individuals are now being equipped with necessary digital skills that they can use to get a job or start their own business. Grow with Google is launching \$4 million in funds for nonprofits to provide lessons on digital skills.

Learn more here: <https://grow.google/justice-impacted/>

In Memoriam – New York CRTF – Exodus Employee:

“Ms. Jean Coaxum seemed to be a permanent fixture here at Exodus; she was the person you first encountered when you arrived here. She worked with Julio Medina for many years. She was the resident chef who prepared countless meals for our participants and individuals who showed up at Exodus just looking for a meal.” ~ New York CRTF Coordinator Gary Brown

Below is a statement that was sent out from Exodus:

“We lost our beloved Jean Coaxum (aka Momma Jean, Miss Jean, Blue). Jean has been at Exodus for 15 years, and, like many of us, Jean came directly to Exodus after serving a 25-year sentence. Jean has been a consistent and meaningful presence in the Exodus Family. She was very caring and she could also be stern when needed. (I’m sure many of us here at Exodus have felt the wrath of her tough love) 😊. But the way Jean put her heart and soul into feeding others is probably what she is best known for. Jean touched so many lives in special ways, she’ll remain forever in our hearts!!” ~ Exodus Family